



## Engineering Services Division

# Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2014

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services  
Steve Henninger, Planning Division  
Greg Taylor, Concord Police Department  
Dick Lemieux, TPAC Chair

### A. Regular Discussion Items

**1) Overview of city-wide accident data, including prior-month accident summary and discussion of select accident locations, circumstances and potential action.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Traffic accident data for February 2014 was reviewed. There were 119 reportable accidents in February 2014. This compares with 94 and 121 reportable accidents in February 2013 and 2012, respectively. 14 accidents resulted in total of 24 people injured, four of which occurred on Loudon Road. There were no fatalities.

There were six accidents involving pedestrians: a pedestrian aged 48 years crossing N. State Street in the crosswalk near Palm Street and being struck by a northbound vehicle on N. State Street (injury, driver at fault); a pedestrian (employee) aged 22 years washing the back of a car at the Shell Station car wash at 24 Loudon Road and being struck by the vehicle when the driver inadvertently shifted into reverse instead of drive (minor injury, driver at fault); a pedestrian aged 61 years exiting her parked car on S. State Street near Thompson Street and being struck by the mirror of a passing northbound vehicle (injuries not noted, driver not identified); a pedestrian aged 62 years walking with crutches in the Walmart parking lot and being struck by a turning vehicle (minor injury, driver at fault, distraction by child passenger noted); a pedestrian (worker) aged 38 years standing in Warren Street south of Rumford Street directing traffic near a private snow-removal operation and being struck by the mirror of a passing vehicle (minor injury, pedestrian at fault, improper traffic control, possible rage-related incident); and a pedestrian aged 62 years walking westbound against traffic along Pleasant Street near Rum Hill Road and being struck by the snow plow blade of a passing vehicle (injury, driver at fault, heavy rain noted).

**2) City Council Meeting update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its March 10, 2014 meeting, City Council accepted TOC's report on the Regional/Chenell intersection with recommendation to retain the current two-way stop sign control until intersection improvements programmed under CIP 541 are implemented.

**3) Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: TPAC did not meet in February.

## **B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.**

- 1) Referral from the Parking Committee regarding a request from Havenwood-Heritage Heights to increase the parking setbacks at its driveways along Christian Avenue (*Parking: 11/18/13*).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a request by Havenwood-Heritage Heights (HHH) to increase the parking setbacks at its driveways along Christian Avenue. A concern is that on-street parking blocks sight lines for traffic leaving driveways and complicates resident egress onto the street. Rob Mack noted that this request was originally discussed by the Parking Committee at its November 2013 meeting. At that time the committee requested that Engineering provide additional information related to crash history at these driveways as well as a review of current parking setbacks. Also requested was consideration of alternative on-street parking arrangements such as parking along the south side of Christian Avenue or alternate parking along both sides to potentially calm traffic speeds.

The HHH facility has about seven driveway openings along Christian Avenue: a one-way loop driveway at its main building; five small residential parking area drives; and one larger residential driveway about 600 feet west of the loop driveway exit. Current parking setbacks measured by staff are: about 60 to 75 feet at the loop driveway exit; about 5 to 8 feet at the small residential driveways; and about 36 to 47 feet at the larger residential driveway. The Ordinance specifies a minimum 5-foot setback at driveways and 30-foot setback at stop-controlled intersections. Thus, currently-posted setbacks at the two larger driveways substantially exceed Ordinance minimums; the five smaller driveways are near the Ordinance minimum.

CPD crash data for the three prior years indicates five HHH driveway-related crashes, all involving a driveway exit (at fault) failing to stop or yield to Christian Avenue traffic: One occurred leaving the main entrance loop driveway; three occurred exiting the larger driveway; and one occurred exiting the small driveway about 325 feet west of the main entrance loop driveway. Of the five crashes, four occurred at driveways with currently-large parking setbacks in excess of 36 ft.

Sight lines for vehicles exiting the two larger driveways are ample. Sight lines for vehicles exiting the minor driveways also appear reasonable if the vehicle fully stops near the edge of the travel way (roughly the drivers-side edge of parked vehicles). Traffic counts conducted on Christian Avenue in 2011 indicated average speeds of 25-26 mph and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds of 32-33 mph; 25 mph is posted.

TOC concurred that the current parking setbacks from HHH driveways are appropriate and that safe driveway exits can be made with appropriate driver action. TOC also noted concern for establishing precedent in spot-increasing parking setbacks at select locations from that otherwise specified in the Ordinance and applied city-wide. Regarding an option to relocate all parking to the south side of Christian Avenue, it was noted that: heavier-used driveways to/from Royal Gardens would become subject to the same limited sight lines; more Royal Gardens residents might utilize nearby on-street parking rather than on-site parking, leaving less for HHH residents; and HHH residents would have to cross the street to access their parked vehicles. An option to stagger parking along the north and south sides of the street was considered inappropriate due to roadway width.

## **C. New Discussion and Action Items**

- 1) Review of posted speed limits in the area of Old Loudon Road (*Engineering: 03/03/14*).**

**DISCUSSION / ACTIONS:** Pursuant to staff review of off-site improvements to Old Loudon Road at the Loudon/D'Amante intersection related to a proposed retail development, it was noted that 35 mph speed limits are currently posted along the length of Old Loudon Road as well as the segment of Portsmouth Street between Old Loudon Road and the I-393 overpass. This area is fully within the city's Urban Compact, with statutory speed limit of 30 mph applying. There is no listing in the Ordinance of a posted 35 mph speed along these streets. TOC members speculated that the 35 mph posting is an outdated relic of the time prior to construction of the mall and Loudon Road intersections when this area was part of NHDOT jurisdiction. TOC concurred that it would be appropriate to repost these street segments as 30 mph for the following: consistency with surrounding city street speed applications; appropriate speed posting for this developed area; and provision of a more realistic design speed for intersection improvements. This involves the removal of four existing 35 mph signs and replacement with at least two new 30 mph sign panels. This would not require an Ordinance change and would be recommended to City Council in the form of a consent report, similar to that done by TOC in November 2010 to revise the outdated 35 mph speed posting on Penacook Street in Penacook.

**2) Request for a sign to slow traffic on Portsmouth Street near Mill Brook (Engineering: 03/12/14).**

**DISCUSSION / ACTIONS:** At issue is a request by a driver for signs to 'slow' traffic on Portsmouth Street at the bottom of the hill west of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests site. There is a small trail parking area on the south side of the road near the culvert crossing Mill Brook. The concern is traffic passing by pedestrians who may be walking along the street in this area. After reviewing the area, TOC did not feel that supplemental signing at this lightly-used location would add any realistic benefit to occasional pedestrians which might, in fact, be found walking anywhere along this residential street. It was suggested that if an occasional speeding vehicle creates a seemingly uncomfortable condition for a pedestrian, that the police department would be pleased to follow up on a reported concern if provided with a description of the offending vehicle.

**3) Request for a Do Not Block Intersection sign at the Bouton/Church Street intersection (Engineering: 03/12/14).**

**DISCUSSION / ACTIONS:** At issue is a request by a resident commuter to install a Do Not Block Intersection sign on Bouton Street at the intersection with Church Street so that Church Street vehicles can cut into the double left-turn lane to access I-393 during peak travel times when southbound left-turn lane traffic commonly queues through and beyond the intersection at Church Street.

TOC felt that this would be an inappropriate location to install such a traffic control restriction. Leaving such a gap in left-turn lane traffic within the functional area of the nearby signal would substantially reduce the capacity of this already-heavy traffic movement. Furthermore, a potential right turn from Church Street into such a hypothetical gap in Bouton Street traffic queues might make the Church Street vehicle in violation of the same restriction. It was suggested that if the subject right turn from Church Street onto Bouton Street was difficult at peak times, that an alternate route was available via a right turn at the signal at N. State Street and Bouton Street just a block to the north.

**4) Resident concern on U-turns in his driveway on Herbert Street (Engineering: 03/12/14).**

**DISCUSSION / ACTIONS:** At issue is a concern reported by the resident at 8 Herbert Street regarding some vehicles making U-turns in his driveway. Herbert Street is a short cul-de-sac street off of Higgins Place which is itself a short cul-de-sac street off of Stickney Avenue. A No Outlet sign is currently posted on the Stickney Avenue entrance to Higgins Place. TOC members felt that this concern would be most appropriately handled by the police department.

## **D. Open Discussion Items**

- 1) Staff response to miscellaneous inquiries (refer to correspondence in agenda packet).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer  
Chair, Traffic Operations Committee

***The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on  
Tuesday, April 15, 2014 @ 12:00 PM in the 2<sup>ND</sup> Floor Conference Room.***