



Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes - June 19, 2012

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services
Ed Roberge, PE, Engineering Services
Steve Henninger, Planning
Jim Major, General Services
Greg Taylor, Concord Police Department
Sean Brown, Concord Fire Department
Rick Wollert, Concord Fire Department
Dick Lemieux, TPAC Chair

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 May 2012 was reviewed. There were 84 reportable accidents in May 2012. This compares with 82 and 91 reportable accidents in May 2011 and 2010, respectively. 23 accidents resulted in total of 29 people injured. There were no fatalities.

There were two accidents involving pedestrians: a pedestrian aged 35 years walking in the parking lot at Market Basket (Ft Eddy Road) and being struck by a vehicle circulating within the parking lot (minor injury, driver at fault); and a pedestrian aged 17 years standing on the running board of a vehicle stopped on Community Drive and falling off when the vehicle began to pull forward (minor injury, driver at fault).

There were five accidents involving bicyclists: a bicyclist aged 10 years travelling with a group of bicyclists along the eastbound sidewalk on Manor Road and while crossing Sorrell Drive being struck by a westbound vehicle turning left onto Sorrell Drive (minor injury, driver at fault, helmet worn); a bicyclist aged 47 years traveling northbound along S. Main Street on the southbound side (against traffic) and being struck by a vehicle attempting to turn from Joffre Street onto S. Main Street (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, helmet worn); a bicyclist aged 5 years traveling on the southbound-side sidewalk on N. State Street and while crossing Franklin Street on the crosswalk without stopping, struck the rear of a vehicle exiting the roundabout (minor injury, bicyclist at fault); and a bicyclist aged 25 years travelling eastbound on Prince Street (wrong way on a one-way street) and being struck by a vehicle turning left out of the Audi parking lot (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, no helmet worn).

- 2) **City Council meeting update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: There were no TOC items considered at the June 11, 2012 Council meeting.

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: TPAC did not meet in May 2012.

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

1) **CIP 40: Langley Parkway Phase 3 Study Update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Draft corridor alignments developed by VHB, the City's engineering consultant for the CIP 40 conceptual corridor design study, were discussed. The corridor generally begins at the Pleasant/Langley intersection and follows the existing access road along the west side of the Concord Hospital campus. From there it heads northeasterly and ultimately shares a common alignment with Penacook Street between Rumford Street and N. State Street. The section of the corridor through the Concord Hospital campus is still under development. Moving northeasterly from the campus, the parkway alignment generally traverses land either owned by the city or under prior agreement with owners to allow development of the roadway right-of-way. Options for intersecting streets along Langley Parkway include several major driveways within the hospital campus potential intersections with Auburn Street, Penacook Street, Rumford Street, Bradley Street and N. State Street. To minimize lane-widening needs along Penacook Street between Rumford and N. State Streets, traffic between the parkway and US 3 North could split northerly from the parkway at Rumford Street and access N. State Street at what would be a newly signalized N. State/Rumford intersection. Advanced traffic control would be required at several of the future intersections along Langley Parkway in order to maintain projected 2035 traffic flows. Draft options presented included both traffic signalization with turning lanes as well as multi-lane roundabouts. A multi-use recreational path (10-foot paved path rather than a traditional 5-foot sidewalk) is also being considered along the corridor including potential non-vehicle connections to existing trails and nearby neighborhoods.

TOC members felt that roundabout options, rather than signalization, appeared more compatible with the rural setting of much of the corridor and would operate with less traffic queuing and delay. Consideration of a sustainable design was suggested in which landscaping/grass cutting needs would be minimized due to limited city resources to maintain the corridor. Enhanced landscaping opportunities might be possible if offered by select businesses or other organizations (e.g. adopt-a-spot). Options for tying the Langley Parkway to N. State Street are being given priority consideration by Engineering staff so that this year's reconstruction of N. State Street in the Langley terminus area (CIP 35 Phase 4b) can be made compatible, to the extent practical, with the future needs of the Langley project. Further coordination of the Langley corridor design with Concord Hospital, Lincoln Financial, TPAC and neighborhood groups would be planned in the coming months.

C. **New Discussion and Action Items**

1) **Referral from Councilor Shurtleff regarding a concern by a resident on Fowler Street with traffic speeds and requesting a lower 25 mph speed limit (Engineering: 5/17/12).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a concern by Mark Beauchesne of 31 Fowler Street with traffic turning too quickly from Borough Road onto Fowler Street and speeding past his house. Requested is a reduction in the speed limit on Fowler Street to 25 mph. Engineering staff recorded speeds on Fowler Street near #33 (approximately the center of the straight-away section of Fowler St) for a three-day period during the week of May 21. Average speeds were 26-27 mph and 85th percentile speeds were 31-32 mph. TOC felt that these overall speeds were not indicative of a significant speeding

issue. There were, however, a few inconsiderate drivers recorded in excess of 36 mph; TOC felt this was more appropriately an enforcement issue. The speed data was provided to the police department to assist in selecting a time of day for potential enforcement. Additionally, the police department always welcomes input from residents regarding observations of careless driving such as time-of-day/vehicle description/plate. Information like this is very helpful for enforcement efforts, particularly on lightly travelled local streets.

The current posted speed on Fowler Street is 30 mph which is the statutory speed limit within the Urban Compact. TOC felt that measured speeds on Fowler were reasonable for a 30 mph posting, but that speeds were low enough to also support a reduction to a 25 mph posting. Based on speed measurements on a number of city streets (including nearby Millstream Lane), TOC has found that reducing speed limits from 30 mph to 25 mph has not acted to significantly alter overall travel speed. In this case, TOC felt it would be appropriate to incorporate such a speed limit reduction into an overall city-wide speed limit program rather than consider it as an isolated change now (see discussion in Item D.1).

2) **Request from a resident of Heather Lane to install a STOP sign on the New Meadow Road approach to Heather Lane (*Engineering: May 31, 2012*).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a request by Christopher Mamos of 49 Heather Lane to add a STOP sign on the New Meadow Road approach to Heather Lane. There are currently no STOP signs at this intersection. He noted, however, that there are two STOP signs at the nearby Heather/Gabby intersection. Rob Mack discussed the request with Mr. Mamos and also visited the intersection.

The City's policy on installing new STOP signs follows Federal guidelines for the use of STOP signs. These guidelines consider the use of STOP signs optional at intersections and subject to unique characteristics of each intersection as determined by engineering study. For example, STOP signs are appropriate if a side street intersects a through street where the application of the normal right-of-way rule would not be expected to provide reasonable compliance with the law. Both New Meadow Lane and Heather Lane are very low-volume local streets, and New Meadow Lane has a readily-apparent terminus at Harrison Street. Sight lines at the intersection are appropriate and Police Department records indicate that there have been no reported accidents at this intersection. TOC concurred that a STOP sign is not necessary at this location, and that the normal right-of-way rule per NH Statutes (traffic turning from/to New Meadow Lane must yield to through traffic on Heather Lane) is appropriate. This rule is enforceable, STOP sign present or not. City policy defers the installation of new STOP signs at locations not otherwise determined by engineering study to need the device in order to better manage fiscal resources.

The two existing STOP signs located at the nearby Heather/Gabby intersection are atypical, apparently stopping the cross street (Heather Lane) and assigning right-of-way to Gabby Lane, the side-street of a T intersection. It appears that when those signs were installed pursuant to development of the Gabby Lane subdivision, there was anticipation of extending Gabby Lane further to the east thus making a future 4-way intersection. In that case STOP signs would have been appropriate to assign right-of-way to one of the crossing through streets (in this case Gabby Lane). The street extension was abandoned, but the STOP signs have remained in place ever since.

3) **Referral from Councilor Patton regarding a concern by a resident of Jensen Park on the short-term parking of large trucks along the northbound side of Manchester Street while stopping at**

Dunkin Donuts (Engineering: 5/11/12).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is occasional parking of large trucks along the northbound side of Manchester Street near the Dunkin Donuts while the driver walks over to the Dunkin Donuts to make a purchase. The concern is that such stopped trucks block sight lines for cars exiting from Crestwood Drive or the mobile home park just to the south, making egress from these driveways difficult. Requested is the installation of No Parking signs along this section of Manchester Street.

Most of the roadside area along this area of Manchester Street is curbed with narrow shoulders, and a stopping truck would extend into the travel lane. There is also an uncurbed area on the westbound side above the mobile home park up from Crestwood Drive (#71) that also provides an informal 'pull-off area,' however trucks stopping here also tend to encroach on the travel lane of Manchester Street. TOC concurred that the preferred first course of action should be enforcement of the violation of parking within or encroaching on a travel lane, or blocking of a driveway. CPD staff would inform sector patrols.

Parking Enforcement suggested that the potential use of No Parking signs along that area of Manchester Street may be problematic. Posting No Parking in front of Dunkin Donuts might be interpreted to mean that parking is allowed further down or up the street where there are no signs (spurring the migration of more signs along the street). Also, the posting of No Parking signs along the uncurbed area near #71 could get confusing as this area has several driveway openings along it. TOC concurred with Parking Enforcement's concern, and preferred the enforcement of lane blocking as the appropriate measure.

D. 

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

- 2) **Discussion of city-wide speed limits.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: TOC continued is prior discussion of speed limits throughout the city with a goal of making a more uniform and predictable application of speeds city-wide. Currently, the statutory speed limit within the City's urban compact boundary is 30 mph (whether so posted or not). In 2005 Council lowered speed limits to 25 mph (as low as state statute allows except as school zones) on about 100 select local residential streets. However, many other similar local residential streets still remain at 30 mph while a reduction to 25 mph on these streets would also be appropriate. As an option to the high cost of individually evaluating and installing/reinstalling speed limit signage on a street-by-street basis as we move forward, TOC discussed city-wide models that might effect this change with a blanket speed zone. One option would provide for a city-wide "25 mph speed limit unless otherwise posted" within the urban compact zone. The collector/arterial network of streets would generally remain posted at 30 mph (as most are), while most of the short, local-only residential streets would become 25 mph. Engineering staff plans to refine and cost out a potential city-wide speed limit conversion plan over the coming months. Feedback would be solicited from TOC and TPAC as the plan develops. Ultimately, feedback from the public would be sought prior to formulating a recommendation for City Council consideration. Programmed FY2014 funding under CIP 435,

Neighborhood Traffic Improvements, is an option.

Respectfully submitted,

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

***The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on
Tuesday, July 17, 2012 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.***