

JAMESTOWN TRAFFIC COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 20, 2019
Approved: 10/17/2019

I. A regular meeting of the Jamestown Traffic Committee was called to order at the Jamestown Town Hall, Conference Room, 93 Narragansett Avenue at 6:09 PM by Vice-Chairman Meagher.

II. The following members were present:

Thomas Tighe, Chairman
Valerie Southern
William Munger
Vincent Moretti

The following members were absent:

Mary Meagher, Vice-Chairman
Timothy Yentsch

Also present:

Police Chief Edward Mello
Kim Devlin, Clerk

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF MIUNTES

A) May 16, 2019 (regular meeting)

Member Munger moved to approve the minutes; Member Moretti seconded. So voted; 4 ayes, 0 nays.

IV. OPEN FORUM

A) Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no Scheduled Requests to Address.

B) Non-Scheduled Requests to Address

Mr. Peter Converse addressed the Traffic Committee regarding the number of handicapped parking spots in town, specifically in the East Ferry area. Mr. Converse provided a letter to the Traffic Committee that will be on the next agenda.

Mr. Converse stated that there was a handicapped parking spot in front of East Ferry Deli that was eliminated and he was told it would be relocated to the East Ferry parking lot. That has not yet happened. Mr. Converse stated that after he wrote the letter he remembered that there is a handicap parking spot on Union Street next to the rec center.

Mr. Converse also stated that there are no handicapped parking spots at West Ferry and that when the Arts Center expansion variance was granted that they should have been required to provide at least one handicap parking spot.

Executive Director Chief Mello stated that the town will be assessing the situation and take his concerns into consideration when planning the parking layout for the East Ferry parking lot.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

A) Letter of Mark Henry of Howland Avenue endorsing the installation of a four-way stop sign at the intersection of Howland Avenue and High Street; review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote

B) Letter of Fred and Jean Burditt of Howland Avenue endorsing the installation of a four-way stop sign at the intersection of Howland Avenue and High Street; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Member Munger moved to accept the communications; Member Moretti seconded. So voted; 4 ayes, 0 nays.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Open Meetings Act and Access to Public Records Act: Future Training session by a member of Ruggiero, Brochu & Petrarca, Town Solicitors; upcoming training session for Boards/Commissions/Committees at a date to be announced; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote, continued from April 16, 2019

1) Traffic Committee Sub-Committee and Open Meetings compliance for posting of Agendas and maintaining Minutes
Chairman Tighe stated that this item will be continued.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A) Review of parking and traffic congestion issues at the Jamestown Library, Community Playground, and Jamestown Arts Center; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello suggested continuing this item until the planned construction for the safe routes to school project is completed because that will have an impact on the parking situation in the area.

Chairman Tighe stated that maybe in the future when a business expansion is allowed they will forward that to the Traffic Committee for review.

Member Moretti asked Chief Mello if a business is required to increase the number of parking spots when an expansion is allowed.

Chief Mello stated that there is a formula the Zoning Committee uses to make that determination. For example, when the Jamestown Arts Center (JAC) was granted a variance for expansion it put pressure on the parking situation in the area because they do not have on-site parking.

Chief Mello stated that in 2010 the Town received grants through the DOT for the safe routes to school initiative which includes plans for Watson Avenue and North Road, to add parking on street there. The project has been somewhat stalled because of the permitting process. Public Works Director Mike Gray is seeking to modify the proposal in an effort to expedite the process and scale down the impact and reduce costs.

Member Southern asked what the potential is for increasing the parking in the area.

Chief Mello stated that the potential is to have additional parking along North Road in front of the Library down to Narragansett Avenue. There will only be a handful of spots added but it will increase pedestrian safety and make people feel comfortable walking a longer distance along the road. Chief Mello stated that he would like to work with Mike (Gray) and Lisa (Bryer) and take a wholistic approach to the entire area.

Member Southern suggested using the parking spots at Town Hall and the Post Office to mitigate parking issues.

Chief Mello stated that the parking at Town Hall is an option and he encourages the JAC to reach out to the Post Office for use of their parking lot. Chief Mello stated that when the JAC has an event he meets with the staff there to develop a parking plan.

Member Southern asked if that isn't work the (Traffic Calming Concepts) Sub-Committee should be doing.

Chief Mello provided an update on agenda item VI (A)(1).

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Open Meetings Act and Access to Public Records Act: Future Training session by a member of Ruggiero, Brochu & Petrarca, Town Solicitors; upcoming training session for Boards/Commissions/Committees at a date to be announced; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote, continued from April 16, 2019

1) Traffic Committee Sub-Committee and Open Meetings compliance for posting of Agendas and maintaining Minutes
Chief Mello stated that he spoke to the Town Solicitor and that this sub-committee cannot be an informal committee. It will require all of the work that any committee must do regarding posting meetings, minutes and agendas that is bound by the Open Meetings Act.

A discussion ensued.

Member Southern asked if we couldn't have one agenda item that focuses on the work of the sub-committee at each meeting.

B) Consideration of the installation of a stop sign at Walcott Avenue intersections and forwarding to the State Traffic Commission (Walcott Avenue is a State road); review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello reported that they were directed to forward this request to the State Traffic Commission.

C) Jamestown Ambulance Barn lot and parking considerations/issues; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chairman Tighe suggested continuing this item until the Town decides what they are going to do with the lot; if they are going to sell it or turn it in to a parking lot.

Member Munger stated that it has been empty for a while now and it is appraised low, and he feels that the Town should not sell the lot. Member Munger stated that he prefers that the committee take action.

Chairman Tighe stated that it is out of the purview of this committee to recommend to the Council what they should do with the property.

Member Munger stated that he feels it is best to offer the Council some encouragement on what to do with the property and to put our two cents in.

Member Munger moved to reflect in our minutes to encourage the Jamestown Town Council to do a formal vote to move forward to convert the entire parcel of the Ambulance lot into a nicely landscaped municipal parking area. If the Town Council is in agreement then to proceed with a concept plan that the Traffic Commission could look at in September. Member Moretti seconded.

A discussion ensued on how to manage the lot, whether it be a paid lot or not.

Chairman Tighe directed Member Munger to draft a letter to the Town Council.

So voted; 4 ayes, 0 nays.

D) Agenda items for the next and/or future meeting agendas; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

E) Upcoming Meeting Schedule; review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chairman Tighe stated that normally in July and August we don't have any meetings and asked Chief Mello if there is anything pressing coming up.

Chief Mello stated that no there is nothing he is aware of, but if something comes up he will notify Chairman Tighe.

Chairman Tighe stated that the committee will meet again in September.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, a motion was made by Member Munger and seconded by Member Moretti to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 PM. So unanimously voted.

Attest:

Kim Devlin
Clerk