

JAMESTOWN TRAFFIC COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 21, 2016

I. A regular meeting of the Jamestown Traffic Committee was called to order at the Jamestown Town Hall, Council Chambers, 93 Narragansett Avenue at 6:00 PM by Chairman Thomas P. Tighe.

II. The following members were present:

Thomas Tighe, Chairman
Mary E. Meagher, Vice-Chairman
David Cain
Timothy Yentsch
Vincent Moretti
Melissa Mastrostefano
William Munger

Also present:

Police Chief Edward Mello
Kim Devlin, Clerk

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF MIUNTES

A) March 17, 2016 (regular meeting)

Motion was made by Member Cain, seconded by Member Moretti to accept the March 17, 2016 minutes. So voted; (5 ayes, 0 nays; 2 abstentions (Mastrostefano & Munger)).

IV. OPEN FORUM

A) Scheduled to Address

There were no Scheduled Requests to Address.

B) Non-Scheduled to Address

There were no Non-Scheduled Requests to Address

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Amendment of the Jamestown Code of Ordinances Chapter 70 Traffic and Vehicles, Article IV. Stopping, Standing and Parking, Sec. 70-87 Prohibited or Restricted Parking on Specified Streets and Sec. 70-89 parking at Jamestown Shores Beach; review and discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chairman Tighe stated the recommendations have been made by the Police and Fire Chiefs' and the committee is recommending the proposed ordinance changes to the Town Council. If anyone feels the restrictions should be amended, state your case to the committee at this time.

Mr. Guy Settipane of Seaside Drive presented plat maps to the committee with the proposed parking restrictions highlighted. Mr. Settipane stated that there are currently no restrictions and the number of homes affected by the new restrictions is very large.

Executive Director Chief Mello stated the discussion began in the south shores and mostly due to input from (Fire) Chief Bryer that there are no parking regulations at all. When two vehicles are parked on opposite sides of the road it is difficult to pass. Hull Street, in particular, is difficult to allow parking on because it is a highly trafficked area. There are a number of street options that allow for parking on one side, but some roads are so narrow the residents don't think there should be street parking at all. Overnight parking would be permitted in areas where it is allowed, with a resident permit. Each household would be permitted three overnight parking passes. The residents in the south shores were able to adjust and accommodate. The parking restrictions in the south shores have made an improvement from the Fire Department's perspective.

Chief Tiexiera stated that the streets are narrow and the fire and rescue trucks are eight to nine feet wide.

Member Munger stated that some people have been complaining about parking for twenty years in the shores and the ambulance and fire people complained and that is what is driving this conversation. The intent is not to be problematic or to raise money, the intent is to solve a public safety problem.

Mr. Peter DiBiase, from Seaside Drive, stated that Chief Mello's explanation was helpful in aiding in the understanding of the intent of the restrictions. However, small lots cannot accommodate parking for large families or the surprise stops by friends, coaches, players, etc. Mr. DiBiase stated he is a waterfront resident and his home has significant value and raises a lot of tax money for the town and he should be able to enjoy his property.

Jerry Leroux thanked the members of the Traffic Committee for the additional hearing. Safety seems to be paramount issue, but he feels this is going too far. Mr. Leroux would like to know how many times, and where, there were emergencies when someone lost their life or a house because emergency vehicles couldn't pass a street.

Chairman Tighe stated that Mr. Leroux lives on Schooner Street, which has proposed no parking on the even side of the street and requires a pass for overnight parking. Chairman Tighe asked Mr. Leroux if he is opposed to those restrictions.

Mr. Leroux stated he is opposed to the entire ordinance.

Mr. Richard Cribb, Seaside Drive, stated he would support no parking on one side of the street, but not both.

Ms. Michelle LaFazia stated that, due to the new parking restrictions, there are three cars parked in front of her house day and night. Also, while walking, she has become trapped in between the parked cars and delivery trucks that double park on the street on more than one occasion.

Mr. Richard Cribb, Frigate Street, stated that he went to town hall and went through fourteen months of minutes and only saw one complaint, from Hull Street, where an ambulance couldn't pass. Mr. Cribb stated that he doesn't see a problem so he doesn't see a need for a solution.

Mrs. Charlotte Zarlengo stated that she would like to comment on the issue from a walker's point of view. There are a number of people that walk in the area and it is dangerous to walk with cars parked in the street. It would be nice to have one side of the street where there are no cars parked, but it is also important that the fire and rescue vehicles can pass.

Chairman Tighe asked Mr. Dan Lilly to express his views on the issue.

Mr. Dan Lilly, Seaside Drive, stated he lives on Seaside Drive near Beach Avenue and he feels having parked cars on the street helps to slow down traffic, making it safer to walk.

Mr. Sav Rebecchi, Sail Street, stated that he would like to report on the south shores area. Mr. Rebecchi stated that there is a learning curve with new restrictions, but he feels people are shifting their habits to abide by the new rules, which also creates a shift of problems. Mr. Rebecchi feels that there should be parking on one side of Seaside Drive. The new restrictions will push people farther and farther away from the right-of-way access points along Seaside Drive. Mr. Rebecchi asked what the town's responsibility is for making the streets safe and why there aren't sidewalks or shoulders. Mr. Rebecchi feels this is the town's responsibility, not the Police Chief or the Fire Chief. Also, Mr. Rebecchi suggested placing gravel on the right-of-ways to make parking areas for people who would like to access the water via a right-of-way.

Mrs. Kathleen Fitzgerald, Capstan Street, stated she and her husband bought their home in 1996 to escape the parking bans in Cambridge, and they came to Jamestown for the rural character. Mrs. Fitzgerald would like to address the issue from a different perspective. At night, in the summer, Capstan Street turns into a raceway. With no impediment of parked cars the racing is a major safety issue.

Mrs. Carol Nelson Lee, stated that there are a number of CRMC (Coastal Resources Management Council) designated rights-of-ways in the shores and she

feels the parking restriction will limit the use of rights-of-ways, as the proposed parking restrictions on all of the right-of-ways except five. We need to make sure that access to the rights-of-ways is available.

Member Yentsch asked Mrs. Nelson Lee what rights-of-ways are actively used.

Mrs. Nelson Lee stated that Champlin Way is used by kayakers, Spirketing is being used as a private driveway, and Steamboat is acceptable.

Mr. Michael Egan, Champlin Way, stated that he echoes Sav's (Rebecchi) comments. There are a number of rights-of-ways that are being taken over by private property owners and also the streets. The town owns 50' of road and, in some places, 20' of the road is being landscaped as private property.

Member Yentsch asked Chief Tiexiera what the minimum width that his vehicles can pass through comfortably.

Chief Tiexiera stated that 12-14' is the minimum.

Member Yentsch asked Chief Tiexiera if there were to be single sided parking on Seaside Drive, but that there would always be 14' of space, if that would be acceptable.

Member Yentsch stated that people have adapted well in the south shores, and maybe a parking line would solve the safety issue on Seaside and accommodate property owners. This could maybe be applied to Frigate and some other streets that are wider. I will the ask Chair what the mechanics are to amend the existing proposal.

Member Cain stated it would be nice to assess the legal rights-of-way owned by the town on each street and we should incorporate that into the recommendation to the Town Council.

Vice-Chairman Meagher stated that people are claiming 40-50' of the rights-of-ways as their property. It would be nice if the middle of the rights-of-ways were paved.

Mr. Rebecchi stated that several people have put gravel down on the rights-of-ways for private parking.

Member Munger stated that, from his perspective, he would like to table everything because he needs more time to digest the information presented tonight. He does feel he can support parking on one side of Seaside.

Member Moretti agrees that there was a lot of information presented tonight and we need to compromise and bring both parties together. Member Moretti also agrees that he would support no parking on one side of Seaside.

Vice-Chairman Meagher stated that there has been excellent input tonight and, in an effort to be consistent, there are areas that aren't as problematic as others and we need to individualize that more.

Chairman Tighe stated that, rather than try and do anything now, we should continue the matter.

Mrs. Nelson Lee stated that she is a member of Friends of the Jamestown Rights-of-Ways and the group has submitted a report to the town council on half of the rights-of-ways and that the group is walking the last right-of-way soon.

Chairman Tighe moved to continue the matter, Member Cain seconded. So voted; (7 ayes, 0 nays).

B) Amendment of the Jamestown Code of Ordinances, Chapter 70 Traffic and Vehicles, Article III. Specific Street Regulations, Sec. 70-55 Restrictions on Certain Streets – Columbia Avenue; review and discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello stated that the residents and Christian (Infantolino, McQuades representative), are trying to work out some of the issues and we would like the matter continued.

Member Cain moved to continue the matter, Vice-Chairman Meagher seconded. So voted; (7 ayes, 0 nays).

C) Conanicus Avenue Crosswalk; review and discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

1) Letter of Police Chief Mello to RI State Traffic Commission

Member Moretti moved to continue the matter, Member Cain seconded. So voted; (6 ayes, 0 nays).

D) Speed limit on North Road from Sloop Street north to Summit Avenue; review and discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello stated that there will be a three year paving project on North Road and it may be better to wait until the work is complete to make any decisions on the speed limit. Chief Mello stated that he will suggest that the speed limit be raised on North Road, at some point, and it is up to the committee if they want to break this up as the road project phases are completed or if they would rather address it all at once.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business to discuss.

Member Munger stated that he would like to add the feasibility of making the village golf cart friendly under New Business at the next meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, motion was made by Committee Member Yentsch and seconded by Committee Member Cain to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM. So unanimously voted.

Attest:

Kim Devlin
Clerk