

JAMESTOWN TRAFFIC COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 17, 2019
Approved: 2/20/2020

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

II. The following members were present:

Thomas Tighe, Chairman
Mary Meagher, Vice-Chairman
Michael Junge
Vincent Moretti
Valerie Southern
Timothy Yentsch

The following members were absent:

Bill Munger

Also present:

Police Chief Edward Mello
Kim Devlin, Clerk

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF MIUNTES

A) June 20, 2019

Vice-Chairman Meagher moved to approve the minutes; Member Southern seconded. So voted; 6 ayes, 0 nays.

IV. OPEN FORUM

A) Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no Scheduled Requests to Address.

B) Non-Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no Non-Scheduled Requests to Address.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

A) Letter from Peter Converse, Re: Disability parking spots at East Ferry; 6/20/2019 - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

B) Letter from John Doty, Jr., Re: "No Parking" signs on Green Lane and Union Street; 7/5/2019 - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

C) Letter from Chairman Tighe to residents of Fox Run area, Re: On street parking; 10/5/2019 - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Vice-Chairman Meagher moved to accept Correspondence items A, B and C; Chairman Tighe seconded. So voted; 6 ayes, 0 nays.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Consideration of the installation of a four-way stop sign at Walcott Avenue and High Street - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

1. Sample template of the Resolution that the State requires from the Town Council in order to proceed

Chief Mello stated that a group of residents elected to go to the State Traffic Commission to request a four-way stop sign at the intersection of Walcott and High Street. The State rejected their request and Mr. Norman Beretta asked that it be brought back to the Traffic Committee to forward a recommendation to the Town Council, who could then send the request back to the State.

Vice-Chairman Meagher asked Chief Mello what his opinion on the matter is.

Chief Mello stated that he would recommend not limiting the request to a stop sign, and to include other traffic calming measures in the request. Chief Mello also recommended asking the State to look at the entire corridor from the intersection of Narragansett Avenue and Walcott Avenue to Highland Drive. Chief Mello stated that the Police Department receives complaints about the speed of cars along the entire stretch and would recommend asking the State to re-stripe the road, narrow the lanes and adding a bike lane, for example.

Member Southern agreed with Chief Mello's strategy and stated that it needed to be looked at comprehensively instead of focusing on one stop sign at one intersection.

Brenna Jordan, 19 Walcott, addressed the Traffic Committee stating that she is concerned about the timeline and would prefer to ask the State for a stop sign first. Ms. Jordan stated that it is dangerous for her to walk to her mailbox because of vehicle traffic speeding on Walcott.

Vice-Chairman Meagher stated that her concern is that the placement of a stop sign without other considerations will provide a false sense of security.

Member Southern stated that there has to be a strategy for the entire area that is comprehensive.

Ms. Jordan stated that she is asking the Traffic Committee to support what the residents want.

Member Yentsch asked Ms. Jordan what were the reasons the State gave for the denial.

Ms. Jordan answered that the State claimed that High Street was not a major road and that a stop sign was not necessary at that location.

Chief Mello clarified to the Traffic Committee that he was not recommending that the Committee not ask for a stop sign, but to include other options in the request, along with the request for a stop sign.

Member Southern stated that we should have a thoughtful and comprehensive view of the corridor before we put in a request to the State.

Vice-Chairman Meagher suggested that the Traffic Committee develop a letter with the help of Chief Mello to send to the Town Council.

Chief Mello stated that he will draft a letter and send it to the Committee for review.

Vice-Chairman Meagher moved to ask Chief Mello to draft a letter that will be shown to the neighbors and one or two members of the Traffic Committee and send it to the Town Council; Member Yentsch seconded. So voted; 6 ayes, 0 nays.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A) Disability parking spots - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello stated that Mr. Converse attended the June meeting and provided the letter (on the agenda under Correspondence) because he was concerned about the number of disability parking spots near East Ferry. Chief Mello stated that, at the time, the renovations to the East Ferry parking lot were not completed and the parking lot was not striped. Since the project has been completed there are eight disability parking spots in the area and Mr. Converse is satisfied with the result.

Chief Mello also provided a map of the Jamestown Arts Center (JAC) plan that was approved by the Town which showed there should be a disability parking spot at the JAC. Chief Mello stated that none of the parking spots at the JAC have been striped, including the disability parking space, and there is not a sign to mark the spot.

Member Junge asked Chief Mello what the JAC has to do and what action the Traffic Committee should take.

Chief Mello stated that it is not the purview of the Traffic Committee, that it is a Zoning issue.

Member Yentsch asked about the safe routes to school project and when it will be implemented.

Chief Mello stated that a number of years ago the Town was awarded two grants under the Safe Routes to School program. There is a lot of opportunity to complete parts of the project and adjust the plan to move it forward before the money is revoked. The Town could use some of the money to fix the area Tim is taking about, fixing sidewalks, etcetera that would free up Town Capital funds to be used for elsewhere.

B) Parking on Melrose Avenue - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Vice-Chairman Meagher state that she asked the Town Council to send this item back to the Traffic Committee for further review because she was concerned about the parking for the houses on the south corner of Melrose and Watson.

Chief Mello summarized the traffic and parking situation as it exists today, stating that there is currently no parking allowed on the east side of Melrose Avenue between the driveways of the school. That causes the parents who circumvent the drop off and pick up procedure to park on the west side of the street. Those cars were parking off of the road, in the unpaved section of the right of way, which was causing runoff problems for the adjacent properties. The homeowners were then placing unpermitted barriers to prevent parking off of the pavement and asked the Town to change the parking ordinance to allow parking on the east side of the road.

A discussion ensued on the traffic pattern around the schools.

Vice-Chairman Meagher stated that she would take this (the original recommendation of the Traffic Committee to the Town Council) back to the Town Council.

A discussion ensued regarding the potential for one-way streets in the area to mitigate the traffic issues during school drop off and pick up times.

Chairman Tighe suggested continuing the item until the next meeting.

Member Moretti moved to move up items D and E; Vice-Chairman Meagher seconded. So voted; 6 ayes, 0 nays.

D) Parking in the area of Fox Run, as referred to the Traffic Committee by the Town Council; 9/23/2019 - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Mr. Brian Evans, 10 Fox Run, stated that he does not see a parking problem on the street. Mr. Evans stated that the people who bought Harpool's house had a few boat trailers parked there during a sailing event this summer but that he did not see it as an issue.

Vice-Chairman Meagher asked Chief Mello if overnight trailer parking is allowed.

Chief Mello stated that it is allowed on most residential streets, to the extent that overnight parking is allowed. The parking ordinance makes overnight parking unenforceable.

Ms. Alma Davenport, 99 Clinton Avenue, stated that she was driving south on Fox Run in July and the cars parked on Hamilton were so close to the intersection that she could not see and was edging out to take a left turn onto Hamilton and was hit by a car.

Chairman Tighe asked Chief Mello if the law was still no parking within 40' of an intersection.

Chief Mello stated that, yes, that is correct and that he will have the State take a look at the intersection and measure the distance from the intersection.

Mr. Sam Paterson, 23 Fox Run, stated that he does not see a problem with parking on the street, but that if it does become an issue then it will be addressed.

Chief Mello stated that we have also received a letter, too late to include in the packet, from Jamie and Kris Matthews, stating that they do not see an issue with parking on Fox Run.

Vice-Chairman Meagher stated that it seems like there is a consensus from the residents of Fox Run that there is no issue.

Chairman Tighe stated that there is no need to take any action.

E) John Doty, Jr., Re: "No Parking" signs on Green Lane and Union Street; 7/5/2019 - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Mr. John Doty, 17 Union Street, stated that there is a need for two "No Parking" signs, one on Union Street and one on Green Lane. Mr. Doty stated that there used to be a sign at the end of Union Street on Green Lane at the intersection and it was taken down and never put back up.

Chief Mello stated that he has spoken to Public Works Director Mike Gray and asked him to replace the sign at the end of Union Street; there are signs at 12 Green Lane and 16 Green Lane and there is a fire hydrant in between. Chief Mello also stated that the Town has received a very negative response from people about the number of signs on Green Lane, but we will look at making some adjustments.

Mr. Doty also mentioned that the signs on Green Lane are hidden in overgrown hedges.

Member Southern stated that we should address the issue of hedges because it has come up a number of times and it seems to be an issue in many places where visibility is compromised. Member Southern stated that we have rules about how the hedges have to be trimmed at intersections and those rules need to be enforced.

Chairman Tighe moved to have the acting Town Administrator ask the Zoning Official to go out and look at the hedges and that if he thinks there needs to be trimming done then he can send a letter or issue a citation; Vice-Chairman Meagher seconded. So voted; 6 ayes, 0 nays.

C) Mary Lou Sanborn - Request for digital display sign at Bay View Drive - Review, discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

Chief Mello stated that Ms. Sanborn requested that the Town install a speed indicator sign on Bay View Drive about 300 yards from the intersection of Conanicus Avenue. There are currently signs on Conanicus Avenue, Southwest Avenue, Walcott Avenue and North Road. The installation of these types of signs has been limited to high traffic areas and it would be a unique and the first occurrence of one being installed on a residential road. Chief Mello stated that there are no other pending requests for those signs.

Chief Mello reminded the Traffic Committee that we have a pending request in with the State to reconfigure the intersection of Conanicus Avenue and Bay View Drive.

Vice-Chairman Meagher suggested not taking action on this item until the State gets back to us with the engineering for that intersection.

VII. OPEN FORUM - CONTINUED

There was no continued Open Forum.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, a motion was made by Vice-Chairman Meagher and seconded by Member Moretti to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM. So unanimously voted.

Attest:

Kim Devlin
Clerk