

November 22, 2021
Traffic Safety Committee

Members present: Chair Rozek, Councilors Remillard, Theberge and Morgan. Councilor Otis was absent.

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Deputy Chief of Police Dan Buteau, Community Development Director Pam Laflamme, Michael Eastman, Eamon Kelley and Richard Langlois.

Chair Rozek called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Minutes

Councilor Theberge moved to accept the minutes of the September 20, 2021 Traffic Safety Committee meeting; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Julia Brennan/John Tate – Blind driveway sign request – Western Ave.

Deputy Chief Buteau thanked Mr. Wheeler for providing the [minutes](#) from the January 14, 2019 TSC meeting where sign requests were discussed. He advised he looked at the minutes and did some research and there was no matrix created as discussed at the last meeting. He did comment there was great guidance from the previous PW Director Mr. Grenier which is in the above minutes. He feels the same guidance should be followed for this request and keep it consistent. He commented the guidance did mention MUTCD defines warning signs, and that they should be kept to a minimum, it was also mentioned that Maine DOT does not advise the use of the signs as they offer a false sense of security and once the sign is in place for a long time, it no longer attracts the attention of the passerby. He commented he did drive by a couple of times and it's a tough driveway right at the crest of the hill in a narrow part of the street and there is no great place for a sign there which will be an issue with plowing. Councilor Remillard moved to deny the blind driveway sign request, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Susan Genna – Request for left hand turn arrow signal on traffic lights on Glen Ave. to go over the bridge

Mr. Wheeler advised he reviewed the last study done in 2013 and it didn't suggest adding a left-hand turn arrow signal. He did comment he reached out to Mr. Pernaw who had done the study in 2013 by email and phone, but his email bounced back and phone number is no longer his. He is thinking Mr. Pernaw retired. Councilor Remillard asked Mr. Wheeler if he could obtain the cost to put up a light as she feels they are very convenient. Mr. Wheeler commented he would contact a lighting company who specializes in these types of lights for the cost. Councilor Remillard moved to table this item till the City Manager obtains the cost of a left-hand turn arrow signal, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Mt. Jasper concerns – Michael Eastman

Deputy Chief Buteau stated the PD had done extra patrols in that area and he wasn't able to provide an update at the last meeting. He commented the PD did random patrols totaling around 9hrs. They met with a total of twelve people and no dogs at that time. He informed that from his research, it seems like springtime is when the calls seem to come in. He requested the help of Mr. Eastman to try to tackle the unleashed dogs' issue by contacting the PD in the springtime when more people start going.

Ms. Laflamme commented she has been in contact with Sally Manikian, Matt Bowman and Al Hospers in regards to the anchor removal. She stated that both Mr. Bowman and Hospers agreed last week to go up there and remove the anchors. They will try to remove them before winter, but might be in the Spring. She also commented that she will be contacting the State archeologist in regards to the graffiti on the walls inside the mine. She commented that according to Mr. Bowman, the graffiti is really imbedded some even etched into the rock so we will look forward to the State archeologist's recommendations. Chair Rozek commented that a line of communication has opened up between Mr. Eastman where he can call Ms. Laflamme and Deputy Chief Buteau if there are any issues in regards to Mt. Jasper. Mr. Eastman is satisfied with the outcome. He commented yesterday he walked the track as he knew there were individuals up the trail with their dogs. He witnessed an individual show up with his dogs and unleashed them when he got to the snow machine bridges which resulted in three dogs running all over the place. Chair Rozek thanked Mr. Eastman for his time and interest in maintaining the health and safety of this property. Councilor Remillard moved to table this item indefinitely as Mr. Eastman, Ms. Laflamme and Deputy Chief Buteau have an open communication and dealing with the issues, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Angela Collins – Autistic Child Area sign request – High Street

Chair Rozek commented this is a similar request to item a. Deputy Chief Buteau commented that Councilor Otis had requested, at the last meeting, that the PD put the radar cart out in that area. He commented the PD did put a radar sign up and did a speed study for about a week. He reported about 4,000 vehicles had come through and there is no doubt every once in a while, speeders come through. He commented extra patrols were assigned to that area to monitor the issue. Councilor Remillard questioned at which times is it worst. Deputy Chief Buteau commented Ms. Collins had stated it was mostly on the weekends, but the week's speed study done showed October 23rd and 24th as low dates which were on the weekend. Councilor Remillard moved to deny the sign request, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Peavey Lane Parking and Traffic Issue

Deputy Chief Buteau commented he did patrol the area a few times and did a search of PD records for the last two years in regards to parking issues for Peavey Lane. He stated the only issue reported was from September 25, 2021 for a complaint of a bread truck blocking a driveway, but when the PD got there, it was already gone. He did not see any ordinance violation. Councilor Remillard moved to table this item indefinitely and if any issues, citizens are to contact the PD directly, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

St Vincent Nursing Home drainage issue

Mr. Wheeler advised many years ago St. Vincent's had approached the City about developing their parking area on their front lawn. At the time the City advised them how to properly do this which included them installing some drainage. At the time, they didn't want to do it and decided not to. After a few years, they began using their lawn for parking. A couple years ago they hired a contractor who put in a catch basin and a section of lawn that is not paved where there is gravel which terminated right at the curb line. This resulted in drainage going into this structure being dumped in the street. The catch basin fills up, the gravel comes down the line and that gets dumped in the street, all flows down the street and a good amount of it ends up in front of Mr. Langlois' house.

Mr. Wheeler advised there has been communications with St. Vincent's about repairing it, but was stalled. Recently, Mr. Wheeler contacted the Nursing Home Administrator Jeff Lacroix advised him this had to get resolved before winter. There were two pieces that were needed now to stop the problem.

One was a drain line in the street as the City drain line did not go up that far, it's about a 70' extension. The second piece is work on their site to connect the catch basin to the City drain system and some maintenance. The City gave St. Vincent's an estimate to do the drainage piece in the street which is their responsibility. Nothing moved forward after the estimate was given and with winter approaching, Mr. Wheeler made the decision to do the City piece and contacted Mr. Lacroix advising this was done. He didn't want to leave this situation so it would go another winter unaddressed. What really needed to happen was the section in the street so it could get paved before paving plants close and now St. Vincent's is free to do the piece on their property.

He is not aware that they've done anything yet but he did recommend they hire a consultant to help them determine what needs to be done. He stated he got confirmation about a month ago they hired HEB as he spoke with Eric Grenier who explained what their plan was. He mentioned that most recently Mr. Lacroix contacted him asking if the City could send the vac truck over to clean their catch basin. The City did go over and billed St Vincent's for their services as this is a private catch basin. Mr. Langlois commented he has not seen any work done yet on St. Vincent's part and stated he has no confidence in Mr. Lacroix. He explained in October of 2020, after having dealt with the PWD, he contacted Mr. Wheeler who then contacted Mr. Lacroix. He showed a picture of the drainage by his driveway which was also presented to Mr. Lacroix. He stated it got worse after that as it got on his lawn and ruined it. He took care of it himself this year.

He stated that Mr. Wheeler advised him Mr. Lacroix stated he would get it taken care of in the Spring of 2021. The Spring, Summer and Fall has come and still nothing done. He commented the City has done a great job at bringing it where it's at now, but he is ready to take legal action next Spring if St. Vincent's doesn't do their part. He commented he found out St. Vincent's is owned by NH Catholic Charities and contacted them directly a couple weeks ago. The gentlemen he spoke to confirmed he would look into getting this resolved. Councilor Remillard asked Mr. Langlois to share his contact at NH Catholic Charities with the City Manager so he can contact them also. A little pressure from the City might help. Mr. Langlois commented he is satisfied with what the City has done and if nothing gets done, plans on starting a case in January-February 2022. Councilor Remillard moved to table this item until the next meeting and in the meantime, Mr. Langlois will give his contact information to Ms. Laflamme who will contact NH Catholic Charities to see if this can be done immediately since the ground is not frozen and avoid any of this legal action, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Industrial Park Road – “No Pedestrian Traffic During the Day” signage request

Deputy Chief Buteau advised he did take a ride over there this past summer after receiving a call from Mr. Brouillette in regards to issues with a particular business or institution. A phone call was made and it has gotten better since then. He did state that he has never heard of this type of sign before. Ms. Laflamme advised that Mr. Capone and Mr. Brouillette are concerned with the safety of the pedestrians as there is a lot of industrial traffic in that area. Deputy Chief Buteau commented that the no parking signage has improved in that area and the part of the road closest to Capone, all along the horseshoe, there is a yellow line (no parking). Chair Rozek questioned if there are any rules about walking in a travel lane and suggested tabling the item and further investigate. Councilor Remillard moved to table this item till the next meeting and in the meantime, Ms. Laflamme, Deputy Chief Buteau and Committee Members will look around to see if there is signage for this situation, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Speed Limit Change – East Milan Road

Mr. Kelley advised he is requesting to reduce the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph between Northwood Mobile Home Park and where the speed limit increases to 40 mph at the north end of White Mountain Lumber. Councilor Remillard questioned if this is actually a City of Berlin Road. Ms. Laflamme responded it is all the way to the southern entrance of the industrial park. Deputy Chief Buteau commented this is an area regularly patrolled. Councilor Remillard questioned the process to reduce speed limit. Ms. Laflamme advised she would have to look back, but she believes there would be a public hearing involved as you are changing the ordinance. Councilor Remillard commented she would like to move forward with this request and have Ms. Laflamme confirm the process. Ms. Laflamme stated she could bring a draft ordinance to the December 6th meeting, where they would have the 1st read of the ordinance, table it and have the public hearing at the December 20th meeting. Councilor Remillard moved to approve reducing the 30 mph speed limit to 25 mph in the section of road mentioned above and have Ms. Laflamme bring the changes to Council as an ordinance, Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to adjourn the meeting and the motion carried by all in favor. The meeting ended at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Rioux
Executive Assistant

*Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the City Council by motion.