

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 20, 2019

Attendance

Captain Russell Timmons, Chairman
Robert Belmore, City Manager
Ken Vincent, City Councilor Representative
Mike Bobinsky, Public Works Director
Keith Hoyle, Fire Chief
Shanna Saunders, Director Development Services
Robert Gadowski, School Superintendent
Paul Robidas, Member at large

Absent

Jenne Holmes, Member at Large
Gary Lemay, City Engineer

Other in Attendance

Mike Williams, COAST Bus Representative
Bill Berndtson, Trio Investment
Councilor Ed LeVasseur

The Chairman called the Meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Review and Accept October 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Paul Robidas motioned to approve meeting minutes, seconded by Keith Hoyle.
Meeting minutes passed.

City Manager (CM) Bob Belmore asked the Chair to proceed with the meeting starting with COAST and then with Trio so they do not have to stay for the entire meeting.

New Business

C. COAST Bus Stop Relocation Request. COAST submitted a letter to the City requesting to move some of their stops. Mike Williams stated that the new Route assignments will go into effect June 29th. Some of the stops are moving from one side of the street to the opposite side. A new stop will be added at Green St and Washington St. The stop in front of Stein Park (soon to be Veterans Park) is being removed. Councilor Vincent inquired as to the reason for the changes and asked about COAST making enhancement to some of the stops? Mike Williams said that COAST is driving through downtown differently now and at present COAST has no funds to enhance any of the stops. Mike Bobinsky asked about the locations of the COAST signs and to make sure that roads and sidewalks were not disturbed. Mike Williams said they use Dig Safe and sign will not be in the Streets. Shanna Saunders asked if the shelter that is currently at Stein Park could be moved to another COAST stop. Mike Williams said it can be moved to any stop we like but COAST cannot pay for the concrete pad that is needed. Shanna Saunders said that COAST has been looking at this redesign for over a year and the changes are what COAST has taken from the public request and she motioned the Committee approve this request. Paul Robidas seconded this with the stipulation that COAST goes through the City when removing /adding any posts. **All in favor, motioned passed.**

Mike Bobinsky asked about timing. Mike Williams said early June with new service stops starting June 29.

A. Trio Investment. The Hall at Great Falls. Shanna Saunders said her concern was the safety and people jay walking vs. the proper use of a crosswalk. CM Belmore stated that the map presented to the Committee was introduced by Councilor Dave Witham at the Public Works & Environment Committee. Some design of an illuminated cross sign was suggested. Capt. Timmons feels that signage can run from \$2500 - \$5000 or more. There are considerations to consider between design, solar vs hard wired. Mike Bobinski said that he has quotes running about \$2000 including shipping. Capt. Timmons instructed the committee to first determine a need and not get concerned with the cost and asked "Do we support this recommendation"? Paul Robidas stated that this has been on the Agenda before and feels that now if we are pushing parking for Great Falls to the Downtown then we need to be concerned about people crossing, I'm not sure though I want a continued flashing light in downtown. Councilor Vincent said he likes the idea of signage, but not sure who would pay.

CM Belmore questioned whether people will leave the Hall all at the same time. Maybe split cost 50/50 (City/Hall), but where do we put it? Capt. Timmons suggested the middle crosswalk (by Beacon St) on map is the best. Councilor LeVassuer feels pedestrian improvements are needed. He is speaking for the people who live here. He does not feel the middle crosswalk is a good idea. He is also afraid about light pollution from a Flashing Light. First we need to add a crosswalk, second we need more ADA parking spots. Capt. Timmons said the problem with adding a crosswalk too close to Market St intersection you change from 2 travel directions to 3 directions to navigate crossing the street and he is not comfortable with this.

CM Belmore said he finds this all interesting and mentioned several years ago we had Engineering work done for the current crosswalks placements. He does not feel switching crosswalks is a good idea.

Paul Robidas said The Hall is presenting to the Planning Board (PB) tonight 11/20. Paul offered a motion that this Committee support the endeavor on some sort of signage and let the Planning Board discuss the matter further. Keith Hoyle seconded. **All in favor, motioned passed.** Bob Gadomski thinks we need to take into consideration what signage is most appropriate, not sure if it is a Flashing Light in downtown. Councilor Vincent stated we need to explore more options with signage. Shanna Saunders was authorized to bring our determination to the Planning board Meeting.

B. Removal of Flashing Light at Green Street and Franklin Street. Capt. Timmons said the Light is showing its age, and questioned, is it really necessary? CM Belmore stated that the apartment complex is doing upgrades and Eversource has been involved with electrical improvements and wants us to move the beacon traffic light up higher in the intersection. The current beacon light is not to Code. Paul Robidas said I don't recall there being a lot of accidents at this intersection. Capt. Timmons stated in 5 years there have been 7 accidents and one of them was a deer struck. Shanna Saunders said that this light was put there many years ago when there were more businesses there. Mike Bobinsky is in support or removing the light. Bob Gadomski motioned to remove The Flashing Light, Shanna Saunders seconded, **All were in favor, motioned passed.**

We had received a communication from Councilman Austin expressing his feelings that the light should remain.

In addition to the beacon light matter Councilman Witham submitted in writing a concern. He expressed a line of sight issue at the west side of the intersection. There are currently two ordinances in place prohibiting parking on either side of Franklin St between Green St and Silver St. It may be an enforcement issue. Motion by Vincent to table, Second Robidas all in favor, motion passed. Some members wanted time to visit the intersection before making a recommendation. **The matter is Tabled.**

Superintendent Bob Gadomski left the meeting at 3:05

Old Business

- A. Review Parking Ordinance Specific to “In-town” 2 hour Areas.** Paul Robidas stated that the Committee needs to walk this area before we make Ordinance changes. Shanna said these changes are based on Development in the City and it makes sense to look at this. Paul Robidas said this is going to impact the Businesses and motioned to Table this until we do a site walk. Keith Hoyle seconded. **All in favor to Table.**

***Paul Robidas motioned to adjourn, seconded by Keith Hoyle
Motion to adjourn at 3:20 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted:
Brenda Ann Breda, Executive Assistant
to the City Manager