



HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 11, 2013

1:30 PM

POLICE DEPARTMENT –
BRAD CROSS ROOM

Attendees: Chief Mark E. Doyle, Kyle Fox, Bob L'Heureux, Fran L'Heureux, Norman Peppin, Glenn Wallace, Finlay Rothhaus, Tom Touseau and Claire Rioux.

Excused Absent: Chief Michael Currier, Tim Thompson, Paul Konieczka.

Invited Guest:

Town Center Committee:

Nelson Disco

Pat McGrath

Mary Hendricks

Heron Pond Board of Directors

Noel Friedman

Christopher Guild

Chairman Doyle called the meeting to order at 1:34p.m.

Chairman Doyle called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introductions were verbalized.

Chairman Chief Doyle:

We have a couple of things that we can do quickly, (old business issues) and then we will move to the front of the agenda, under new business so that the individuals from Heron Cove as well as the Town Center Committee can present to the committee.

Old Business

- Update regarding the plans for the Bedford Rd. Bridge./ Kyle Fox

Chairman Chief Doyle

Kyle do you have an update regarding the plans for the bridge, as well as the engineering studies for the Bedford Rd. Bridge?

Kyle Fox

I do have an update, do you want to discuss this now? This may take a while. I have developed engineering study plans, the committee may have questions.

Chairman Chief Doyle

It sounds like it could be a long involved discussion, so what I would like to do is 2 things. Bob if you do not mind, we could move past the "no thru trucking" signs on Back River Road to be addressed later and we will table the 2nd old business item:

- Update on Chapel Lane (meeting on June 19, 2012) whether this area is passable for fire apparatus if vehicles are parked on the street/ Chief Currier

I have not heard from Chief Currier on this agenda item.

Action Item

Chairman Chief Doyle

Discussion regarding Chapel Lane update will be deferred until the next meeting, all in agreement.

- Re-cap of the Exit #13 off ramp meeting/ Chairman Chief Doyle

Chairman Chief Doyle

Exit 13 off ramp in Bedford concerns came as a result of several members of the committee. DOT changed the signage to reflect what the behavior of vehicles prior to the merge should be doing. so that vehicles will know what lanes they should be in. Also a yield sign was placed so that vehicles will yield prior to crossing into traffic. They are also looking into removing part or all of the berm that inhibits the sight issues prior to merge. They will be looking into this, by spring. They will keep us posted, on their progress. Chief Bryfonski, Bedford PD, also had some of the same concerns, DOT was very open to our suggestions.

Bob L'Heureux

I spoke to DOT and one of the reasons why it was made that way is when north bound traffic is exiting and if they miss the curve they would go directly into traffic. Once they take that berm out they would have to replace the berm with a guard rail.

New Business

- Request submitted by the Heron Cove Condominium Board of Directors, regarding the installation of “No Parking” signs in the area of the Manchester Street Bridge. Vehicles regularly parked along Manchester Street (presumably fishing) during the warmer months. The main issue is the safety concern this poses as that roadway becomes very congested with people parking on both sides. / Kyle Fox

Chairman Chief Doyle

Asked Kyle Fox if he would give the committee a quick snap shot of the Heron Cove Board’s concerns.

Kyle Fox

Back in February, the property manager for Heron Cove emailed Adam Jacobs, the town’s operations manager, with the Heron Cove Boards concerns. Email below:

From: Nicole DuBois [mailto:ndubois@evergreenmgt.com]

Sent: Friday, February 8, 2013 10:29 AM

To: Adam Jacobs

Subject: Manchester Street Parking

Good Morning Adam,

The Heron Cove at Bowers Landing Condominium Association Board of Directors have received notice from their unit owners, that there are a number of vehicles regularly parked along Manchester Street presumed to be fishing. The concern is that these people are walking through posted land and in some cases the woods directly behind the Heron Cove homes.

The Board is interested in finding ways to prevent this from reoccurring and are reaching out to you (via me) to see if No Parking signs could be installed on either side of the road near the Manchester Street Bridge.

Thank you for your time. Please contact me with any questions or possible solutions.

Best Regards,

Nicole DuBois

Association Administrator

Evergreen Management, Inc.

Norm Peppin

Are there no “no parking “signs there at this time?

Kyle Fox

There are no signs at this time.

Noel Friedman

The seniors that live at Heron Cove are very concerned about someone getting access through the woods to their homes.

Norm Peppin

Are they going to be working on that bridge, soon?

Christopher Guild

We also were wondering about that, we were hoping to get information on the status of the bridge at this meeting.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Kyle could give an update on the bridge. What is the timeline for reconstruction?

Kyle Fox

The timeline for the repair of the bridge could be anytime from now until next year. The historic and environmental issues have caused a number of delays. DOT has approved the final plans, we are waiting on DES. Once that happens, it goes to bid. If the wetland application gets approved soon, there is a chance we can start construction this year. What we want to avoid, if we can, having the bridge closed for over a year. We want to work around the winter. Once the wetland application is approved a schedule will be accepted. This could be anywhere from this summer to the start of next spring.

Noel Friedman

Because this is a joint venture between the two towns who actually is in charge of the project?

Kyle Fox

Nashua is the lead agency among the 2 communities. The bridge is being funded through the State Bridge Aid Program which is funded 80% state and 20% by the towns. Of that 20% funded 75% Nashua, 25% Merrimack.

Noel Friedman

How would we go about getting “NO Parking Signs”? .

Chairman Chief Doyle

What ends up happening is a recommendation from this committee determines whether there is an identified need for “no parking signs”. We would present the recommendations to the town council. Since it is a town charter change it then would have to be included in a list of streets and roads under a particular chapter. This is a normal process. If there are any signage changes, rules relative to changing or adding town ordinances, it has to go under that particular chapter and the council has to give their blessing.

Kyle Fox

Interjected and a public hearing.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Yes, and a public hearing. The public would have an opportunity to come to the hearing and will have a chance to express their concerns at that time.

Noel Friedman

Will you be putting together something for the board?

Chairman Chief Doyle

This is the first step. We wanted to have a chance to talk about it, and find out if there is a defined need for a no parking sign. What I am hearing, from your perspective, there is a need.

Bob L’Heureux

Regarding this bridge replacement, how is the road physically going to change with the new bridge verse what is now? After re-construction and the road is wide enough, then we would have no parking signs that are not really needed.

Kyle Fox

The approach road will be the typical town road, 24 feet wide, with gravel shoulders. The bridge will be wider, which is typical and a sidewalk will be on the bridge. It will be the same cross section that you see on main roads in Merrimack.

Bob L’Heureux

So the approach to the bridge will not be any wider than it is now?

Kyle Fox

Not especially.

Chairman Chief Doyle

That will not be enough to accommodate vehicles parked on the side of the road.

Kyle Fox

Correct, there will not be a 4 ft or 8ft shoulder.

Bob L'Heureux

Well that leads me to ask, if people are trespassing and doing things illegally, that problem is not being addressed. If you are putting no parking signs there and people are still breaking the law by trespassing and fishing, signs will not solve the problem. If you address the law breakers, then you would not need the signs.

Glenn Wallace

Is there signage for no fishing there now.....

Noel Friedman

There is signage along the 4 ft .high fence, no trespassing. There is a break in the fence so that people can enter to walk the trail.

Glenn Wallace

Is there anything around the pond, is that the town?

Christopher Guild

It is part of the Pennichuck pond water system.

Kyle Fox

(Handed out a plan of Heron cove). If you look at the plan I just handed out, the shaded portion is Heron Pond Cove property. The little piece of land just below it between the reservoir and Heron Cove is the Pennichuck property, which is fenced off.

Glen Wallace

If the no parking signs were to go where you are suggesting, would the problem be solved? Would they park somewhere else still cut through the areas of concern.

Chairman Chief Doyle

We are not allowed to post signs on the Nashua side, consequently, if there are no signs posted on the Nashua side people will park on the Nashua side.

Fran L'Heureux

Has Pennichuck been contacted regarding your concerns? If you call them, I believe they may be able to help you out.

Kyle Fox

This is a trespassing issue. Are you concerned about safety?

Noel Friedman

We are concerned about the safety of our older residences. The signs we have now are not adequate. There is a gap in the sidewalk at the north end property across from Brookstone, which can be used as an entrance.

Kyle Fox

There are no sidewalk CIP projects on the books.

Finlay Rothhaus

If funds were collected from Brookstone, and it is part of the original plan, then we have to move the planning process forward before the "time limitations" run out. The sidewalk that exists, near the fence, did the town put it in?

Noel Friedman

It was put in by Stabile, it was part of the development.

Chairman Chief Doyle

So it is on the other side of the fence?

Noel Friedman

It is part of the development but it is outside the fence open to the public.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Is there anything else you would like to bring to the table regarding this issue? If not, thank you gentlemen for coming. We will be in touch.

Action Item:

Chairman Chief Doyle

We will have direct patrols and enforcement action if vehicles are on the street. Once we have data from the direct patrols we will re-visit this issue at the next meeting. Thank you all for coming.

- Discuss closure of Church St., at Daniel Webster Highway, to facilitate the expansion of an existing sidewalk in front of the Library to Wire Rd. / DW Highway intersection/
Chairman Chief Doyle.

Nelson Disco

Gave a brief history of the Merrimack Center Committee. The Town Center Committee was formed by town council 2 1/2 years ago. The purpose is to look at a way to implement certain

recommendations from a study by the Merrimack Town Committee and the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, the results was to put walkways and pathways around and through the center of town. The town center, defined by our ordinances, between Front St. over as far as the Rite Aid pharmacy and all the land east of the Everett Turnpike. The plan was to have a walkable center from the town hall to the Post Office, thus making this area more of a community center. We are looking at different funding sources, such as the Safe Routes to School to build sidewalks connecting the high school to walkways and parks.

This sub-committee was asked to look at one aspect of this, building sidewalks north from the town hall area ultimately to get to Front St. There are some real obstacles there, the Baboosic Brook for one, a very dangerous crossing. Specifically, what we look at north from the library along route 3 extend that north to the Wire Rd. intersection. In conjunction with the idea, that there are plans afoot in the capital program to improve Wire Rd. intersection. We would have a plan for a sidewalk to go through there and a safe pedestrian access to get at least as far as the brook. Looking at the site, we see an immediate problem at the intersection of Church St. and Rte. 3. If you are familiar at all with this area, and you are driving a sedan, which sits low. you can not see north at all. It really is unsafe. In order to build a sidewalk, the way the road is configured, we would have to make some changes. The most economical way is to close off Church St and extend the sidewalk on to Wire Rd. intersection. We have been talking to different committees in town, Town manager, Chief Doyle, Fire, DPW, Senior Citizens, the Deacons at the Congressional Church, and Library trustees. We are trying to educate as many people as possible, and see what objections they would have, in return from these groups we have been getting support. When we met with Chief Doyle, he suggested that this committee would like to hear about this and may be interested in supporting the idea of closing the street off. The idea would be closing the street off at the top of the hill, make a cul-de-sac, and make it a dead end. Kyle Fox is looking at ways to do just that. The Church has expressed a concern regarding people using their drive way, we will be addressing that issue. We would like to get the support of this committee, that this would be a great idea to do from a safety point of view for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Norm Peppin

Have you measured the boundary lines down there, where that entrance is?

Nelson Disco

We have not measured anything on the ground, I have some plans that show were they are.

Norm Peppin

There is a lot more land than what is showing by the road. The approach to come down the property that is Pizza Man, there should be a boundary that is wider than what shows for the road.

Nelson Disco

Do you mean we own more than what is occupied by road?

Mary Hendricks

It is wider toward the road? Is what you are saying?

Action Item:

Kyle Fox

If that is the case the GIS does not show that, I will check.

Bob L'Heureux

This was tried in the past, no one was notified and it did not end well.

Nelson Disco

We will contact and meet with the property owners.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Nelson, I think what you are looking from us is just a yea or nay regarding how it is going to affect public safety with extending that stretch of sidewalk. I know when we spoke I had no problem, I absolutely agree extending it along that particular section means closing Church St. I cannot imagine a public safety perspective it would not have any infringement on or how we do our service for the police department, it does not. Especially if this will be tying in with the sidewalk enhancement improvement project that we are looking at for the entire town center.

Norm Pepin

Is it possible to make the sidewalk on the other side?

Bob L'Heureux

What you are saying... where the sidewalk ends now, you would make a crosswalk on the east side till you pass Pyneburg's and cut back across.

Norm Pepin

If we go over the bridge this will get 2 issues out of the way, Wire Rd., for one.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Wire Rd. is another project.

Nelson Disco

We did discuss sidewalks on both sides of the road, that is our ultimate goal. You have to observe certain standards, road crossing are required, you have to have a light with a crossing. Another light on Rte.3 would not be very popular.

Kyle Fox

Cross walks are allowed without a signal. By striping a crosswalk, it sets legal precedence for being a sidewalk. Because sidewalks are legally enforced, that does not mean they are safe. The best example I can give is the common request for a sidewalk across Route 3 at Woodbury St. We refused because the sight distance is terrible, and if we did that there is going to be an accident. Signals are not a prerequisite to have a crossing. There are 2 project that just got approved, the Baboosic Lake Road signals at Route 3 and the initial engineering for Wire road intersection. Both of those projects tie in perfectly with this concept. What really is needed is a corridor plan, so we can work toward something.

Nelson Disco

We do have a sight plan for the center which is part of this corridor plan. That was done under the Intergrading Transportation and Community Planning (ITRAC) study funded prior to the town center committee being formed.

Kyle Fox

Interjected the ITRAC ?

Nelson Disco

Yes, that is what we are working with currently.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Who else do you plan on going to? I know you are going to the library, Tuesday, and the residents at some point, do you have any groups that you have not talked to?

Nelson Disco

Those are the only groups that I haven't yet spoken to that the committee has identified as stake holders. We also need to go through a public hearing process. Are there any suggestions that you may have?

Chairman Chief Doyle

The only one that comes to mind is MYA at Kids Cove, there is a cross walk there now.

Nelson Disco

I will do so.

Kyle Fox

The plan for Baboosic Lake Road at Route 3 is to put new equipment there and add a 4th phase. The biggest safety issue in that intersection is the conflict between Baboosic Lake Rd. traffic and the landscaping company traffic.

Glenn Wallace

As a body, I would suggest that we wait before we take a vote, I would like to hear from the residents. They may have safety concerns that we are not aware of, I would like to get their stamp of approval. I would like the whole picture before making a decision.

Finlay Rothhaus

I could go either way. As far as closing the street, there has to be a public hearing. I do not have a strong opinion. I could see one way signage to accommodate traffic. The neighbors are a concern, they may have an issue.

Glenn Wallace

The neighbors may not have an issue, but I would like to hear what they have to say.

Kyle Fox

Speaking from public works perspective, we are in favor of discontinuance of the road. There are a number of safety issues with the road. You cannot see left as you are coming down, the older population have a problem. Older drivers have a problem turning their necks. We are in favor of closing the road, whether the sidewalk goes in or not. One of the goals, being budget conscience, would be to do this on town property. I looked into putting a cul-de-sac on this property but that was not possible and did not fit on town property. I was able to (see in red) draw out plans for a hammer head turn around that passed the planning board, and has passed the fire dept review as well.

Bob L'Heureux

How would this effect the road?

Kyle Fox

It would not have any impact. The green line is paved all the way down.

Bob L'Heureux

How wide would that be?

Kyle Fox

Referrer to the red box on diagram-- 24 feet wide

Chairman Chief Doyle

After hearing some of the comments, it would be appropriate to table this. We have some time to get back together again to discuss this further. If we were to table this to the next meeting (prior to start of summer, end of June) you would have time get the resident's and MYA feedback. We then can re-cap what we have done and get some feedback from your committee.

Finlay Rothhaus

That works for me for sure, but it was all about what Nelson mentioned a few minutes ago about how the sidewalk will impact that road. In fact, if we are going to do a sidewalk which has been the plan, from that standpoint it will be necessary to close the road. I do approve of that. We can do it either way table it or do it today, currently we are only speaking of the sidewalk.

Bob L'Heureux

Do you have to have a sidewalk go across Church St.?

Chairman Chief Doyle

I have a concern; crossing Rte. 3.

Mary Hendricks

I think he is referring to not having an actual sidewalk and walk across Church St. I think that will also be a safety issue.

Chairman Chief Doyle

I do not see any worth of having Church St. open. If I had my druthers I would close Church St. because I do not see any value of keeping that roadway open. People can't look as they are pulling out of Church St. and we already have a restriction to turn left.

Kyle Fox

To answer your question, you could not use the existing Church St. as a sidewalk; this would not meet ADA requirements.

Motion

On motion of Glen Wallace, duly seconded by Fran L'Heureux, to table this agenda item until the next meeting until we have more information from the Town Center Committee.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Is there anyone in attendance who would like to speak to the motion?

Glenn Wallace

I like the idea and would like to see that road closed. My position is, I would like to hear from the residents before I make a decision on this.

Nelson Disco

I think I hear you saying that if the residents are opposed to it you would not be in favor of this...

Glen Wallace

Not at all, I just want to hear what they have to say, and then I would make a decision.

Mary Hendricks

This committee opinion should be on the safety of the road.

Kyle Fox:

If the motion is voted on as is, I will vote against it. I look at it as a safety issue, and see that our charge is to make safety recommendations. In order to discontinue a road it has to go through a process, which is a public hearing etc.

Glen Wallace

I may be unclear of what this committee is asked to do. Can someone clarify what this committee is asked to do?

Bob L'Heureux

I think I can answer that; the motion is to go along with the concept of closing Church St. for a sidewalk.

Glen Wallace

From your discussion I got lost in the fact with the overall mission. I would like to get more information, are you asking us from a safety prospective "Do you agree on closing the street": then that is a different issue and I would withdraw my motion.

Mary Hendricks

We are going to different departments and committees' asking if it would be a safety issue; whether the Fire department felt it would be a safety issue if the road was closed. What we are asking of each department; would this cause any safety issues? We want to know what your thoughts are if the road is closed, again, would this be a safety concern?

Glen Wallace

I misunderstood what you were originally asking, I will withdraw the motion.

Fran L'Heureux

I withdraw my second.

Motion:

Motion by Bob L'Heureux to support the concept of extending the sidewalk from Baboosic Lake Rd to Wire Rd.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Is there anyone who would like to speak to the motion?

Chairman Chief Doyle

Which would include closing Church St. to extend the sidewalk for all of our best interest and best for public safety.

Motion

On motion of Bob L'Heureux, duly seconded by Fran L'Heureux, to support the concept of extending the sidewalk from Baboosic Lake Rd to Wire Rd. to include closing the Church St. intersection with Route 3. Motion carries 8-0-0

Fran L'Heureux

Kyle, could look into what the town property line is near pizza man.

Kyle Fox

The map that was handed out is what the GIS system is showing.

Meeting Minutes

Motion

Motion by Kyle Fox and seconded by Fran L'Heureux to accept the November 13, 2012 minutes with the following amendments Pg. 3 insert (NH State) Senators and Representatives. All in favor 8-0-0.

Old Business

- Update regarding the plans for the Bedford Rd. Bridge./ Kyle Fox

Kyle Fox

Brief Account of the Bedford Rd. Bridge Project: The engineering study phase is coming to a close. We have had a number of meetings with DES, Fish and Game etc. to discuss what would be possible out there. From a design stand point this is a unique bridge, it is not often that you find the river on both sides of the approach road. An overflow structure was discussed with DES and Fish and Game. Unfortunately, what we proposed they did not like. It was decided that the existing structure will be where the new structure is located. (Please refer to page 2 on the handout). The road profile will change to eliminate the over the top issues (6ft higher), 100 ft. span on the bridge. Because of the water on both sides, there is no way to put slopes; this will bring up the expenses.

Bob L'Heureux

How big of a culvert are you going to have?

Kyle Fox

It will be a single pipe that is 21'. The proposed bridge is roughly 100'.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Kyle when do you think start up will be?

Kyle Fox

All of this is just the first phase, the next step will be the engineer (conception) study approval, then the primarily and final design (more specific elevations etc.) is next. Wetland applications are needed, working with the historic resources because of the old bridge and the archeologist could take many months. This is an 80-20 project, the town has money set aside, the town is responsible for 20% but not sure of the 80% from the state,(State Aid Bridge Program) this may cause this project to be pushed out.

Fran L'Heureux

Would there be 2 bridges closed at the same time?

Kyle Fox

No, the Wire Rd. Bridge will be open within 2 months.

Norm Peppin

I have a concern about the effect upon the other bridge down the road.

Kyle Fox

These are tail water flow flooding issues; this will not have an effect on the bridges down the line.

Bob L'Heureux

Would it be possible to have a covered bridge?

Kyle Fox

An authentic covered bridge would not happen, it would be very expensive and it is not in the budget.

Chairman Chief Doyle

Thank you Kyle for the update, are there any more questions... being none second item:

- Verification of the size of the "no thru trucking" signs on Back River Road. They should be 30X30/ Kyle Fox

Kyle Fox

I went back to Manual Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to verify and according to R5-2, no truck sign; the minimum size is 24X24. The signs are 24X30, we are in compliance.

- Request submitted by Jennifer Page. 3 Nichols Lane, Merrimack, regarding placing a crosswalk from Bramber Estates to Lilac Ct. (on Bedford Rd)/ Kyle Fox

Action Item

Chairman Chief Doyle

Request to have this item tabled. I want to look into this agenda item further. I will call her back to let her know it is tabled. All present in favor. 8-0-0

New Business

- Discussion regarding the stop sign on Railroad Ave and Rt. 3. Bob L'Heureux

Bob L'Heureux

You cannot see the stop sign on Railroad Ave when you make a left hand turn on Rte. 3. There is nothing there to indicate where you should stop. Because of the height of the sign, you can't see left hand traffic, so if you take a left hand turn you do not see the sign. Why was this changed from yield to stop?

Kyle Fox

I cannot answer regarding the specifics of the height of the sign, since I have not seen it. I can tell you that Adam Jacobs and I reviewed that area last fall. We made the determination that the yield sign was not appropriate because DWH is a major arterial. We did not feel it appropriate to have a Yield sign leading on to a major arterial. Sign placement in that area is difficult; the best thing to do is have one exit point for Railroad Ave. The best solution would be to close the spur.

Chairman Chief Doyle

That is actually called Main St.

Kyle Fox

That should be ironed out. I know it as Railroad Ave. We repaved DWH from bridge south to Greely St. When I did the striping, I tried to find a safer box because the buses use all of the 100feet, which causes issues for DW. The lines were placed in a manner that it would ease traffic toward the center of the spur to make it more predicible. My hope is that each year we

would move the stripe a little over till we get the effect needed. This is training the drivers, hence the Stop Signs.

Bob L'Heureux

Is that stop sign approved by the town yet?

Kyle Fox

Not yet. The stop sign is not enforceable yet

Chairman Chief Doyle

We are not writing any tickets on that sign yet.

Bob L'Heureux

What can be done at the complex?

Kyle Fox

I am trying to bring the fog line out and the white line out to make it a standard with area to promote an intersection that people expect. This has to be gradual process. Painted island is what we are striving to have in that area eventually. Kyle will check the area out.

Action Item

Chairman Chief Doyle

The stop sign on Railroad Ave and Rt. 3. will be re-visited.

Glen Wallace

Just an FYI, I spoke to Senator Bragdon regarding the Ex. 12 toll. The bill passed the Senate but may be in trouble in the house. It is in 2 bills presently, and they are trying to slip the bill in the budget so it can be a debated point in June, but the Senator is not optimistic at this point.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was voted to adjourn on a motion made by Bob L'Heureux and seconded by Fran L'Heureux. Motion carries 8-0-0.

Meeting Adjourned 3:29pm