



HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 9, 2014

1:00 PM

**POLICE DEPARTMENT – BRAD CROSS
ROOM**

Attendees: Chief Mark E. Doyle, Bob L’Heureux, Paul Konieczka, Finlay Rothhaus, Tom Touseau, Glenn Wallace, Kyle Fox, Chief Michael Currier, Tim Thompson.

Excused absence: Fran L’Heureux

Guest: Matthew Shevenell, Merrimack School Business Administrator
Richard Desmond, Transportation Coordinator
Pat Bailey & Gregg Stimson Student Transportation of America,
Ken Clinton, Meridian Land Services for Old Blood Property

Recording Secretary: Claire Rioux

Chairman Doyle called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Chairman Doyle called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of May 8, 2014 was made by Kyle Fox, seconded by Tim Thompson. Motion Carries 9-0-0.

Comments from the Press and Public: None

Introduction of guests.

Chairman Doyle stated that the next meeting of this committee will take place at the latter part of August, unless something comes up that needs to be addressed immediately.

New Business:

- Nomination submission: William Godfrey; discussion regarding the vacant 3 year position to the Highway Safety Committee.

Discussion took place relative to William Godfrey’s nomination to the committee.

Motion by Bob L’Heureux and seconded by Tim Thompson, for approval of William Godfrey to serve the remainder of the vacant term to expire 6/30/2015. 9-0-0 Motion passes.

Bob L'Heureux:

It would be fitting that Norm Peppin be recognized by the Town Council.

Motion by Bob L'Heureux for approval to honor Norm Peppin at the next available Town Council meeting to honor and recognize his years of service to the town. All in agreement. 9-0-0.

Action Item:

- Letter to be sent to Mr. Godfrey as well as the Town Council advising that the committee voted and confirmed Mr. Godfrey as a member of the Committee.
- Letter to Council asking the Town Council to honor Norm Peppin at a Council Meeting.

Old business:

- Safety concerns on Wilson Hill Road/ Michael Redding at the request of Mr. Redding (will be discussed at the next meeting) Those in attendance in agreement.
- Request submitted by Jennifer Page, 3 Nichols Lane, Merrimack, regarding placing a crosswalk from Bramber Estates to Lilac Ct. (on Bedford Rd)/ (will be discussed at the next meeting) Those in attendance in agreement.
- Chestnut Hill Subdivision, regarding the proposed connection from the Old Blood Road subdivision to Madeline Bennett Lane/ Chairman Doyle

Chairman Doyle:

Last month Ken Clinton, Meridian Land Services and John Tenhave, Northview Homes presented an overview of the subdivision and history of the area. Representatives from the school are here today to express their concerns in this regard.

Rich Desmond:

The re-aliment of the road impedes on the conservation easement, there are 22 acres in the conservation easement which have no sewer line, Old Blood Road is a Class 5 road. According to the Merrimack School District- Conservation Easement agreement; the school shall review the proposed plan before final vote.

Matthew Shevenell:

I asked to be present at this meeting to express the school board's concerns regarding the proposed road design (proposed intersection of Old Blood Road and Madeline Bennett) and the school's options for a revision of the proposed design. A stop sign in this area is very much a concern. Presently, there are 38 buses that go this school; this number does not include the special vans. Our concern is the delay this will cause the school, resulting in a snowball effect, affecting all the elementary schools in the town. It will also affect the parents who normally pick

up their children at 4:10; we believe this could change to 4:40. Another concern would be the crossing of 2 lanes of traffic when parents are dropping off their children. This design may cause a financial burden for the school, by extending the school bus driver's day, triggering a bell time change for all schools.

Bob L'Heureux:

Why are there no stop signs presently in this proposal?

Kyle Fox:

The principle reason is that Madeline Bennett is a driveway going on to a main road, (Old Blood).

Chief Doyle

Madeline Bennett will be merging onto an access road; the main traffic would have the right of way.

Chief Currier:

If there is a stop sign in this area, the sign will be used only 20 minutes of the day, people will have the tendency to ignore the stop sign on Madeline Bennett road.

Finlay Rothhaus:

Does the Reeds Ferry School have a similar situation?

Matthew Shevenell:

There are only 8-10 buses at Reeds Ferry, this is an elementary school which is at the end of the bus run, and it is not the same situation.

Pat Bailey:

There is less flow and fewer buses at Reed Ferry.

Finlay Rothhaus:

I do not see the proposed design being a safety issue.

Matthew Shevenell:

Has a traffic study been completed?

Tim Thompson:

Not at this time.

Matthew Shevenell:

Madeline Bennett Road has not been accepted by the town, so it is the schools concern. Another issue would be the speeding on this road.

Paul Konieczka:

There are 70 houses being built and most likely the cars from these homes would go south. Peak times for the school will be at 2:30 for 180 days a year. Leaving the school is like a driveway; Madeline Bennett will have most of the traffic.

Matthew Shevenell:

A traffic study should be done to determine where the majority of the traffic will be. You can double that amount of cars; most households have more than 1 vehicle.

Bob L'Heureux:

Would a T intersection for traffic coming out of the development be beneficial?

Tim Thompson:

The main traveled road has the priority in traffic flow. The school would be coming out of a driveway.

Chairman Doyle:

From a safety perspective, the flow from the main thruway should be a continuous flow.

Ken Clinton:

Madeline Bennett is a non-approved town road which the DPW maintains. We are proposing 2 signs on both sides of the school, which will be solar powered with 2 flashing lights. There will be 2 waves of buses, this will cause some delays, but not 20 to 30 minutes. Buses will take a right hand turn, stacking the buses on school property, not on the town road.

Matthew Shevenell:

This is irrelevant; we feel this plan will cause delays resulting in the need to change the bell times.

Ken Clinton:

School buses should not be in a public's way. The buses should be internal on school property.

Chairman Doyle:

What is your next step?

Ken Clinton:

We are looking for this committee's endorsement. We currently have endorsements from the Fire Department, Engineering, and Community Development.

Chief Currier:

Buses cannot inhibit emergency apparatus.

Bob L'Heureux:

If the big concern is the stacking of buses on the road, would it be feasible to open-up land on school property for buses?

Chairman Doyle:

How about the back field?

Bob L'Heureux:

If we clear that area, who would assume the cost?

Finlay Rothhaus

This area would not be adequate.

Chief Currier:

I agree this area is just too steep.

Matthew Shevenell:

There is no support for a stop sign at Madeline Bennett; each bus will have to stop causing delays.

Paul Konieczka:

Instead of three lanes, would it be possible to have 2 lanes, with a large shoulder?

Ken Clinton:

The right lane can become a stack lane for 20-30 minutes a day.

Chief Currier:

You would have to have some type of coordination for control; parents will turn into the lane.

Matthew Shevenell:

Again, the school is not on board with a stop sign, it will affect scheduling, bell times, and sports programs. What is needed is a traffic study.

Tim Thompson:

The safety of the kids is the main concern, 2 point of access are needed for the subdivision.

Matthew Shevenell:

There is a need for 2 access roads, but one of the roads would be an egress for emergency vehicles only.

Chief Currier:

The safest way is to have a stop sign.

Finlay Rothhaus:

I feel the proposed design is safe; the issue would be the bus situation which comes in 2 waves.

Glenn Wallace:

Will children be able to walk to school? Will it be safe?

Matthew Shevenell:

The rule of law is that if you live a mile within the school you should be walking to school.

Glen Wallace:

The 16 year old drivers will be racing through the area causing safety concerns.

Kyle Fox:

Are the 16 year old drivers released after the buses because they are released from the High School which is where these buses are going?

Matthew Shevenell:

Many of the seniors are released the last period of the day.

Kyle Fox:

I do not see a problem in the morning, I do not think that there would be much of a delay; this is a safe, well-designed intersection. I suggest a test run should be done before school lets out, one with a stop sign, one without, which will be timed for calculations, on Thursday or Friday?

Pat Bailey:

If this study is going to be done, it should be in 2 phases; one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. I do not think this will be accurate, buses will not have a stop sign and the traffic flow will be different.

Kyle Fox:

By conducting this study it will give us some data to work with.

Tim Thompson:

I agree, this will give us a good idea.

Tim Thompson:

The data we obtain will be presented to the planning board.

Motion by Kyle Fox and seconded by Tim Thompson, for approval of the concept of the design connection of the Old Blood Road subdivision to Madeline Bennett Lane.

Discussion:

Tim Thompson:

In my opinion, The Highway Safety Committee should endorse this design, this is a safe design. I withdraw my second for discussion.

Glenn Wallace:

I do not feel comfortable with the safety of this design. I will not be able to vote in favor of this motion.

Finlay Rothhaus:

I am in favor of the traffic impact analysis.

Chairman Doyle:

This committee is tasked with this design, with no modifications.

Motion:

Motion by Kyle Fox and seconded by Tim Thompson, to conduct a study regarding buses movements at Madeleine Bennett. The interpretation of the study will be forwarded to the Merrimack Planning Board with the Highway Safety Committee's approval of the concept of the design, connection of the Old Blood Road subdivision to Madeline Bennett Lane. 5-4-0 Motion passes.

New Business:

- **Email received by Kyle Fox from Merrimack Christian Academy requesting school flashing lights.**

Kyle Fox:

Adam Jacobs (Operations Manager) received an email from Merrimack Christian School regarding school flashing lights. According to the NHDOT Administration, flashing school signals can be installed for either public or private schools, as long as there is pedestrian traffic to the school. The cost of erecting the flashing lights in a school zone belongs to the requester.

Chairman Doyle:

Have Merrimack Christian School follow up with a service request. The request can be placed on the agenda so that this committee will present our recommendations to the council.

- **Alternates on the Highway Safety Committee**

Bob L'Heureux:

Is it possible to have alternates for this committee?

Tim Thompson:

I do not think the Charge of the Highway Safety Committee allows alternates

Action Item:

Review Charge and report to the Committee at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

*There being no further business, the meeting was voted to adjourn on a motion made by **Tim Thompson** and seconded by **Paul Konieczka**. Motion carries 9-0-0.*

Meeting Adjourned 2:15 pm