

**MEETING OF THE  
CITY OF WOBURN  
TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2016 – 4:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE ROOM  
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Attending: Comm. Joanne Campbell, Comm. Myles Collins, Comm. John Corey, Comm. John Duran, Comm. Raymond Mooney, Comm. Timothy Ring, Comm. Peter Socorelis, Comm. Lindsay Higgins.

Absent: Comm. Tina Cassidy.

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Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and to accept, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (Cassidy, Mooney absent).

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**No. 2016-13**

Request for no through traffic restriction on Maura Drive. Comm. Higgins stated that she spoke to Comm. Mooney, that he has information concerning this matter, and that she suggests the matter be laid on the table until his arrival at the meeting. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be LAID ON THE TABLE, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (Cassidy, Mooney absent).

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Comm. Mooney arrived in the Council Chamber during the following matter.

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**No. 2016-09**

Delayed green light for westbound traffic on Russell Street. Comm. Corey stated that he spoke to Michael Karas of MassDOT concerning the matter, that MassDOT is waiting for the delivery of new equipment for the intersection, that when the equipment is delivered it will be installed, and that the city does not have jurisdiction over this intersection. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE UNTIL FURTHER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-13**

Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to take the matter of the request for no through traffic restriction on Maura Drive from the table, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent). Comm. Mooney stated that his officers conducted enforcement on Maura Drive area eight or ten times since the last meeting, that traffic devices were not installed as the speed of the vehicles did not warrant this action, that one citation was issued, that the highest speed recorded by officers was 28 m.p.h., that the officers were in the area between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., that of 29 vehicle trips recorded at one time nine of the vehicle trips were residents,

that in both directions the highest speed was short of there being a speeding issue, and that the officers did not observe the high traffic volumes. Eugene Foley, 18 Maura Drive stated that he is aware of the police traffic study and that no speed exceeded 30 m.p.h., that the residents find 30 m.p.h. a difficult and dangerous speed and that it is not suitable for the roadway conditions, that the volume found in the study to be low does not consider the Winning Farm, Shannon Farm and a Lexington condominium development that will bring 300 new residential units into the neighborhood and that Maura Drive remains a potential cut through, that they have discouraged the children in the neighborhood from playing in the streets, that child warning signs have been posted for drivers at both ends of the street, that the morning traffic speeds tend to be a bit faster than in the afternoon, that a petition was signed by a large number of residents on Maura Drive in support of taking some action on this issue, and that he understands that a resident only restriction cannot be posted on Maura Drive but they are present in other areas of the city.

Comm. Mooney stated that there are fourteen locations with posted signs indicating resident traffic only but these are not enforceable and will be removed, that there can be time restrictions for travel on the streets as long as the time restrictions are not the same on both ends of the street, and that the time restrictions for travel on the street apply to the residents of the streets as well as the general driving public. Mr. Foley stated that he requests three items, that first would be to restrict travel on the street to residents only during certain hours, that the second would be to reduce the speed limit to 25 m.p.h., that he compared Maura Drive and Waltham Street, that Maura Drive has a steeper grade than Waltham Street, that the posted speed limit on Waltham Street is 25 m.p.h., and that the third request is for a no heavy trucking restriction on Maura Drive. Comm. Corey stated that the grade change on Maura Drive is more severe than on Waltham Street, that the Maura Drive traffic is not excessive, and that from an engineering perspective he does not see a safety issue on Maura Drive. Comm. Mooney stated that the police department did not examine the spill over traffic to Grace Road. Comm. Duran stated that the traffic may be diverted to Grace Road if prohibited from Maura Drive. Comm. Ring stated that he did not understand why as a practical matter a vehicle would use Maura Drive instead of Waltham Street. Comm. Mooney stated that sometimes GPS units are directing drivers along particular streets such as Maura Drive, that there were no trucking issues on Maura Drive during the enforcement periods, that there were box trucks but these do not come under the heavy commercial vehicle restrictions, that the resident only restrictions in the city are going to be eliminated, that the State has given some authority to communities with regard to speed limits, that no vehicle traveled over the 30 m.p.h. speed limit during the enforcement periods, that dropping the speed to 25 m.p.h. may not achieve the benefit sought by the residents on the street as there is a 5 m.p.h. tolerance built into speed enforcement, and that the volume of trucks on the street was not high enough to warrant a no heavy trucking restriction. Comm. Campbell stated that she was not certain that a 25 m.p.h. speed limit would have much benefit except for discouraging drivers from exceeding the 30 m.p.h. speed limit. Comm. Higgins stated that there is not much guidance on the new speed limit regulations, and that advice should be sought from the City Solicitor on the new speed limit regulations. Mr. Foley stated that he was not certain that the residents on the street were aware the time restrictions for travel on the street would apply to residents of the street as well. Comm. Mooney stated that the residents could drive in either direction to leave the street during time restricted hours but they could not enter the street against the time restriction, that even if the speed limit was reduced to 25 m.p.h. he does not believe that speed of vehicles is an issue on Maura Drive, and that a sign would be posted indicating a 25 m.p.h. speed limit but unless conditions change there would not be enforcement against drivers traveling between 26 m.p.h. and 29 m.p.h. Comm. Higgins stated that a public hearing should be held to hear from the residents before taking further action. Comm. Corey stated that he would not support a heavy commercial vehicle restriction or a reduction in the speed limit to 25 m.p.h.

at this time. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to hold a public hearing for the purposes of considering a restriction on hours of operation and direction of travel on Maura Drive, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-11**

Stop sign restriction at intersection of Mt. Pleasant Street at South Street.

ORDERED MOUNT PLEASANT STREET - That a stop sign restriction be established southeast bound and northwest bound on Mount Pleasant Street at the intersection with South Street.

Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be GIVEN A SECOND READING AND ADOPTED, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-14**

Request for traffic calming on Beacon Street at intersection with Sturgis Street. Comm. Corey stated that he looked at the area but must review the matter with the Department of Public Works, that this is a large enough project that it would require funding that likely is not available in the Department of Public Works budget, that the curb could be moved and pavement planting be installed not to exceed 2½ feet in height, that there would be a stop sign posted on Beacon Street, and that this would not be a massive project but would required work. Comm. Ring stated that a template would be used to determine whether emergency vehicles would be impeded with an altered intersection. Comm. Duran stated that the layout of utilities is not a positive but not a negative as well. Comm. Campbell stated that a number of residents are supportive of improvements at the intersection. Comm. Ring stated that the corner of Water Street and Sturgis Street has even worse access for emergency vehicles. Comm. Campbell stated that there would be a site visit at the location on September 19, 2016. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be LAID ON THE TABLE until the meeting of October 20, 2016, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-16**

Resident traffic and through traffic only restrictions. Comm Mooney stated that all the locations where resident traffic only restrictions are in place are being identified, and that the matter should be laid on the table until a list of affected streets is established. Comm. Campbell stated that a public hearing will be necessary to avoid confusion among residents on these streets. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be LAID ON THE TABLE until the meeting of October 20, 2016 at which time the Police Department shall provide a definitive list of streets with resident only or not through traffic restrictions, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-17**

Request for handicapped parking restriction at 44 Fowle Street. Appearing was Richard Pinto of the South End Italian Club, 44 Fowle Street and he stated that a number of club members have handicapped placards, that there is handicapped accessible parking at the rear of the building but the door at the rear of the building is only open for functions requiring the members to walk around the building, that there is parking for three vehicles on the street in front of the building, and that they ask that two handicapped parking spaces be established on Fowle Street in front of the club. Engineering Department Senior Engineer Brett Gonsalves stated that there roadway is forty feet wide in that area.

**ORDERED** FOWLE STREET – Two handicapped parking spaces shall be established in front of 44 Fowle Street.

Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be GIVEN A FIRST READING in anticipation of a recommendation from the Handicapped and Disabled Citizens Commission, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-15**

Traffic control signals at Montvale Avenue and Washington Street intersection. Comm. Corey stated that he forwarded this request to the city's traffic consultant VHB for review and to determine whether there is an issue with the traffic control signals that must be addressed. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be LAID ON THE TABLE until the meeting of October 20, 2016, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-18**

Three-way stop sign restriction at Forest Park Road and Mishawum Road. Comm. Corey stated that this issue has been reviewed in the past, that there are 18,000 vehicles trips per day on Mishawum Road, that there are less than 1,000 vehicles trips per day on Forest Park Road, that the intersection does not pass warrants for a three-way stop restriction, that the traffic on Mishawum Road should flow through and the traffic on Forest Park Road should have a stop restriction at the intersection which is does, and that he would not support a three-way stop restriction at the intersection. Comm. Duran stated that at an earlier time the stop sign on Forest Park Road was move to a better location but it was determined at that time that a three-way stop sign restriction would not be appropriate. Comm. Higgins stated that the issue is the dangerousness of vehicles turning from Mishawum Road northerly onto Forest Park Road. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the MATTER be RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent. (Cassidy absent).

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**No. 2016-19**

Discussion regarding Municipal Modernization Act effect on traffic regulations. Comm. Higgins read Section 193 and Section 194 from the Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016 An Act Modernizing Municipal Finance and Government, and stated that these sections will affect future action by the

Traffic Commission. Comm. Corey stated that it appears that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile calculation is still required but State approval is not required. Comm. Campbell stated that these changes will be helpful for the city due to the traffic in the community, and that a 25 m.p.h. speed limit may be beneficial on many streets. Comm. Duran stated that he agrees that these changes could be a good idea in some high hazard areas but the Traffic Commission could get inundated with requests for 20 m.p.h. speed limits. Comm. Corey stated that any unposted street in the city has a speed limit of 30 m.p.h. but that a 25 m.p.h. speed limit may become more common, and that reducing the speed limit on a street from 30 m.p.h. to 25 m.p.h. will not help relieve with traffic congestion. Comm. Mooney stated that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile calculation assists in understanding what speed a roadway can handle however enforcement of a 25 m.p.h. speed limit on a roadway that can handle 35 m.p.h. is a recipe for disaster and near impossible to enforce, that there has to be a nexus between vehicle crashes and the speed on a roadway, that there will have to be guidelines to set up realistic expectations, and that safety zones are school zones. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that a copy of Section 193 and Section 194 from the Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016 An Act Modernizing Municipal Finance and Government be forwarded to the City Solicitor for review and comment on implementation by the Traffic Commission, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent (Cassidy absent).

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Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to adjourn, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent (Cassidy absent). Meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

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William C. Campbell, City Clerk  
and Clerk of Traffic Commission