

**Traffic Safety Committee**  
April 28, 2015

The Traffic Safety Committee met at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2015 in the classroom located on the lower level of the Municipal Center. The meeting commenced with Chairman John Stella, Mayor Randy Casale, Police Chief Doug Solomon, Fire Chief Gary VanVoorhis, and Tony Furco in attendance. Councilmember Pam Wetherbee was also in attendance.

**Old Business**

Members reviewed items discussed at the last meeting. Due to the age of the traffic counter and software required to load routes, further investigation must be done to see whether new software or a new counter is needed. Speeding on Talbot Avenue was discussed and noted that conditions worsen between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. when commuter traffic increases. The Police Chief can put up small speed detector sign or try posting an officer with a hand held radar unit to track actual speed rates. Although the Street Superintendent was not in attendance, it was noted that hash marks have not yet been painted on Bank Street. Mr. Stella reported the owner of the auto repair shop has reverted back to parking vehicles on or near the sidewalk which limits sight distance for vehicles turning out from North Chestnut Street onto Verplanck Avenue. The Police Chief will revisit the site and talk to the owner.

Members reviewed recommendations for changes to the City Code that were sent to the City Council. Mayor Casale announced the City Council will set a public hearing for May 18, 2015, and advised members that they should attend the meeting.

Mr. Stella explained people continue to park along Main Street from East Main to Herbert although parking is prohibited. He recommended the restriction either be enforced or the "No Parking" signs be removed. No one parks in front of "The Hop" because they posted signs and the street is hash-marked. Councilmember Pam Wetherbee agreed that parking is difficult because the embankment on the east side doesn't allow enough space for vehicles to get off the road. Additionally, the road is further narrowed because people are parking in front of the factory building on the west side. She reported the Ambulance Corp. has also complained about the narrow conditions, particularly on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Councilmember Wetherbee suggested painting parking lines to help people know where they can or can't park. Mayor Casale said a "No Parking Here to Corner" sign installed on Main Street near the corner of Hubert Street may help. Police Chief Solomon and Fire Chief VanVoorhis will visit the area on a weekend to check on conditions and see if emergency vehicles are hindered. Mayor Casale explained that narrowed roads cause people to slow down therefore care should be taken when consideration to limiting on street parking because the street will be wider and speeds will increase. Further, sometimes it appears as if people are exceeding the speed limit but are accelerating to a rate of speed not prudent for the conditions. Additional patrols will be put out in the area to see if conditions improve.

## **New Business**

### Exeter Circle

Letters were sent to the Committee from several residents of Exeter Circle requesting action due to the number of cars that park on their street to hike Mt. Beacon. nicer weather has brought more people to the mountain and when Scenic Hudson's lot is full vehicles park on Howland Avenue and Exeter Circle. They feel it is a safety hazard because emergency vehicles are unable to pass through the street. Mayor Casale visited the site and felt parking could be permitted along the first section of Exeter Circle where no houses exist. The road needs to be measured to see if parking could be permitted on one side of the street. He reminded residents that a parking restriction will also affect their use of street parking unless some type of resident permits can be done. The City Attorney is looking into the legality of that proposal. The street will be measured and the situation observed on the weekends. The street is wide enough for emergency vehicles even with cars parked on both sides so this may not be a safety issue but it is a quality of life concern when residents have no parking available for guests.

### Leonard Street, Liberty Street, Grove Street

Linda Kodilanen, 80 Liberty Street, attended the meeting to discuss the area of Leonard Street, Liberty Street and Grove Street. She pointed out that a school, daycare facility and two churches are nearby and an increase in traffic was created with the operation of the Roundhouse event space. Three one-way streets are in the area and many vehicles have been seen traveling the wrong way which is dangerous. She provided a written letter outlining her concerns. Ms. Kodilanen reported in the winter cars park on both sides of the street and snow banks make it impossible for emergency vehicles to pass, vehicles travel at high rates of speed, parked cars block driveways, parents utilizing the daycare facility park on the sidewalk, and the street is used for drag racing. She had several recommendations for improvement: add stop sign on Liberty Street at the intersection of Grove Street (when traveling from JV Forrestal School), add speed bumps, prohibit parking on the right side of Liberty and Grove Streets, and replace faded one-way signage. Furthermore, construction of the residential development on Leonard Street has begun which further creates safety hazards. Ms. Kodilanen reported she been complaining about this area for three years. She also submitted a letter from the crossing guard who works on the corner of Grove Street which highlighted further problems. She reported cars ignore her, the Police Department was notified with no response, and officers do not check to see if people are using car seats or cell phones.

Although members understood her concerns, they pointed out that the police can't be on every street corner. The Police Chief reported the crossing guard who works under his department has never conveyed these concerns to him therefore he will look into the situation. He will make efforts to get patrols there but it won't be on a daily basis.

Regulations currently allow parking on both sides of Liberty Street on Sundays and holidays, which makes travel even more difficult when church is in session. Ms. Kodilanen reported parents drop off and pick up children for CCD classes in the middle of the street during mass which intensifies congestion. Mayor Casale explained every church in Beacon has similar problems with parking, drop-offs, and pick-ups because none have the parking capacity they need. Members agreed that some type of leveling point must be achieved because when one problem is fixed, another is created. This particular issue is more of an inconvenience and only

lasts for a few hours once a week therefore members were hesitant to make any changes. Ms. Kodilanin asked that at the bare minimum members consider installing a stop sign on Liberty Street at the corner of Grove Street.

Councilmember Wetherbee reported a constituent who resides in the house at the end of Main Street near the Hanna Lane gate contacted her about traffic issues that have occurred since Herbert Street was repaved and the Hanna Lane gate was open. She explained the gate is now closed so that part of the problem is resolved however people speed around the corner onto Hubert Street. Additionally it appears that visitors don't know how to get back to the main route therefore she suggested additional signs directing traffic to Route 52. Mr. Stella felt that most people use GPS systems to get around therefore an additional sign may not be necessary. When too many signs are installed, people have a tendency not to read any of them. Discussion took place about putting up too much signage and over regulation of traffic in general.

Councilmember Wetherbee reported she visited the area and witnessed how fast cars take the corner and race to the yield sign on Blackburn Street since Herbert Street was repaved. Since only one complaint was submitted and only one other house shares that particular portion of the street, members felt more research into the number of accidents have taken place would provide a better perspective. The Police Chief will further investigate the problems presented and report at the next meeting.

There was no further business to discuss and the next meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.