

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee - Meeting Minutes

Oct. 12, 2023 – MPD Community Room

Committee Members	Staff	Guests
Jason Plourde, Chair	Michael Viola, MPD Chief	Kimberly Eves
Chris Labonte, BOS Representative	Craig Frye, MPD Captain	Bob Farrow
Nick Darchik, Member	Leo Lessard, DPW Director	Diane Vargonick
Gary Daniels, Member		Eli Smyrloglou
Bill Parker, Member		Typhany McNeill-Sellers

1. **Opening:**

- Chairman Plourde opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and announced that Vice Chair David Wheeler and Advisory Member Community Development Director Terrey Dolan were unable to attend. He then welcomed all in attendance, outlined the duties of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee and reminded everyone the Committee did not make decisions; they provide recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.
- Chairman Plourde stated there were four items on the agenda referred by the Board of Selectmen.

2. **Old Business:**

- Mr. Daniels moved to accept the Meeting Minutes from May 15, 2023. Mr. Darchik seconded. All were in favor. The minutes were accepted, with Mr. Parker abstaining.

3. **Agenda Item #1- Traffic Safety Concern at Union Street:**

- Bob Farrow, Milford citizen residing at 103 Union Street, presented his reasoning for writing a letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting a crosswalk be added where Park Street connects to Union Street. He discussed how over the past few years, the demographics of the neighborhood have changed resulting in higher traffic count and increased speeds. He said it was scary to watch people trying to get across the street without a crosswalk.
- Chairman Plourde outlined several safety concerns with regard to placement of crosswalks. The first safety concern is there is only a sidewalk along the west side of Union Street and no sidewalk along Park Street/the east side of Union Street. A crosswalk cannot go from a sidewalk to nothing. The second safety concern is the downgrade of Union Street being too steep for a crosswalk because of the running slope. Chairman Plourde stated adding a sidewalk on the Park Street side and a crosswalk over to Union Street further down where the conditions are more level could be something for the Town to consider in the future as they update their Master Plan. Selectman Labonte pointed out there are currently several crosswalks throughout town that lead nowhere. Chairman Plourde stated crosswalks by today's standards must be connected to something and discussed the liabilities of not doing so. Mr. Farrow questioned where motorists last see a speed limit sign heading down Union Street from Osgood Road. Chairman Plourde discussed our Town's speed limit of 30mph unless otherwise posted, what that means and cautioned that the drivers heading down Union Street may actually be going 30mph, but it may seem like they're going faster because they are headed into a more populated area. Mr. Farrow questioned how to have the speed limit lowered there. Chairman Plourde explained the process of having a speed study done, but cautioned it could result in the speed limit being raised depending upon the results. Mr. Daniels asked where the school zone ends. Chairman Plourde clarified school zones are only on the

roadways that the schools are actually on, meaning on Osgood Road but not Union Street. Mr. Farrow asked about the use of a speed radar sign in the area as a deterrent. Chief Viola said he would work with DPW Director Lessard to install a speed radar sign in that area for two weeks to a month to collect data.

- Mr. Daniels moved the Committee recommend that Chief Viola and Director Lessard work together to place a temporary speed radar sign in the area to collect data for review and no crosswalk be added at this time. Selectman Labonte seconded. All were in favor.
- Typhany McNeill-Sellers, Milford citizen who resides on Park Street and who wrote the letter to the Board of Selectmen, arrived to the meeting late. Chief Viola told her that he and Director Lessard will be working together to put a temporary speed radar sign in the area to collect data for review. Chairman Plourde also summarized for her the reasons why a crosswalk cannot be added to the location and let her know pedestrian improvements are something the town may consider when updating their Master Plan in the future.

4. **Agenda Item #2- Traffic Safety Concern at North River Road:**

- Kim Eves, Milford citizen residing at 41 North River Road, presented her traffic safety concern to the Committee. Ms. Eves explained her young daughter rides the school bus to and from school and her bus stop is across the road from their driveway which is directly across from the entrance to the MCAA fields. She also said the town transfer station is soon after that and there are multiple businesses in between the area which use heavy duty vehicles. Their driveway is also about 100 feet from a curve making it difficult to see for oncoming traffic and for them when they need to leave their driveway. Ms. Eves has witnessed motorists pass the stopped school bus and cars stopped waiting for the bus. They have even had to replace their mailbox twice which has been hit. Ms. Eves asked the Committee to review traffic flow in the area and post a blind driveway or school bus stop ahead sign, and/or consider reducing the speed limit in the area until after the transfer station.
- Chairman Plourde stated no matter what recommendation the Committee gave, it would have to go through the NHDOT District 5 Office because North River Road is their road- whether it be any kind of tree trimming, signage or striping. Any improvements or modifications at all need to go through NHDOT District 5. He said it may be as simple as checking with District 5 and inquiring if the Town can put up a sign. Selectman Labonte suggested we also ask District 5 if they could do some tree trimming on the edge of the curve to create more visibility.
- Mr. Parker moved to have DPW Director Lessard work with the NH-DOT District 5 Office to inquire about the trimming of vegetation along the north side of North River Road and the potential of installing appropriate signage. Mr. Daniels seconded. All were in favor.

5. **Agenda Item #3- Traffic Safety Concern at Myrtle Street:**

- Eli Smyrloglou, Milford citizen residing at 16 Lee An Drive, began by giving each Committee member a photocopy of an aerial view of the location on Myrtle Street. He had marked it up to simulate a parked truck with a trailer behind it. Mr. Smyrloglou said the gentlemen who lives in that house parks his truck with his trailer behind it frequently. He described the problem occurs when motorists are coming up the hill from downtown. They don't have ample line of sight for when motorists are coming down the hill when this gentleman parks his truck and trailer in that location, and they are forced into the oncoming lane of traffic to go around his parked vehicles. He said there is not enough time or space for motorists to react to an oncoming vehicle.
- Chairman Plourde clarified there are no parking restriction signs in that area. Chief Viola noted several residents on Myrtle Street appear to park on the street in front of their homes. Selectman Labonte noted the same scenario exists on many other narrow streets in town, for example

Summer Street. Chairman Plourde said two options for consideration could be for restricting on street parking or widening the road. Captain Frye cautioned we as a town need to be careful what we do, noting that unfortunately there are many older streets throughout our town that are also narrow. If we put up no parking signs there on Myrtle Street, it would be precedent setting, and we will have to put them on all the other narrow streets in town.

- Mr. Daniels asked if anyone has spoken to the owner of the house about the situation. It is possible he is not aware of the problem, and he may offer to park in his driveway instead. The Committee agreed approaching the owner is a good first step. Chief Viola said Milford Police will contact him and ask him not to park there any longer.
- Mr. Daniels moved to have the Milford Police Dept. talk to the owner to discuss the traffic safety concern. Mr. Darchik seconded. All were in favor.

6. **Agenda Item #4- Traffic Safety Concern at Mason Road:**

- Susan Browning, Milford citizen residing at 417 Mason Road, was not in attendance. She wrote a letter to the Board of Selectmen concerning speeding motorists because she has almost been hit several times while attempting to exit her driveway. She said motorists in the area come around the corner and down the road very fast with no concern for a blind driveway. Ms. Browning requested a blind driveway sign be added.
- Chairman Plourde noted traffic volumes have definitely increased along that corridor and it is vegetated along there. Director Lessard said his department had just recently mowed and trimmed the vegetation along Mason Road. Chairman Plourde said the concern may have already been improved. Director Lessard said he would go out and check the area again. Mr. Darchik said he went there two days ago, backed into Ms. Browning's driveway and noted there was a very clear view to the west. He looked to the left and noted at 409 Mason Road, there were a couple of branches from a tree very slightly blocking the view. He had no issue at all pulling out of the driveway with cars coming from either direction.
- Mr. Daniels moved to have Director Lessard go to Mason Road and check to see if there is still a sight line problem. Selectman Labonte seconded. All were in favor.

7. **Adjournment:** There being no further business. Selectman Labonte moved to adjourn. Mr. Daniels seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Dishong
Secretary