

Public Safety Committee
Council Chambers
November 18, 2015
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor David Walker, Chairman
Councilor Jake Collins
Councilor Robert Gates
Councilor Peter Lachapelle
Councilor Donald Hamann

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilor Elaine Lauterborn
Councilor Sandra Keans
Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Deputy Chief Scott Dumas, P.D
Michael Hopkins, Superintendent of Schools
Michael Provost, Executive Director Main Street
John Bozak-20 Woodman Street
Cathy Anne Auclair-20 Woodman Street
Brian Marshall-17 Woodman Street
Keady Nugent, Brook Street
Monica St Jean

Minutes

Councilor Walker brought the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Public Input

Monica St. Jean was present to discuss the Route 125 and Church Street area. She witnessed an accident; a vehicle was coming off Church Street while another vehicle was heading towards downtown Rochester on Route 125. Councilor Lachapelle stated that if Route 125 going north is backed up the vehicles cut down Church Street. He also asked how many accidents have occurred on Church Street. Deputy Chief Dumas said there have been accidents in the area, but he would have to gather the information and get back to the committee.

Michael Provost, The Executive Director of Rochester Main Street, was present to discuss the need for traffic calming measures downtown. He stated that he has been monitoring the downtown area since 2009 when he started working in downtown Rochester. He has now counted 15 pedestrians hit while in a crosswalk. He stated that bikes should be going with the vehicular traffic not on the sidewalks. He would like painted “sharrow” symbols put on the street for the bicycle traffic.

2. Linden Street-Handicap Sign

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Richard and Alice Shabbat live at 24D Linden Street. Mr. Shabbat is 99 percent confined to a wheel chair and it is hard for him to get close enough parking on the street. He is requesting a handicap parking spot in front of

his apartment building. Councilor Walker said he is not sure if there is a curb cut in this area. This was kept in committee. Mr. Bezanson will check the area out and get back to the committee.

3. Central Square-Handicap Accessibility

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Michael Provost, The Executive Director of Rochester Main Street, stated that they use Central Square near the Parson Main statue often for the events that Rochester Main Street holds. He also said that a lot of residents from the Gaffney Home, Colonial Hill and Riverside attend these events. It's difficult for the elderly to step up over the granite barriers to the grassy seating area; there are no railings or handholds to steady them. They also hold events for children such as the Wild Life Encounter and the Teddy Bear Picnic. During the children's events children have been stepping off the curbs to the sidewalk and falling. Mr. Provost is requesting to have the interior granite curbing removed and narrow the traffic lanes a little on Wakefield Street to allow two handicap parking spots for access at grade level. Councilor Walker said this may have to go to another committee because there could be a significant cost to this. Councilor Lauterborn said they should check into the Community Development Block Grant funds that are available. Councilor Walker asked Mr. Bezanson to look into the removal of granite curbing, the tapering of the grass and look into handicap spots. This was kept in committee and Mr. Bezanson will get a cost estimate and a plan together for this and report back to the committee next month.

4. Wildcat Transit- Gonic Parking Request

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. The Fire Department has received a request from a private citizen to park at the Gonic Fire Station to facilitate usage of the Wildcat Transit stop in Gonic. It was posited that this would be a safer alternative to on-street parking. Mr. Bezanson stated that DPW had discussed the request internally and with the Fire Department. The unanimous consensus between the Departments was not to allow the parking request at the Gonic Fire Station. Councilor Walker agreed with the recommendation of City staff. Councilor Lachapelle was familiar with the request and said that he would discuss the on-street parking issue in Gonic further with Blaine Cox. No action taken.

5. Harding Street/ Richardson Street Speed Limit Concerns-Signage

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Keady Nugent of Brook Street was present to talk about speeding concerns on Richardson Street and Harding Street. Councilor Walker said that the intersection of Harding Street and Preston Street is a four way stop. Councilor Lauterborn said that Richardson Street is a cut through to Lowell Street. Councilor Walker asked if the speed trailer was available. Deputy Chief Dumas said it was. They will move the speed trailer to Harding Street next and conduct more directed patrols in the area.

6. 201 Chestnut Hill Road-Blind Driveway Sign

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Deputy Chief Dumas said he checked the area out and it is difficult to get the front end of car out to see. Deputy Chief Dumas stated that if the owner's fence was not there it would be a little easier. He does feel it does warrant a sign. Councilor Walker said in the past the committee approved the "blind driveway" sign if the resident would pay for it. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to approve the "blind driveway" sign at the owner's expense. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.** Mr. Bezanson will contact the resident to let him know the request passed at the committee level if he would pay for the sign, it still has to go to the full council.

7. Leonard Street/Harrison Street-Stop Sign and Slow Children Sign Request

This was kept in committee there was no information regarding this request.

8. Speed Limit Posting- Twombly Street

Council Walker summarized the issue. Deputy Chief Dumas stated that Twombly Street is a cut through between Walnut Street and North Main Street. He said extra patrols have been conducted in the past and the recorded top speed was 47 mph; the speed limit is 30 mph. Councilor Collins said posting the speed limit will make no difference. The police department will do extra patrols and set up the speed trailer on Twombly Street after Harding Street.

9. Route 202/Salmon Falls Road/Paradise Street-Signage Request

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. A resident of Vernon Avenue submitted a letter describing a speed/sight distance issue at the intersection of Paradise Drive and Salmon Falls Road. The traffic turning from Highland Street (Route 202) to Salmon Falls Road is the problem. The vehicles pulling out of Paradise Drive onto Salmon Falls Road are almost getting hit as the cars speed around the corner from Route 202. There is a yield sign, but some vehicles accelerate right onto Salmon Falls Road. The author gave three options that may work:

1. Install a "Blind Drive" sign
2. Change "Yield" sign to a "Stop" sign
3. Cut back the brush along the edge of roadway to improve sight distance

Mr. Bezanson recommended option 3 as a measure to improve the situation. The committee agreed. Mr. Bezanson will have Public Works staff look into that.

10. Street Light Request for Anderson Lane and Franklin Street Intersection

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Mr. Bezanson said there was no street light within 50 feet of the intersection of Anderson Lane and Franklin Street. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to install a street light at the corner of Anderson Lane and Franklin Street. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gates. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

11. Crosswalk Installation on Franklin Street at Anderson Lane

Councilor Walker stated that curb cuts already exist on either side of Franklin Street at Anderson Lane, however a crosswalk has never been painted. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to paint a crosswalk on Franklin Street at Anderson Lane. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gates. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

12. Street Lights for Davis Blvd.

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. There are no street lights from 202 to almost the second intersection with Jay Way. This was kept in committee to figure out which pole(s) to place the street light(s) on.

13. No Parking on Corner of Grove Street/Highland Street

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Mrs. Raab has requested no parking on corner of Grove Street and Highland Streets. They are parking on the side of the road. Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to paint hash marks at the Corner of Grove Street and Highland Street. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. Mr. Bezanson stated they are parking off the pavement. **Councilor Lachapelle amended his motion to place a “No Parking Here To Corner” sign on Highland Street. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

14. Traffic Light issue at Cocheco Estates - Status Update

Councilor Walker updated the committee on this. There will be a traffic light at Cocheco Estates when it warrants one.

15. Traffic Flow around William Allen School (kept in committee)

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. John Bozak of 20 Woodman Street was present to discuss the ongoing issue in this area. Mr. Bozak said there has been some improvement. He said the upcoming winter months are going to be a problem. Vehicles are parking on both sides of the road. This makes it impossible for two vehicles to make it down the street. Mr. Bozak asked for a dead end sign for Woodman Street. Councilor Walker said it is not a dead end street. Mr. Hopkins the Superintendent of Schools was present to discuss the traffic issue around the Woodman Street area. Student drop-off at the William Allen School is at 8:00 AM; this is not the problem. The problem is during the afternoon pick-up. Parents waiting for their children line their cars up on Davy Anne Locke Lane and Woodman Street. Councilor Lauterborn asked who owns Davy Anne Locke Lane, the School or the City? Mr. Bezanson said he would have to do some research to answer definitively. Ms. Auclair of 20 Woodman Street said she went to William Allen School and she had to walk from Charles to Granite and doesn't see the problem with having kids walk from Charles Street. Mr. Hopkins said it's unsafe to allow

parents and buses to drive down Granite Street for student drop-off and pick-up. Councilor Collins said he has been in the area and said he has seen a lot of improvement and people should be commended for that. Councilor Gates said buses and parents could drop-off and pick-up separately. Ms. Auclair said she cannot get into her garage when the vehicles are parked in the area. Mr. Marshall of 17 Woodman Street said they should have studies done of the area. Councilor Keans said parents could pick up on Charles Street. Councilor Walker said emergency vehicles need to be able to get through; the safety of the residents in the area is paramount. Councilor Walker said there is always the “nuclear option”, which is resident only parking. Councilor Lauterborn said maybe they should have resident only parking. She also suggested having the bus pickup and the parent pick-up at different times. Mr. Hopkins said that is not an option because the buses go to the other schools as well and if the children leave earlier they lose educational time. **Councilor Gates made a motion to keep people on Charles Street, so use the nuclear option, residential parking only. This was seconded by Councilor Lachapelle. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.** Councilor Walker said they could install resident parking only signs. **Councilor Lachapelle amended the previous motion to No parking Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM and 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM, resident parking only and no standing. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gates. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

16. No Smoking Request at Ledgeview Drive (kept in committee)

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Councilor Lachapelle checked the area at least twice and saw no cigarette butts and Councilor Walker also walked the area and saw nothing as well. No action was taken; saw no issue.

17. Other

Whitehall Road - Parking Lot

Councilor Collins asked what happened to the temporary pedestrian sign that was in the crosswalk at the Whitehall Road Parking Lot. Mr. Bezanson said he'd have to check into that and see if it could be replaced. Councilor Walker said maybe a few more of them could be purchased.

Tebbetts Road

Councilor Lachapelle said coming from Pickering Road to Old Dover Road there is a shrub causing a line-of-sight problem. There are also two telephone poles that hinder the line-of-sight. Councilor Walker said the shrub has been trimmed back in the past.

Church Street - Gonic

Councilor Lachapelle said a constituent had asked to move the speed limit sign to another pole and another sign should be installed passed the entrance. Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to add a 30 mph speed limit sign on Church Street after the entrance to the

mill. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gates. Voice vote was taken, with Councilor Walker, Councilor Hamann and Councilor Collins opposed. Vote failed 3 to 2. Mr. Bezanson will have the “30 MPH Speed Limit” sign moved further to the north from the intersection.

Ward 5 Meetings - Cocheco Estates Traffic Light

Councilor Gates said during the Ward 5 meetings the residents were vocal about having a traffic light at the entrance of Cocheco Estates. Councilor Walker said it is state jurisdiction and it's in the plans when it warrants one.

Route 11 Bus Stop

Councilor Gates said the residents are happy with the bus stop being moved because there is a longer site distance.

Whitehall Road Update

Deputy Chief Dumas said the speed trailer was placed on Whitehall Road for two weeks. There were 10,000 cars; the average speed was 34 mph; and the speed limit is 35 mph.

Lowell Street

Deputy Chief Dumas said the speed trailer was placed on Lowell Street from October 13 to 31, 2015; there were 24,200 vehicles; the average speed was 33 mph; and, the speed limit is 30 mph.

Hansonville Road - No Thru Trucks

Deputy Chief Dumas said they believe the gentleman driving the truck that is causing the complaint lives in Barrington, so he needs to be able to get home. He stated he will keep an eye on the issue.

Traffic Light North Main St and Ten Rod Road

Mr. Bezanson said the timing on the traffic light at North Main and Ten Road can be changed. The quote is for \$515.00.

Councilor Hamann made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 PM. Councilor Gates seconded the motion. The motioned passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II