

Public Safety Committee
Council Chambers
January 20, 2016
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Donald Hamann
Councilor Ray Barnett
Councilor Robert Gates
Councilor James Gray

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilor Peter Lachapelle

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Deputy Chief Scott Dumas, P.D.
Matt Pappas, Vice-Chairman
Rochester School Board
John Bozak, 20 Woodman Street
Katrina, 2 Bermuda Lane
Karen Stokes, Rochester resident
Debbie McGlidden Rochester resident
Virginia Murrey, Rochester resident
Nichole Roy, Plante Street
Scott Laughlin, 9 Granite Street
Mike Hopkins, superintendent of schools
Paul Lynch, Chairman of Rochester School board
Karen Ensco, Balsam Lane

Minutes

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

1. Approve Minutes from December 16, 2015.

The first order of business was to approve the December 16, 2015 minutes. ***Councilor Gates made a motion to approve the December 16, 2015 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gray. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

2. Public Input

Councilor Hamann asked if there was any member of the public present to discuss any topic other than the Woodman Street parking and traffic concerns. Matt Pappas, who is a Gonic resident, was present to talk about the speeding issue on Pickering Road. He had spoken to the crossing guard that is in the area and she stated to him that speed was an issue. He said that tractor trailers use Pickering Road to get to Dover. He suggested

expanding the school zone to include a portion of Pickering Road; adding more signage warning motorists of the crosswalk, or installing a blinking light; anything to slow the traffic on Pickering Road down. Deputy Chief Dumas said they would place the speed trailer on Pickering Road to see what the speeds are and follow up with enforcement.

3. Woodman Street - parking and traffic concerns

Councilor Gray made a motion to move item 6 up on the agenda since there were members of the audience present to discuss Woodman Street parking and traffic concerns. John Bozak of 20 Woodman Street was present to discuss the ongoing parking and traffic concerns. Since there are new members on the Public Safety Committee, Mr. Bozak gave a little background on the ongoing concerns in the area. He stated for the last two years there has been an ongoing struggle to work with the William Allen School to come up with a reasonable solution to the parking and traffic concerns. There are a large number of vehicles that utilize Woodman Street and Davyanne Locke Lane for on-street parking, which is the current route for vehicles dropping off and picking up students at the school. He said in the morning the drop off/pick up vehicles are there for 20 minutes and in the afternoon it's an hour and a half. The residents worry that if there is another fire in the area, emergency vehicles will not be able to get through. There was a fire in the area in 2015 and if it happened 20 minutes later it could have completely burnt the building down because all the cars would have been in the area. Mr. Bozak stated that at the December 2015 Public Safety Committee it was decided to implement the so-called "nuclear" option, which would have permitted only resident parking or standing in the area during drop off/pick up times. Parents were upset that they would be restricted in this way resulting in off-site parking and walking children to the school. Mr. Bozak stated that he does not want to stop the parents from bringing their children; he wants the area accessible to emergency vehicles at all times. Councilor Gates said he read the document. He asked Mr. Bozak if the committee changed to redirect traffic to Granite Street would it help the issue. Mr. Bozak said yes it would be the same as before. Katrina of 2 Bermuda Lane has a child that attends William Allen School. She stated that Mr. Bozak has a box truck that is consistently parked on the side of Davyanne Locke Lane that contributes to the traffic flow problem. She stated that she is looking for a solution to the problem, if traffic is redirected to Granite Street then there would be the same issues with the residents of Granite Street. Councilor Gates asked her what her plan would be. She said Woodman and Myrtle have a crossing guard there and let a few vehicles at a time enter the area. She said she doesn't see the problem. There are 5 buses in the afternoon. She said it was a quick process not an hour and a half. Councilor Gates stated there are residents in the area that walk to school and they are safe, he doesn't see an issue with allowing children to walk to school in this area. He said a solution is needed. He stated that both parties need to figure out a solution and bring the issue back

to the committee. Mr. Bozak said that the residents were happy last December with the “nuclear” option and Granite Street. Nichole Roy was present to discuss the issue and to bring forth a few options that may help the problem. She stated that the morning drop off is not a problem.

Option 1: The City would budget for a bus to bring all car ride students from William Allen School to St. Mary's Church on Lowell Street where parents would be waiting. The cost for the year would be approximately \$25,000.00. The bus company might be able to work on the price. This price would not be in this year's budget. This option would eliminate all pick up traffic in the area around the school. The bus company also offered 2 no cost bus options. The first would be to take a half route bus from the high school and middle school route to pick up the car riders at William Allen no later than 3:30 PM and have them dropped off at St. Mary's. The other no cost option would be for the R7 bus that normally travels Lowell Street to pick up the car riders and drop them off at St. Mary's before heading to McClelland, putting their schedule behind by 10-15 minutes.

Option 2: (Charles St. Wait) This option would be similar to what the city was doing in the beginning of the year and pay 2 crossing guards to only allow 6 cars at a time on Davyanne Locke Lane. The cost of this option for the school year would be \$8,065.00 to include background checks.

Option 3: (No Parking Woodman) No parking on Woodman Street for residents or William Allen parents during the morning commute 7:45-8:30 AM. or the afternoon pick up 2:45-3:30 PM. Through traffic only would be allowed and the parking attendant would monitor this during her current route during school days.

Option 4: (Grade specific release) Bus pick up in front of the school would stay the same but to reduce traffic on Woodman and Davyanne Locke Lane parent pick up times would be set for grade levels 1-5. Younger children would be picked up with the older siblings. Councilor Hamann asked if Ms. Roy talked with the residents. She said no. Karen Stokes said she appreciates the help and although there is no perfect solution the concern should be the safety of the children first and foremost. Debbie McGlidden said she is the guardian of her 5th grade grandson that goes to William Allen School. She said that during the 1/2 hour to 45 minutes in the morning and afternoon, the parents have been courteous. Her concern is that there is a box truck and vehicle parked on the “wrong side” of a one way street. She stated she was a fire fighter and EMT for many years and she said that people move during an emergency like a fire. The school has been there for a long time; the homes in the area used to be single family homes and many are now multifamily homes. Virginia Murrey picks up her two grandchildren and usually parked on Charles Street until the snow banks piled up. She stated it is not safe on Charles Street right now and not sure of the solution, but it's not safe. She said she goes down Woodman Street and every day the box truck is there; she gets there at 2:58 PM and is home by 3:15 PM, not a long wait. Scott Laughlin of 9 Granite Street said that parents

are not paying attention, they're smoking and throwing their cigarettes butts out the window and kids are getting out on the street side. Councilor Gray said that the parents and residents can either work among themselves or talk to the Public Safety Committee. Councilor Hamann said the decision was made and then put on hold, not rescinded. He said he does not think a decision will be made tonight. Councilor Hamann suggested that the residents and parents come up with a solution together. Councilor Gray said the vehicles and buses should be separated for safety. The 5 buses could go down Woodman Street to Dave Anne Locke Lane and the vehicles onto Granite Street. Councilor Gray asked to have the bus company check whether a bus could make the turns safely. Councilor Gray said the cost of the crossing guard would be lower because they would only be needed for the afternoon pick up. He also stated that the snow on Charles, Granite and Myrtle can be taken care of, they have a snow budget. Brian Marshall of 17 Woodman Street said when the construction happens there will have to be another solution. Karen Ensco of Balsam Lane said that residents had complaints of blocked driveways; maybe signs would help. She said to lessen the vehicles on Woodman maybe only 6 cars should enter a time. Mr. Bozak said that the safety of the children is not necessarily the issue, they are in no danger. Paul Lynch, Chairman of the school board was there and said they would work with the residents and the parents and that their special school board meeting was Thursday January 21, 2016; this issue will be addressed at that time. ***Councilor Gray made a motion to place "no parking" signs at the discretion of DPW to allow buses the ability to utilize the Woodman Street/Daveyanne Locke Lane route. Councilor Gates seconded the motion. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

4. Gonic Crosswalk (resident email)

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. The City received an email from Elizabeth Redman regarding slowing traffic down on Pickering Road. This request was also brought up during public input. Deputy Chief Dumas said the speed trailer will be placed on Pickering Road. This was kept in committee until next month to get the information from the speed trailer.

5. Franklin Street - Sidewalk Safety Concerns (resident letter)

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. A letter was received from Dot Callaghan of 108 Franklin Street. She stated in her letter that there is a safety concern in the area of the new crosswalk on Franklin at Anderson Lane. Vehicles cut down Franklin Street from the Maine side. She also suggested that brush and trees need to be trimmed back between 100 and 116 Franklin Street. Mr. Bezanson will have DPW take a look at the area.

6. Betts/Cross Road Intersection Concerns (staff update)

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. Mr. Bezanson stated that DPW trimmed back the brush on the corner. He did not yet have an exact answer regarding the property line and what further steps could be taken to improve line-of-sight at the intersection. Kept in committee and Mr. Bezanson will obtain more information regarding this area.

7. Other

Striping Near Gonic Post Office

Mr. Bezanson said the striping near the Gonic Post office driveway will be completed in the spring; the plan is to stripe approximately 20 feet to the south and 40 feet to the north.

Milton Road-Cumberland Farms

Mr. Bezanson said that DPW has signs that read "No Parking Between Signs", and rather than order new signs, plans to use these signs at this location. The Public Safety Committee had no issue with the use of the signs already in stock.

Twombly Street

Mr. Bezanson said the 30 mph signs are on order and not sure when they will be installed given that we are in the middle of winter.

Davis Boulevard - Streetlights

Mr. Bezanson said the streetlights were in the process of being ordered. He noted that one of the new streetlights and one of the existing streetlights are not aligned at the future proposed intersections of Jeffrey Lane and Keith Drive. Councilor Gray asked that a note be sent to the Planning Department to convey the desire to include a condition on future development that the streetlights be moved to the intersections at the time the streets are developed.

Estes/202 Intersection

Mr. Bezanson said they had heard from DOT regarding the safety improvement project at the intersection of Estes Road and Route 202. DOT stated that bids were due in January

for the demolition of the house on the corner, as well as other line-of-sight improvements. It was noted that construction was expected to begin in early 2016.

Washington Street/Fillmore Boulevard

Deputy Chief Dumas said directed patrols were done between December 22 and December 29, 2015. There are speeding problems in the area, going between 41 and 50 in a 30 mph zone.

Knight Street/Columbus Avenue

Deputy Chief Dumas said since January of 2013 there have been 21 accidents; 17 have been in the parking lot; only 3 of the accidents pertain to the safety of the intersection. Making Knight Street a one-way to Upham Street would alleviate some of the issues. Mr. Bezanson stated that the Committee may wish to maintain two-way traffic to the parking lot on Knight Street that is owned by Frisbie Foundation, potentially only restricting the end of Knight Street at the Columbus Avenue intersection. This was kept in committee for more information.

Woodman Street

Councilor Gates wanted to make a comment regarding the Woodman Street parking issues. He stated that the kids will eventually move on to a different school because William Allen School is only K-5, but the property owners may be there for a longer period of time.

Councilor Gates made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 PM. Councilor Gray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II.