

The Westfield Traffic Commission

January 10, 2023

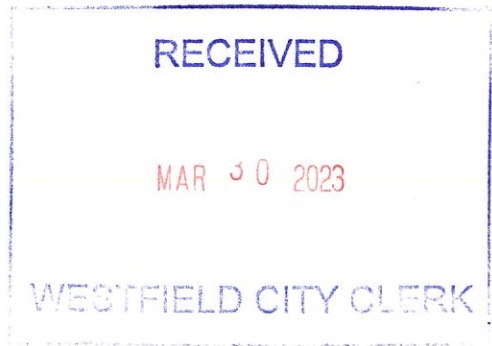
The Westfield Traffic Commission special meeting was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 via remote participation and also in person in room 315 @ City Hall, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA.

Roll Call: Comm. McMordie – Present – Acting Comm. Cain – Present - Comm. Mejias – Present – Comm. Clark – Present – Comm. Gadbois – Present

Approval and Release of Minutes dated March 16, 2022 and September 21, 2022: Commissioner Clark made a motion to approve and release the minutes dated March 16, 2022 and September 21, 2022. Commissioner Gadbois seconded this motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes
Commissioner Clark – Yes
Commissioner Gadbois – Yes
Commissioner Mejias – Yes
Commissioner Cain - Yes



OPEN PARTICIPATION - None

OLD BUSINESS:

Pearl St – “One side of street parking” – Law Dept./City Council - Mejias: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Linden Ave – “One side of street parking” – Law Dept./City Council - Mejias: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Orange @ Elm St – Traffic study - Cressotti: The traffic study showed the warrants were not met for a traffic light at this intersection. This item can be removed from the agenda.

Montgomery Rd @ Russellville Rd – Street/stop sign - Mejias: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Montgomery Rd – speed – Additional speed signs in the #500 area – Speed study when weather permits - Mejias: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Notre Dame speed sign – Cain: Commissioner Cain said that speed signs have been installed by the DPW. This item will be removed from the agenda.

Turnpike Industrial @ Lockhouse Rd – Stop sign – Cain: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Arnold @ Elm & Elm @ Franklin St – “Do Not Block Intersection” – Mejias: Commissioner Mejias said that the “do not block the box” at Elm St and Franklin St had already been voted in some time ago. It was painted and since has faded. She wants the intersection of Arnold and Thomas St added to that. She would like

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both intersections to be done as soon as the weather is better. Commissioner Cain said the DPW can take care of that. Commissioner Mejias said that the Gas and Electric Department has agreed to allow signs on the stop lights at these intersections as well. Commissioner Clark made a motion to add Arnold St and Thomas St to the “do not block the box” intersection and to paint it at the same time Franklin St and Elm St are painted. Commissioner Gadbois seconded that motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes
Commissioner Clark – Yes
Commissioner Gadbois – Yes
Commissioner Mejias – Yes
Commissioner Cain - Yes

Meadow @ Dubois Crosswalk signs - Figy: This is complete and can be removed from the agenda.

Kellogg St/north off of Orange – One side of street parking: The Traffic Bureau went and spoke with all residents on this street. Unanimously, they all agreed they would like to see one side of street parking on this street. The width of this road is only 21 feet wide. Commissioner Clark made a motion that there be no parking on the west side of Kellogg St north of Orange St. Commissioner Cain seconded that motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes
Commissioner Clark – Yes
Commissioner Gadbois – Yes
Commissioner Mejias – Yes
Commissioner Cain - Yes

Daylighting intersections – Matthews-Kane: City Councilor Matthews-Kane said that she is concerned about crosswalk safety. She said Traffic Commissioner McMordie pointed out that there are already intersections that do not allow parking near them. She is hoping the more dangerous ones are included in this. She would like no parking signs added to these locations. She would like to see this done at the crosswalk at St. Mary’s and near the other schools. Commissioner Mejias said she has spoken to Commissioner McMordie about this as well. She said that the ordinances already show that there is no parking up to 20 feet from the end of each intersection. City Councilor Matthews-Kane said she is looking for signage or enforcement. She requested a study of the most dangerous intersections within the down town area. Commissioner Clark suggested the police department start more enforcement in these areas. Commission Mejias said that can be done. She said they can also put out on social media notifying the public of the ordinance. Commission Cain suggested that the trailer could also be put up in these intersections. Commissioner Mejias said she can do this too. She will look at the numbers and come up with a list of intersections. City Councilor Matthews-Kane had also suggested that these areas be painted with no parking on the roadway. Commissioner McMordie said her concern with this is that they already had problems with the line painting company this year. Commissioner Clark said he would like to see this left on the agenda with the notion that the Police Dept. will notify the public in the meantime, while they identify the most dangerous intersections. Commissioner Cain said he will also look into the possibility of getting these areas painted. The commission agreed.

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Holland Ave – Handicap parking (Woman’s Club) – Mejias: Commissioner Mejias said that Chief Valliere has been working with Mary O’Connell on this. There are some ADA compliance issues that need to be addressed. There will be a temporary additional handicap spot put out for events until the other issues are brought up to compliance.

E Silver St – From intersection of Broad St to S Meadow – Reduce speed to 25 MPH – Figy: Commissioner Mejias said that she did do a study on this road. The numbers did not show a need to reduce the speed. They are working on making 25 MPH city wide in certain areas. This street will be addressed at that time.

Hunters Slope – No trucks/turn around sign – Mejias/Onyski: City Councilor Onyski said he is hoping to have a sign added at this location that says no trucks or local deliveries only. He said he would like it to be just a warning sign. Commissioner Mejias said she has spoken to different city departments on this and they have all agreed that since this is a private way, they won’t object to a sign going up, but the residents will have to fund it themselves. She would like the residents to contact her before the sign goes up for her to make sure the sign is agreeable.

Main St @ White St – add crosswalk – Mejias/McMordie: Commissioner Mejias said there is a request for a crosswalk at this location. She said there is already a crosswalk to the east of this location. It is very close to where the new one is requested. Commissioner McMordie said that any crosswalk has to be ADA compliant. She said to make this crosswalk ADA compliant would require re doing the curbing which would also require the info structure to be re done. She does not recommend this. It would require a lot of work and be extremely costly. Commissioner Mejias said the requested crosswalk is approximately 12 steps from where the current existing cross walk is located. Commissioner Clark made a motion to remove this item from the agenda with no action taken. Commissioner Gadbois seconded this item.

Roll Call:

- Commissioner McMordie – Yes
- Commissioner Clark – Yes
- Commissioner Gadbois – Yes
- Commissioner Mejias – Yes
- Commissioner Cain – Yes

354 North Rd @ Root Rd guardrail – Mejias/Cain: Commissioner Mejias said she reached out to the homeowner to ask some further questions. She has not heard back yet. She would like this item tabled until she can speak to the resident. The commission agreed.

Court St @ Washington St – U Turn – Figy: Commissioner Mejias said she is not in favor of adding a U turn at this location. Ryan Moltenbrey is the owner of 53 Court St. He said that the customers and patients of this location often times have a hard time coming eastbound as there is an island covering their first entrance. They would like to see a center bi directional turn lane added. This item will be referred to the Engineering Department for a traffic study. This will be tabled until that study can be complete.

Angelica @ Old Quarry – Stop signs – Mejias: Commissioner Clark made a motion to add a stop sign at the intersection of Angelica Dr at Old Quarry Rd. Commissioner Gadbois seconded that motion.

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Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes
Commissioner Clark – Yes
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Commissioner Mejias – Yes
Commissioner Cain – Yes

Crosswalk on Broad St @ Forum House #55: Resident Kevin McClair said he is a member of the Forum House. He said getting across the street is difficult. There are only crosswalks at the ends of the street. It is a long street and having another crosswalk added would be very helpful. He said there are numerous pedestrians that go to different business on that street. They cross all along the street rather than the crosswalks that are at each end due to the location of where they need to go. Having another crosswalk would also help for safety purposes. Commissioner McMordie said that she does recognize that Broad St is a very long stretch without any crosswalks. She said that Broad St needs a revitalization. She said she is not a fan of mid-street crosswalks, especially where there is not proper lighting. She would like to add this street to a grant opportunity the city is working on called Complete Streets. She said that with this grant, they will get funding to get lighting, signaling and add the crosswalks. She said this will ensure that the crosswalks are as safe as possible. She believes this will be the best option. She said this street will be a top priority when that grant is received. Commissioner Clark said that he drives down this street daily and sees jay walkers all day. He would like to see a crosswalk added. He does not feel the commission should wait years while they wait for the grant to add the crosswalk. City Councilor Matthews-Kane said she has learned a lot about crosswalks during her time as a City Councilor. She said mid crosswalks are very dangerous if they are not done right, because they give a false sense of safety. The last 2 pedestrian deaths in Westfield happened in a crosswalk. She said she agrees with what Commissioner McMordie said and as much as she does not want to have to wait, she thinks it should be done safely and correctly. Commissioner Mejias said to just add a crosswalk would lead a pedestrian to believe they are safe. She said speed is a big concern on that road. Enforcement is done regularly on this street due to the amount of pedestrians and speeding that happens on this street. She agrees that it is best to wait for the grant before the crosswalk is added for safety concerns. Kevin McClair said as long as he knows it will be taken care of and on the agenda to make it a safe crosswalk, he is fine with it. Commissioner Cain said he can have yellow watch for pedestrian signs added in the meantime. Commissioner Mejias said she can also add message boards that read high pedestrian traffic.

Foss St @ Lawton Ave stop sign – Mejias: Commissioner Clark made a motion to add a stop sign on Foss St at Lawton Ave. Commissioner Gadbois seconded that motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes
Commissioner Clark – Yes
Commissioner Gadbois – Yes
Commissioner Mejias – Yes
Commissioner Cain - Yes

Elm St northbound traffic left turn only over Great River Bridge: Commissioner Mejias said they just can't add signs to the trestle. She said they can add more signs to the existing posts and add painting. Commissioner Clark said he would like a sign that either says left turn only or a sign that shows the other lanes going straight and the left lane turning left. Commissioner Clark made a motion to add a sign on Elm St

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northbound before the bridge and add one to the existing post at the bridge that reads left lane must turn left and to paint arrows on the left lane in the spring. Commissioner Gadbois seconded this motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner McMordie – Yes

Commissioner Clark – Yes

Commissioner Gadbois – Yes

Commissioner Mejias – Yes

Commissioner Cain - Yes

Discuss how to eliminate confusion for southbound traffic at clock – tabled in 2018: Commissioner Mejias said she has spoken to the Gas & Electric Dept. and they said it would not be a huge issue to try and reset the first light on a trial basis and see how it works. The commission agreed to this.

Lack of lane markings Elm St/Orange St/Westwood area – Clark: These areas were just painted and yet the paint is already fading. The DPW is looking into hiring a better line painting company. All of these areas will be addressed.

Engine Brake signs Southampton Rd: Commissioner Mejias said she did speak with MA DOT and looked at the city ordinances. Southampton Rd from North Rd to the Mass Pike entrance already has a no engine break ordinance. She asked MA DOT about signage. They said they do not put those signs up because they do not feel they are enforceable. The trucks are required to have engine breaks for safety purposes. This is a state highway and they will not erect signs. The City does not erect signs on state property either. Commissioner Gadbois asked if the City will put up a yellow advisory sign. Commissioner Cain said he can look into it. Commissioner Mejias said she will reach out again to MA DOT and see if they will allow the City to put it up.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion on rotary on Western Ave @ Bates – Mejias: Commissioner McMordie said this intersection is dangerous. She thinks a rotary in this area will be a great addition. They are in the preliminary design stage of this. Traffic, speed and accident studies are currently taking place. This item will be table until those studies are done and more information can be brought before the commission.

Truck traffic on North Road: Resident Cortney Danneker read a letter she previously sent to the commission. She said that they have lived on North Rd for a long time. The truck traffic has gotten significantly worse. This area is zoned rural residential. The White Oak School is across the street from them. She works from home at times and the truck traffic makes this difficult. The walls in their home vibrate occasionally from the trucks. She feels the primary source of the truck traffic consists of solid waste trucks, tractor trailer trucks and dump trucks. She is requesting that the commission reach out to Casella and request that they use an alternate route as the previous owner had done, prohibit heavy commercial truck traffic on North Road (between Southampton Rd and Root Rd) and to establish signage to prohibit the use of engine brakes in this area. City Councilor Onyski said he believes there is an existing agreement with the trash company and the City regarding the route their trucks should take. He believes this was part of their special permit. He is going to look into this. He also suggested that the Danneker's contact their City Councilor Morganelli. Commissioner Mejias said she will have a truck study done in this area. She will also reach out to the trash company herself regarding the issue.

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Traffic light at Holyoke Rd @ Springdale Rd – Mejias: Commissioner Mejias said she would like to see a traffic light installed at Holyoke Rd and Springdale Rd. She said this intersection has had 85 accidents since 2017. The commission has tried numerous measures to try and resolve this problem. None have worked. She believes traffic lights are needed. Commissioner McMordie said that she thinks this is a fantastic idea. She said her only concern is that this intersection is getting looked at as part of a study and she doesn't know if adding traffic lights may alter the data of the study. She said she would have to coordinate with the company doing the study first. Commissioner Mejias said she understands this concern, but she thinks the number of crashes that have happened at this intersection warrant for a traffic light. Commissioner McMordie said they could always do it and speak with the company as well. Commissioner Clark suggested adding LED stop signs instead of the 2 that are already there. Commissioner Mejias said there are 2 LED stop signs currently. She said the commission has also already had the lines measured to ensure the stop signs are in the correct location, had the trees removed in that area and had additional signage added. Commissioner Clark said that a traffic light will cause excess noise in that area and the neighbors may not be in favor of it. City Councilor Onyski said safety is paramount. The noise is a consequence and it is a legitimate complaint from residents in the neighborhood. He said it will also cause damage to the road from large trucks stopping there. He also noted that adding a traffic light will require the residents to adjust. City Councilor Onyski asked if an independent group has looked at this intersection and done a private study to offer suggestions. The commissioners did not believe that had been done. Commissioner Mejias said that the end result will be to slow down the traffic. Commissioner Gadbois asked if a flashing yellow light on Holyoke Rd and a flashing red light on Springdale Rd would help. He said the vehicles traveling down Holyoke Rd don't always notice that as an intersection. Commissioner Clark suggested a flashing sign on Springdale that says crossing traffic does not stop. Commissioner Mejias said she can look at additional signage on Springdale to enhance the approach. Commissioner Cain said if vehicles are not stopping he doesn't know if additional signage will help. He said the DPW can add a sign on Springdale. Commissioner Mejias said she can also look into the accidents in that area and see what direction the driver at fault was traveling in to try and figure out which area is causing the problem. In the meantime, the DPW will paint "stop" on the road way and add more signage. Commissioner McMordie said she can also have the company that is doing the study look at this intersection as well. This item will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

4 Way stop Western Ave @ N. West Road – Mejias: Commissioner Mejias said that there were 6 accidents since 2018 at this location. Commissioner Cain said he can add blinking lights to the existing signs. He said he can do that this week. If there are any future problems, the commission will look at this again.

Lower the speed limits in the Orange St, Washington St, Pearl St, Brookline Ave, Moseley Ave and Meadow St neighborhoods to take advantage of the 2016 Municipal Modernization Act, which allows communities to reduce speed limits to 25 miles per hour on thickly settled roads and on roadways in the business district: Commissioner Mejias said this was brought forth by City Councilor Figy. City Councilor Matthews-Kane said that in 2016 a new law was passed that you don't have to look at warrants anymore. You can just say these streets should be 25 MPH. She suggested the commission double check with legal on this. She also said that just about a week ago, on his last day in office, Charlie Baker signed another law to say that Cities can do this for state highways as well. Commissioner Mejias said she will have to look into this. She said this will affect the 2016 act. She said 3 surrounding Cities have already done this. She is going to contact the other cities to get guidance as well. This will be tabled for the next meeting.

No parking this side of street during specified hours on Hamlin Place: Commissioner Mejias said that she has received complaints from residents in this area regarding parking on Hamlin Place while parents are

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dropping off and picking up their children during school hours. It is a very narrow road and when a vehicle is parked on it, it makes getting out of your driveway extremely difficult. They are looking to have no parking on the west side of the street during pick up and drop off times. The commission decided to table this item for further review. This will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

Next Meeting – March 15, 2023 6:00 p.m.

At 8:08 PM Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Gadbois seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

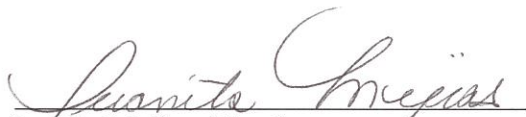
Commissioner McMordie – Yes

Commissioner Clark – Yes

Commissioner Gadbois – Yes

Commissioner Mejias – Yes

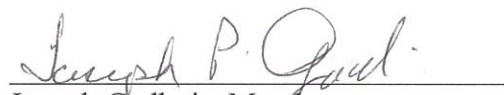
Commissioner Cain - Yes



Juanita Mejias, Member



Richard Clark, Member



Joseph Gadbois, Member



Francis Cain, Acting Member



Allison McMordie, Member

3/15/23
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