

The Westfield Traffic Commission Regular Meeting

March 21, 2018

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WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

The Westfield Traffic Commission regular meeting was held on **Wednesday, March 21, 2018, in Room 315A** at 59 Court Street, Westfield, MA.

Roll Call: Comm. Camerota – Present – Comm. Billips – Absent - Comm. Cressotti – Present - Comm. Boldini – Present

Representing Commissioner Billips is Casey Berube. Also present for tonight's meeting is City Councilor Figy and City Councilor Surprise.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED DECEMBER 20, 2017: Commissioner Cressotti made a motion to approve the minutes dated December 20, 2017. Commissioner Boldini seconded that motion. All in favor.

OPEN PARTICIPATION – None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Paper Mill Road:** Commissioner Camerota stated that the state has requested additional information. He is hoping to have it sent out by the end of next week.
- B. **Springdale Rd Curve – Signage:** Commissioner Camerota said there are 2 signs there already but he would like to have an additional sign put up that shows the speed limit. Pro Tempore Commissioner Berube said that he spoke to the resident of the first house on the curve and that he was looking for a sign placed as a motorist is coming up the hill indicating a curve ahead. DPW has a sign in inventory they could use for this and there is a utility pole there already which they could utilize. Commissioner Camerota said he would also like a chevron sign at the other side of the curve as well. Pro Tempore Commissioner Berube said he will take care of both signs.
- C. **Root Road – Speed & Trucks:** This is still being analyzed. This will be tabled until a future meeting.
- D. **Root Road – Signage:** The residents of Root Road are looking to have additional no parking signs posted all the way to North Road. Commissioner Boldini made a motion to extend the existing no parking ordinance on Root Rd and extend it to North Rd and have signs posted. Commissioner Cressotti seconded that motion. All in favor.
- E. **Streatery Pilot Program Proposal for Skyline Trading Company:** City Councilor Surprise said that Skyline Trading Company is hoping to create an outdoor eating area using 2 parking spaces in front of the establishment. He showed the Commission an example of what they would like to do. They are looking to do a pilot program and see how this would work. They have already spoken to the License Commission and were told they just need to file to amend their current liquor license and verify that there are not any current ordinances that they would be in violation of. They are looking to have this set up from May to August or September, weather permitting. He said he knows the Commission was concerned about the speed and had previously discussed reducing the speed on that section of Elm Street. Commissioner Camerota said the Commission has the authority to create what is called a safety zone and reduce the speed to 20 MPH. Councilor Surprise said he would be in favor of that and also having a jersey barrier on the side where traffic will be coming from. Commissioner Camerota noted that the Traffic Commission liked the idea when it was originally presented. There are issues that need to be looked at though. The City Council would have to waive the open container law. Who would be responsible for the barriers? Commissioner Boldini said that the License Commission would be able to extend their liquor license to include outside. Councilor Surprise said that the amendment to their license would allow them to serve alcohol outside as long as a customer is not walking to and from the inside eating area with alcohol. Commissioner Camerota said there is still an ordinance regarding open containers that would need to be waived on this part of Elm Street for the time period they are looking to have the outside eatery opened. The goal is not only to create more seating for Skyline, but also to create more foot traffic into downtown. Councilor Surprise said he was also going to see if the music business next door to Skyline would be interested in giving up their parking spot for this as well. He hasn't spoken to them yet, but he feels they may be interested. Commissioner Camerota asked Councilor Surprise if he thinks any other business' have an interest in this. Councilor Surprise said that other restaurants in the area have enough space that they already have small outside areas to eat. Commissioner Boldini said that the Commission had previously expressed their concerns about having customers sitting so close to moving

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traffic. The current plans presented have customers sitting approximately 8 ½ feet back with wooden decking surrounding them. Commissioner Cressotti said that he still has concerns. He said they need more exact details for these plans. There needs to be more of a separation zone between a pedestrian and the traffic. He thinks it's a great idea and would bring life to the downtown area, but he needs more information before he can give it his approval. Commissioner Boldini asked how wide the barrier should be. Commissioner Cressotti said that it should be wide enough so someone sitting could not put their arm out into traffic. He thinks there should be planters the entire length. He said that the details to make the decision are just not here. He said that Skyline needs to also look at the space they will actually gain from this after the width of the barriers is decided and the expense it will be. The City is not going to pay for the barriers, put them in, remove them or store them. Commissioner Boldini said perhaps putting up lattice would block a customer from reaching through it. Commissioner Camerota said he would like to put this on the round table agenda so they can discuss it. Councilor Surprise asked the Commission to email him their concerns so he can have it addressed and ready to present. The Commission agreed to do this.

- F. **Crosswalks on Pleasant St – Councilor Surprise:** City Councilor Surprise said he has received a request from residents to put a crosswalk in at Pearl St and Pleasant St. There are a lot of children that live in this neighborhood. This is a heavy traffic area. The only crosswalks are at the ends of Pleasant St. This is a far walk just to cross the street. The Commission will look at it and come back with a recommendation at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **White St – Ft Meadow School – Speed:** Pro Tempore Commissioner Berube said that the DPW replaced 2 crosswalk signs on White St and the stop sign on Cherry St today. Commissioner Camerota said a request had come in for additional signage which has been put in place. Another part of the request was to look at speeding on that road. The Police Department did numerous speed studies and found it wasn't a concern.
- B. **Chapel St – Westfield Bank – No Parking Zone:** Westfield Bank is requesting a no parking zone on either side of both their entrance and exit. It is extremely difficult for cars to pull in and out when other cars are parking there. They included a diagram in their request which was shown to the Commission. Commissioner Cressotti made a motion to create a no parking zone on either side of Chapel St near the entrance and exit to Westfield Bank. Pro Tempore Commissioner Berube seconded that motion. All in favor. No parking markings will be painted on Street.
- C. **Main St – Senior Center Parking – Ordinance Change:** There was designated parking on Main St for the Senior Center. The Senior Center is no longer there. Councilor Figy is requesting this ordinance be eliminated. Commissioner Camerota will write it up and send it to City Council for approval.
- D. **North Rd – Truck Route:** Commissioner Camerota said the Commission received an email about tractor trailer traffic on North Rd. The traffic is coming from Servistar Industrial Way and cutting down North Rd to get to Southampton Rd at the intersection due to the difficulty of pulling out on Southampton Rd from Servistar. Commissioner Boldini noted that Southampton Rd is a state highway. Commissioner Cressotti said he looked at putting a traffic light on Southampton Rd to accommodate residents and break the traffic flow some time ago. The only area that met the criteria then was at the North Middle School entrance. The Commission could look at it at a later date, if the City has the funding to do a study of this area. Commissioner Cressotti said the Air National Guard is looking to put an entrance on Southampton Road which could trigger some funding for a study. Commissioner Cressotti said it's the City's desire to have a loop of truck traffic. Commissioner Camerota said that the residents concern is that the road wasn't designed for truck traffic. He said the Commission will review this at a later time.
- E. **Ridgecrest Dr & Little River – Traffic Light:** This topic was brought before the Legislative and Ordinance Committee and City Councilor Figy wanted to know if the Traffic Commission had any information on it. This is not a high accident area. It's not an extremely difficult area to get out of. Commissioner Cressotti said he will continue to investigate options for funding this. Every year he puts this in the budget, it has been denied. Commissioner Boldini asked if this was looked into by MADOT when they recently redid that area. Commissioner Cressotti said they did not.
- F. **Request from Officer Sienkiewicz to Eliminate the Parking Space on West Side of Elm Street at Crosswalk to Bartlett St:** A youth was struck by a motorist while trying to cross the street using the crosswalk. There was a car parked in the parking space which blocked the view of both the pedestrian and the driver. Motorists driving southbound are unable to see a pedestrian in the crosswalk if there is a vehicle parking in that parking space. Commissioner

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Cressotti said there was a similar problem at a different crosswalk and they decided to raise the crosswalk. He is hesitant to remove a parking space because parking is extremely limited in that area. This is the first time anything has happened in that area. The Commission agreed to review the area and discuss it again at a later meeting.

Next Meeting – June 20, 2018

6:58 PM Commissioner Boldini made a motion to adjourn. Pro Tempore Commissioner Berube seconded the motion. All in favor.



John A. Camerota, Commission Chairman



Mark Cressotti, Member



Brian Boldini, Member



David Billips, Member