

The Westfield Traffic Commission

June 24, 2020

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The Westfield Traffic Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 via remote participation and broadcast on Channel 15.

Roll Call: Comm. McCabe – Present – Comm. Billips – Absent - Comm. Billips Designee Casey Berube – Present - Comm. Cressotti – Present – Comm. Clark – Present – Comm. Gadbois – Present

OPEN PARTICIPATION

Due to the emergency order by Governor Baker’s office regarding Covid-19, the public participation portion of the meeting will not be held.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bailey Dr. update – Planning Board: Commissioner McCabe said that on March 17, 2020 the residents of Bailey Drive went before the planning commission. They were told they needed to have their road designated as a city road. It is currently a private way. The traffic commission does not have a jurisdiction on any road that is not a city way. The traffic commission cannot make any changes to this road until that time. Commissioner Cressotti said that he thinks the planning board is wrong and he doesn’t believe the traffic commission’s abilities are limited. Commissioner McCabe said that his understanding upon what he has read is that the traffic commission does not have authority on private ways. As of this date, the residents of Bailey Drive have not brought this request before city council to make Bailey Drive a public way.

Traffic complaint Russellville Rd & Deer Path Lane: Commissioner McCabe said both he and Sergeant Mejias met with the resident of Deer Path Lane who had brought this complaint to the traffic commission. He said they broke down the accidents and where they are occurring. They are occurring more on the opposite side of Russellville Road. The resident would like to see more signage warning drivers of children at play and to slow down. Commissioner Cressotti said there is a sign there but they could look to put in new signs. Commissioner Clark said that Russellville Road to Cabot Road is now 30 MPH. That was done by Chief Camerota. Commissioner McCabe said there is no paperwork on a study ever being done. He said to reduce the speed there must be houses for a quarter of a mile stretch of less than 200 feet apart consecutively which would then make this area considered thickly settled. This area does not meet the criteria. The only other way to change the speed is to go through MA DOT and do a study. Commissioner McCabe does not know if that study was ever done. Commissioner Clark said he also does not believe a study was done. Commissioner McCabe said moving forward, they need to follow the appropriate protocols. He would like to have the children at play sign refreshed and put in front of 17 Deer Path Lane. He also said a speed study was done and it showed that there were barely any vehicles speeding in this area.

Notre Dame Street crosswalk concerns – Request to table until 3rd Quarter commission meeting – Dearellano family: Commissioner McCabe said he has spoken to the Dearellano family and they have requested this item be tabled until the MA State Police reconstruction team provides them with the findings of their investigation.

Holyoke Road truck traffic speed study – Sergeant Mejias: Commissioner McCabe said that they originally held off on this study. The thought was that doing the speed study during the Covid-19 pandemic would not show the normal use of the road. We are now well into June and the study will start on Monday, June 29, 2020 and run for 4 days. He thinks the highest volume of traffic is going to be during the morning and evening rush hours. He has been in conversations with one of the residents there who allowed the police department access

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to his driveway for speed enforcement. Hopefully this study will show some helpful information that Commissioner McCabe can bring back to the commission at the next meeting.

Update railroad overpass at Holyoke and East Mountain Road – Commissioner Cressotti: Commissioner Cressotti said an agreement was reached and the grant was filed. Commissioner McCabe said that the DPW did install a “don’t block the box” sign and the height clearance signs. Casey Berube said that they discovered that there is 12 inches of concrete above the manhole in this area. He suggested adjusting the concrete deck to lower it. He wants to reclaim 6 inches under the underpass and make the transition up to Route 20 as well as chase it back up East Mountain Road to make it functional. Commissioner Gadbois said it would depend on the elevation of the footing. Commissioner Cressotti said that there is typically 8 inches of concrete with rebar included. He said there would only be 4 inches of clearance to gain, assuming there is rebar. Casey Berube said this would make this bridge higher than the Holyoke Road bridge overpass which would divert some of the truck traffic. Commissioner Cressotti said the issue in this area is trucks that are unable to get under this bridge. He doesn’t think raising this bridge by a few inches is going to help. Commissioner McCabe suggested that the commission should look into this item further and address it again at the next meeting. He also suggested doing an axle study. He said if this can take even 20 trucks a day off of this road then it’s a win. Commissioner Cressotti said if he understands what Casey is saying, then increasing the clearance won’t reduce the truck traffic it will expedite it. Commissioner McCabe said trucks can’t make a turn from Springfield Road going north. Casey Berube said this is a GPS issue and the quarry truck traffic. He said this may reduce some of the truck traffic from Holyoke Road and Papermill Road. He said this should be looked into. Commissioner Cressotti said he would like someone to speak with the quarry and see what the requirements are for their trucks and also get feedback from them on this issue. Casey Berube said he will check with them. Commissioner Gadbois said he is weary to put time and money into something that the city still needs to be sub-standard on. Casey Berube said he doesn’t think it hurts to look into the potential cost and feasibility. Commissioner McCabe said he agrees.

NEW BUSINESS:

Master list of streets on GIS layered by limits, zones and hazards: Commissioner McCabe said that he is working with the engineering department and Sergeant Mejias on a master street list on GIS that has the ability by layer to check every single posted speed limit, truck exclusion or special ordinance by street that will be accessible to not only residents of the city, but specifically the traffic commission. This will help during meetings for the commission to be able to look right at the roads at the time an issue is brought before the commission.

Appointment of a replacement for Commissioner Boldini, Mr. Joseph Gadbois: The commission welcomed Commissioner Gadbois.

No truck sign – Orange Street: Commissioner McCabe said he received a request from Bridget Matthews Kane for a no truck sign on Orange Street. He said this became an issue when the trussel was removed and created more truck traffic. He said the Chief of Police has the authority to have an emergency sign be placed there, which he did. It is on the southbound side of Orange Street. Commissioner McCabe is requesting the traffic commission adopt it as a permanent sign. Commissioner Cressotti said he believes this would be considered as a truck exclusion and there is more of a process to it than just putting up a sign. Commissioner McCabe said this is an issue of public safety because two homes have had fences taken down after being struck by trucks. He said he can have a yellow sign put up instead. Commissioner Cressotti said a traffic study has to be done to make Orange Street a truck exclusion. Commissioner Gadbois said he agrees this is the right way to get this done. Commissioner McCabe said he will work on this with Commissioner Gadbois. Commissioner

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Cressotti made a motion to start the process of creating a truck exclusion on Orange Street. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. All in favor.

Western Ave. changes need approval to delete median signs and a left turn sign: Commissioner Cressotti said the signs for Western Ave include some medians which are mountable. They have introduced a center turning lane in several areas as well. The medians are placed to protect the pedestrians. He is proposing to eliminate some signs. The request to remove these signs was approved by MA DOT, but the commission also needs to approve this request. Commissioner Cressotti made a motion to approve the amendment of the traffic control agreement with MA DOT by removing the signs in the medians and adding a left turn sign. Commissioner Clark seconded that motion. All in favor.

Crosswalk on Ridgecrest Drive: Commissioner Cressotti said for quite some time there has been a gap in the sidewalk section between Little River Road and Ridgecrest. Finally they received permission from the abutters to put in the sidewalk. Commissioner McCabe said he would like to see a speed limit sign and a crosswalk sign installed. Commissioner Cressotti said he will take care of this with the DPW. Commissioner Cressotti made a motion for a positive recommendation to City Council to add a crosswalk across Ridgecrest Drive at the intersection of Ridgecrest Circle. Commissioner Clark seconded that motion. All in favor.

Next Meeting – September 16, 2020


At 6:31 PM Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cressotti seconded the motion. All in favor.



Michael McCabe, Chairman



Mark Cressotti, Member



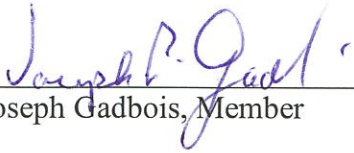
David Billips, Member



Richard Clark, Member

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Joseph Gadbois, Member

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