



CITY OF GARDNER POLICE DEPARTMENT

200 Main Street
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September 16th, 2019

MEMORANDUM

From: James Trifiro, Deputy Chief of Police

To: James Johnson – Public Safety Committee
Chris Coughlin – City Engineer
Dane Arnold – Public Works Director
Jennifer Dymek – City Treasurer
Trevor Beauregard – Community Development Director

Subject: Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes (Pending) from September 6th, 2019

1. Members in attendance:

1. James Trifiro
2. James Johnson
3. Dane Arnold
4. Jennifer Dymek (Former Civil Enforcement/observer to close out open action items)
5. Trevor Beauregard
6. Chris Coughlin

2. Traffic Commission Meeting called to order at 9:00AM

3. Old Business:

- a. Ash Street Parking Compliant – City Code Amendment
 - i. Referred back to Traffic Commission for further study (Letter from City Clerk dated July 3rd, 2019) planned for re-submission as individual calendar item/ordinance change with supporting letter of recommendation and analysis.
- b. Knowlton Street Parking – City Code Amendment
 - i. Referred back to Traffic Commission for further study (Letter from City Clerk dated July 3rd, 2019) planned for re-submission as individual calendar item/ordinance change.
- c. Knowlton Street Parking Meters – City Code Amendment
 - i. Referred back to Traffic Commission for further study (Letter from City Clerk dated July 3rd, 2019) planned for re-submission as individual calendar item/ordinance change.
- d. Connors Street Parking Meters – City Code Amendment



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winter/snow ban parking citations issued starting on November 15th, 2007 ending on April 1st, 2019 (approximately 1644 days). The number of parking citations totaled a low volume of 139 citations on Ash Street during this time frame. When a percentage calculation was applied to these facts, and using an analogy of 1 citation issued per day, it revealed that winter/snow ban parking citations were only required to be issued approximately 8 percent of the time showing that the other 92 percent of the time citations were not required to be issued. Although these statistics could only be supported through concrete reports during a 3 ½ time frame it reinforces the practicality for alternate parking in the area.

- iii. A subject matter of discussion was the proposal to change Ash Street from a two way traffic design into a one way road pattern. A main area of concern with this concept was the possibility for elevated response times for emergency assets reacting to calls for assistance within the area. Although state law permits emergency vehicles to deviate from designed traffic rules when safe to do so, local policy can dictate that emergency vehicles adhere to established traffic patterns in order to avoid roadway confusion and evade any potential collisions or mishaps. A hands-on emergency response assessment was conducted via a one way traffic pattern concept for Ash Street using the intersection of West and Monadnock Street's as the point of entry. Three simulations were replicated for emergency vehicles responding from the north side of Ash Street using the address of #157 (approximate median point) as a residence requiring response. Each simulation was conducted at a safe and modified rate of speed with minimal traffic congestion. The first response scenario was initiated starting at the corner of Allen and Ash Streets. When using a two way traffic pattern approach the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were only required to travel (approximately) 1200 feet with a response time of 35 seconds. When using a one way traffic pattern approach (travel route Allen/Sand/West Street's) the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were required to travel (approximately) 4700 feet with a response time of 1 minute and 55 seconds. When comparing the difference in travel patterns for this scenario, there was a significant increase in distance and travel time when using a one way vice a two way approach that could cause emergency vehicles to travel (approximately) an additional 3500 feet and increasing response time by 228%. The second response scenario was initiated starting at the corner of Clark Street and Racette Avenue. When using a two way traffic pattern approach the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were only required to travel (approximately) 3300 feet with a response time of 1 minute and 10 seconds. When using a one way traffic pattern approach (travel route Racette Avenue,



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Sand/West Street's) the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were required to travel (approximately) 6100 feet with a response time of 2 minutes and 20 seconds. When comparing the difference in travel patterns for this scenario, there was a significant increase in distance and travel time when using a one way vice a two way approach that could cause emergency vehicles to travel (approximately) an additional 2800 feet and increasing response time by 100%. The third scenario was initiated in the vicinity of 169 Eaton Street. When using a two way traffic pattern approach the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were only required to travel (approximately) 8200 feet with a response time of 2 minutes. When using a one way traffic pattern approach (travel route Park/Allen/Sand/West Street's) the results of this analysis revealed that emergency vehicles were required to travel (approximately) 11,800 feet with a response time of 3 minutes and 22 seconds. When comparing the difference in travel patterns for this scenario, there was a significant increase in distance and travel time when using a one way vice a two way approach that could cause emergency vehicles to travel (approximately) an additional 3600 feet and increasing response time by 68%.

- b. A motion was made by Dane Arnold to use this documentation in support of the following City Code amendment:
 - i. 600-24/Parking prohibited on certain street – west side of Ash Street starting at the southerly property line of address #164/migrating in a southerly direction terminating at the intersections of West and Monadnock Street's.
- c. This motion was seconded by James Johnson and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- d. James Johnson related he received/had concerns regarding parking on Nutting Street (initiated Old Business/triggered during Traffic Commission Meeting in June 2019). A roadway survey had been conducted by Deputy Chief Trifiro and Dane Arnold which revealed Nutting Street to range in width from approximately 23 feet (Prospect Street Area Side) to a small portion of approximately 29 feet (Union Street Side <80 feet available).
- e. According to Gardner City Code(s) 567-8/Specifications, in combination with 600-21/General Prohibitions, roadways shall have a width of not less than 28 feet and parking of a motor vehicle should leave a clear and unobstructed lane at least 10 feet wide for passing traffic. Given the configuration that Nutting Street has a two way traffic pattern, and designated parking spots are required to be 8 feet wide it would be most relevant to have 28 feet in roadway width to meet the City Code(s) specifications and sanction one side for roadway parking. The our analysis showed that Nutting Street did not appear to have the approved conditions permissible for roadside



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parking and the majority of the area was under width with ranges starting at (approximately) 5 feet.

- f. A motion was made by Dane Arnold to recommend banning parking on Nutting Street both sides between Union and Prospect Street's. This motion was seconded by Deputy Chief Trifiro and a vote was taken which tallied 4 yeas and 1 nays. This motioned carried and as a result it was determined that the Traffic Commission would recommend to the Public Safety Committee the following City Code amendment:
 - i. 600-24/Parking prohibited on certain street – Nutting Street/along both sides the full length between Union and Prospect Street's.
- g. A request was received from the Mayor's Office to establish parking limitations in the Connors Street Lot (Old Theater Parking). A motion was made by Trevor Beauregard to incorporate the Connors Street Lot as a designated off street parking area. This motion was seconded by Chris Coughlin and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor. As a result it was determined that the Traffic Commission would recommend to the Public Safety Committee the following City Code amendment:
 - i. 600-20(A)/Off-street parking areas – Street, Park or Parking Lot – Connors Street Lot/Location – the area to the immediate rear of 31 City Hall Avenue.
- h. A round table discussion was engaged by Deputy Chief Trifiro for alterations regarding the police parking designations on City Hall Avenue. In a review of the current City Code (600-29) the statute directed for police vehicle parking only, North side of City Hall Avenue 130 feet west of the western intersection of Pleasant Street, then westerly a distance of 20 feet. With Police Headquarters relocating over 4 years ago it was obvious that police vehicles would no longer require the need for designated parking in this area and this ordinance should be amended. A motion was made by Dane Arnold to repeal this ordinance, seconded by Chris Coughlin and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor. As a result it was determined that the Traffic Commission would recommend to the Public Safety Committee the following City Code amendment:
 - i. 600-29(B)/Fire and police parking – Repeal – Police vehicle parking only – City Hall Avenue/North Side/Location – 130 feet west of the western intersection of Pleasant Street, then westerly a distance of 20 feet.
- i. A request was received from a Gardner Resident petitioning for parking meters along the south side battery of parking spots in the West Street Parking Lot. A round table discussion was engaged on this topic and it was indicated that a reason for the request was to generate turnover in parking in the area, along with a comment that there use to be parking meters in this area and they should be replaced. Dane Arnold made mention that in the past there had been parking



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meters in this area but were voted by City Council to be removed. A verbal assessment of the area was discussed amongst Traffic Commission Members and all were in agreement that the West Street Parking Lot in combination with the surrounding area appeared to have adequate options for parking and there had not been any type of specific complaints of parking issues received by the commission. A motion was made by Dane Arnold to dismiss entertaining this request, seconded by Chris Coughlin and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.

- j. A request was received by a Gardner Resident petitioning for a Stop Sign posting westbound at the intersection of Leamy and Baker Street's. Dane Arnold pointed out that this area on is just on the other side of a hill crest and if traffic was at a halt it could cause a hazardous situation as motor vehicles quite possibly would to an have to come to an abrupt stop/yield and depending on weather conditions there could a concern of roadway collisions. Deputy Chief Trifiro conducted an accident survey of this area and there had not been any recent reportable traffic accidents documented in this region therefore this area did not appear to be an area of immediate concern. In addition, Stop Signs are posted on each side of Leamy Street causing any traffic that would enter or cross Baker Street to stop before proceeding. Given this information a motion was made by Chris Coughlin to dismiss entertaining this request, seconded by Dane Arnold and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- k. A request was received from the resident of 39 Emerald Street petitioning that there be no parking in the roadway adjacent to their driveway. A survey of the area across the street from 39 Emerald Street was conducted by Deputy Chief Trifiro and the roadway was measured to be 19 feet in width. According to Gardner City Code 600-21/General Prohibitions, parking of a motor vehicle should leave a clear and unobstructed lane at least 10 feet wide for passing traffic. Given the configuration that Emerald Street has a one way traffic pattern, and designated parking spots are required to be 8 feet wide it would be most relevant to have 18 feet in roadway width to meet the specifications and sanction one side for roadway parking. The analysis showed that the area across from Emerald Street appeared to have met the approved conditions permissible for roadside parking. Given this information a motion was made by Dane Arnold to dismiss entertaining this request, seconded by Deputy Chief Trifiro and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- l. James Johnson related that he received a request from a Stephanie Drive resident to engage Commercial Motor Vehicle restrictions and prevent their transit within the area. Dane Arnold related that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (DOT) regulates these restrictions and did not believe Stephanie Drive met the criteria for DOT restrictions. A round table discussion developed regarding the feasibility of using City Code restrictions for this request. Given this information a motion was made by Trevor Beauregard to dismiss entertaining this



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request without further and/or until sanctioned information is obtained, seconded by Dane Arnold and a vote was taken which tallied 4 yeas and 1 nays.

- m. A motion was made by James Johnson to review the legality of Commercial Motor Vehicle restrictions on the City of Gardner Roadways, seconded by Dane Arnold and a vote was taken which tallied 4 yeas and 1 nays.

6. Intersection Concerns/Updates:

- a. A roundtable discussion was engaged regarding the Timpany Boulevard at West Broadway traffic lights. Trevor Beauregard related these traffic lights are targeted for replacement/upgrade (Spring/Summer 2020) and the city is waiting for a grant approval (notification tentative October 2019) for funding. Chris Coughlin related that a design plan for this intersection has been initiated and in discussion to ensure all project features were in order.
- b. Dane Arnold conducted a presentation on the reconfiguration of the Pearl at Smith Street's intersection. This design plan was engineered to regulate a smoother flow of traffic in the area with the intent to provide additional visibility to motor vehicles intending to entering traffic lanes. Dane Arnold related he had been in discussion with the Mayor's Office regarding this project strategy and has a green light for support. An e-mail was received/distributed from Councilor Walsh disagreeing with the plan. Councilor Walsh related this intersection was redone at the time of the Dunn State Park development, both the accesses and egresses to Smith St. are at or close to 90 degrees. In addition, Councilor Walsh commented there is no evidence that speeding onto Smith from the eastbound lane of Pearl is a problem nor would the planned change serve to reduce speed in the area of the planned access/egress location of the new Middle School. A motion was made by Trevor Beauregard to support this reconfiguration plan, seconded by Dane Arnold and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- c. Dane Arnold conducted a presentation on the reconfiguration of the Smith at Chapel Street's intersection. This design plan was engineered to regulate a smoother flow of traffic in the area with the intent to provide additional visibility to motor vehicles intending to entering traffic lanes. Dane Arnold related he had been in discussion with the Mayor's Office regarding this project strategy and has a green light for support. An e-mail was received/distributed from Councilor Walsh in agreement with the plan to reshape the intersection relating it will improve safety. A motion was made by Trevor Beauregard to support this reconfiguration plan, seconded by Chris Coughlin and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- d. Dane Arnold conducted a presentation on the reconfiguration of the Pearl at Chapel Street's intersection. This design plan was engineered to regulate a smoother flow of traffic in the area with the intent to provide additional visibility to motor vehicles intending to entering traffic



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lanes. Dane Arnold related he had been in discussion with the Mayor's Office regarding this project strategy and has a green light for support. A motion was made by Chris Coughlin to support this reconfiguration plan, seconded by James Johnson and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.

7. Roadway Concerns/Update:

- a. Dane Arnold conducted a presentation on the reconfiguration (2 possible scenarios) for the traffic island on Main Street in the vicinity of the Stasukelis Appliance Building/Hannaford's Supermarket/CVS Pharmacy. This design plan was engineered to regulate the flow of traffic in the area with the intent to provide additional visibility to pedestrians intending to cross the roadway while providing them a safer area to transit. Construction for this project tentatively scheduled for 2020.
- b. Dane Arnold conducted a presentation on the reconfiguration/additions of crosswalks in the area of Central/Park/Cottage Streets in the vicinity of Monument Park. This design plan was engineered to regulate the flow of traffic in the area with the intent to provide pedestrians additional zones to cross the adjacent roadways with increased visibility on foot traffic. Construction for this project tentatively scheduled for 2020.
- c. James Johnson initiated a conversation regarding the use of "Speed Humps" for traffic speed control devices on City of Gardner roadways and supplied a Speed Cushion Traffic Study (dated October 2008) conducted by the Town of Amherst. Several questions were posed by commission members ranging from costs, maintenance issues, possible breaches in roadway integrity, obstacles in snow removal/damage to humps vs. damage to plow equipment, additional hazards created if motor vehicles attempted to drive around them (head on collision factor), target areas of concern and etc. At this time with many posed questions a motion was made by Deputy Chief Trifiro to table this discussion pending further information, seconded by Dane Arnold all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- d. An update on the Main Street Water Project was presented by Dane Arnold. At this time construction was initiated in the vicinity of Main at Willow Street's with intentions to lay a new water main (phase 1) up and through the area of Central Street, tentatively stopping in the vicinity of Cottage Street (weather permitting). Additional construction is also slated for water/sewer upgrades on City Hall Avenue (starting date to be determined). Construction for these projects are tentatively scheduled for continuance until the middle of December.

8. Conclusion:



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- a. At 10:35AM Trevor Beauregard made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous Traffic Commission Meeting, seconded by James Johnson and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- b. At 10:45AM James Johnson made a motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Dane Arnold and all members in attendance were in unanimous favor.
- c. Next Traffic Committee Meeting Schedule: TBD