

Town of Natick
Safety Committee Minutes
March 23, 2010

The Safety Committee members agreed to meet one week early for their March meeting in order to accommodate committee member's availability.

Safety Committee Members Present:

Lt. Brian Lauzon	Chief James Sheridan	
Mr. Robert Ward	Mr. John Slamin	Mr. Ronald Ordway
Mr. Michael Melchiorri	Mr. Patrick Reffett	Mr. Thomas Hladick
Mr. Glen Glater		

Also in attendance: Mr. Joshua Ostroff, Board of Selectmen member

OLD BUSINESS:

The committee VOTED to approve the December 29, 2009 Safety Committee Minutes.

The committee agreed to make every effort to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 in order to follow-through on the issues before us today.

Lt. Lauzon acted as Chair for this meeting in Chief Mabardy's absence. Chief Mabardy had a prior commitment but was able to join us for the last few minutes of the meeting.

Lt. Lauzon presented the committee with a comprehensive power point presentation primarily addressing the need for increased pedestrian and motorist safety, as well as the need for additional signage to assist with meter enforcement in the downtown area.

Raised Crosswalks: The committee continued discussion regarding the cost and feasibility of raised crosswalks in two specific areas of town. Two specific areas being considered are on Kendall Lane between Rt. 135 and H.F. Brown Way and Bacon Street in front of the Lilja School. The town of Dover recently installed raised crosswalk(s) at a cost of \$9,200.00 each. Contingent upon funding, the committee VOTED to recommend properly constructed raised crosswalks including advanced signage warning motorists of the raised crosswalks. If funding was only available for one intersection, the priority would be at Kendall Lane.

NEW BUSINESS:

The parking enforcement officers have requested several meter replacements and signage in order to prevent commuters from parking in the downtown area and taking the train into Boston, leaving their vehicles parked in parking places reserved for short term parking.

Residents who are in need of all day parking are able to purchase commuter permits from the town that are specifically reserved for their all day parking needs. In an effort to accommodate visitors to the downtown area, revisions are necessary in several areas to ensure their parking needs. Lt. Lauzon listed over thirty-five specific areas that have become an issue for the meter enforcement officers to enforce. These areas include:

Pond Street Parking Lot – Missing Meters: One space in the municipal parking lot has a missing meter and that one will be replaced by the DPW. Two rows of spaces are now reserved for permit parking only. Mr. Hladick and Lt. Lauzon will work to have the meter heads removed in the “Permit Parking Only” area and replace them with “Permit Parking Only” signs. No Vote was necessary to address this issue. The meters that have been hit by motorists will also be straightened out as much as possible.

Middlesex Avenue – Post 2 hour or no parking signs: The committee discussed the need for additional signage advising motorists that this area has a two hour parking limit. The committee VOTED to recommend the installation of these signs on the north side of Middlesex Avenue.

Spring Street Bridge – Permit Parking Only Sign Replacement: The committee was advised that permit parking only signs are missing in this area. No vote was necessary to address the replacement of these signs.

Middlesex Avenue – Tree Trimming: Overgrown trees are blocking the signs in this area and will require trimming before the leaves grow and block the view of the parking advisory signs. No vote needs to be taken. Mr. Hladick will have these trees trimmed before the leaves block the view.

Summer Street Parking Signs: The North side of Summer Street, in the area between Rudy’s to Spring Street, need replacement signs. The committee agreed that this area should continue to be posted “No Parking” and the DPW will replace them at their earliest convenience. No vote was necessary. Commuters have been parking in this area and it has become an issue for our meter enforcement officers along this narrow corridor.

Parking area in front of 52 Summer Street: This particular space needs to be posted as a two-hour parking on the South side of the street between #52 and 10’ East of the Fire Hydrant. The committee VOTED to make this recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

The South side of Union Court: The committee VOTED to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that this area be posted with advisory signs indicating “No Parking” Either Side of street.

School Street along the east side of street (by the Post Office), and Common Street in front of the Post Office: The committee VOTED to recommend this area to be posted as “Two Hour Parking”.

Bee Street – “No Parking” signage: The committee VOTED to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the North side of Bee Street be re-enforced “NO PARKING.” Some of the pre-existing signage has fallen down or been removed.

South Avenue – No Parking Here to Corner: It was determined that the sign already in place has faded, leaving it illegible. This sign will be replaced. No vote was necessary.

#20 South Avenue, in front of the Condos, on the north side of the street: The committee agreed that “No Parking” signs need to be placed in front of the new condominiums given the narrowness of the roadway and existing parking on the South side. The Committee VOTED to make this recommendation.

Bacon Free Library – Pedestrian Crossing Signs: This safety issue was of great concern to the committee. The signage already in place for pedestrian crossing is inadequate and needs to be moved closer to the crosswalks. The committee discussed the need for the placement of advanced warning signs in this area as well, to warn motorists of the upcoming pedestrian crossing. This is an area where “bump outs” could also be considered. Lt. Lauzon will present a plan to the Bacon Free Library as well as the Historical Committee, making them aware of the options and making sure there are no objections to the placement of these signs. The committee VOTED to table this issue in order to allow the Bacon Free Library and the Historical Committee an opportunity to share their concerns before any action is taken.

Pleasant Street North: The committee considered the idea of placing a crosswalk on Park Avenue at Pleasant Street North, but determined that it was an unsafe place for a crosswalk. The same petitioner requested the placement of a Stop Sign and Stop Bar on Park Avenue northbound at Pleasant Street to make this a three way stop intersection. The Committee voted not to make either of these recommendations citing the fact that the southbound stop sign was only approved after much debate given the amount of traffic coming off of Rt.9 in the morning in close proximity to the pre-existing school bus stop. It was agreed that speed enforcement in this area is worth a try before any additional measures are taken.

Pleasant Street South: There are curb cuts already in place at Pleasant Street South and Mill lane. The committee VOTED to recommend the installation of a crosswalk in the area where the curb cuts already exist at this intersection. Route 27 northbound at Cottage Street

Rt. 27 North at Cottage Street - Pedestrian Crossing: There is no sign indicating that there is a pedestrian crossing at this location, although the committee already recommended it to the Board of Selectmen, who approved it. No vote was necessary. Pedestrian Warning signs will be placed in the area of the crosswalk.

School Street Extension – No Sidewalk: This is an area that the petitioner believes is in need of a sidewalk to connect the neighborhoods South of East Street to the downtown area. Mr. Hladick will get back to committee members regarding property lines in order to determine how to move forward. The committee VOTED to table the discussion to the next meeting.

Common Street – Crosswalk is not handicap accessible: This crosswalk needs to be made

handicap-ADA accessible. The committee VOTED to respectfully recommend that the Board of Selectmen approve measures to make this crosswalk handicap-ADA accessible by constructing the appropriate curb cut on the North side of the street.

Bakery on the Common – No Crosswalk: The committee discussed crosswalks in the area of the Bakery on the Common. There is no safer solution than the one already in place, at the corner. The committee VOTED to take no action.

Pond Street and Plain Street – No Crosswalk: The committee discussed the need for a crosswalk with proper pedestrian signage and VOTED to respectfully recommend to the Board of Selectmen that a crosswalk with proper signage be constructed in this area where the curb cuts currently exist.

Bacon Street & Walnut Street – No crosswalk: The committee discussed the need for a crosswalk at this location. Part of the Mathworks project was to formalize crosswalks in this area. As a temporary solution, the committee VOTED to paint the crosswalk in the interim across Bacon Street on the West side of this intersection.

North Ave. @ Marion Street – No Crosswalk: The crosswalk crossing North Avenue on the West side of this intersection has previously been approved by the Board of Selectmen and will be painted in the near future. No action needed to be taken by the committee.

Route 135 @ Grant Street – No Crosswalk: This crosswalk was previously approved by the Board of Selectmen and will be addressed by Mr. Hladick.

Pegan Lane Road Improvements: This issue will need closer review by Mr. Hladick and Lt. Lauzon and will be tabled until the April meeting. Mr. Hladick will report back to the committee at that time.

Route 16 @ South Street: Lt. Lauzon and Mr. Hladick updated the Committee regarding how the most recent changes have been working out so far. Mr. Coviello will be asked to report to the committee at the April meeting on what needs to be done in the near future to cure the problem. Committee VOTED to table the issue until then.

Lakeview Avenue 30 MPH Advisory Speed Limit Signs: The committee discussed the need to place 30 MPH advisory speed signs in this area, on Proctor Street. The committee VOTED to respectfully request the Board of Selectmen to approve the installation of Advisory Signs.

Bunker Lane: Committee members VOTED to recommend the installation of a chevron in this location.

Mohegan Trail: Resident complaint that motorists can't see when pulling out onto Kendall Lane from Mohegan Trail when vehicles are parked in the duplex driveway at the corner lot on the North side. Mr. Melchiorri determined that the home in questions driveway was legal. Lt.

Lauzon will attempt to mediate the issue with the tenant currently residing at this location. No vote necessary.

Madonna Street @ Shady Oak – Request for Stop Signs: A request was considered for the installation of two stop signs both on Shady Oak approaching Madonna Street. The committee agreed that this was a reasonable request and will recommend favorably to the Board of Selectmen that they approve this request.

313 Speen Street pedestrian Crossing: The safety committee asked Mr. Reffett, as a member of the Planning Board, to send a letter to Mass DOT regarding this entire area. Mr. Ostroff also asked that Donna Challis be sent a letter on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, to add discussion of this issue to the Board of Selectmen’s next meeting agenda. Mr. Glater, Natick Bicycle and Pedestrian will also ask for a letter from his committee regarding their concerns in this area. Annie Greel will also be copied on this agenda item. The committee VOTED to collect recommendations from the Planning Board and Natick Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, and to ask Mr. Reffett to send the letter to Mass DOT addressing these concerns.

Walcott Square – Pedestrian Crossing: The committee considered a request to post signs on all four corners indicating “No Right on Red” which would be installed on mast arms. The committee VOTED to make this recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. They also agreed that a volume study be conducted both pre and post installation on East Street during the morning commute.

Felch Road Request for 30 MPH Advisory Signs: A request was made to post a 30mph advisory speed sign on Felch Road South of Pine Street. The committee VOTED to table this request until it can be re-evaluated.

H.F. Brown Way Safety Issues: The committee discussed safety issues for pedestrians in this area and what steps need to be taken to make this area safer. Members of the committee will take a closer look at this area and Lt. Lauzon and Mr. Hladick will make a site visit prior to updating the committee at the April 27th meeting. A vote was taken to Table this issue until then.

Add On:

Mr. Glater, Safety Committee Member and Natick Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Member raised concerns about water pooling when it rains at the crosswalks in the downtown area. No action was taken on this issue.

The committee adjourned at 11:45