

Town of Natick
Safety Committee Minutes
September, 15 2009

The meeting was called to order by Lt. Brian Lauzon, Natick Safety Officer, at 10:07 a.m.

Members in attendance:	Lt. Brian Lauzon	Mr. Tom Hladick
	Mr. Robert Ward	Mr. Ronald Ordway
	Mr. John Slamin	Mr. Patrick Reffett
	Chief James Sheridan	

Also in attendance:	Mr. William Hurley	Lt. Brian Grasse
	Mr. Joshua Ostroff	Mr. Mel Albert

OLD BUSINESS:

Approval of the April 28, 2009 Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

NEW BUSINESS:

Lt. Lauzon welcomed Mr. Hladick, as its newest member representing the Natick DPW along with Mr. Hurley, representing the Natick Public Schools. Lt. Lauzon also acknowledged Lt. Grasse who was asked to attend on behalf of Chief Mabardy, in his absence.

Request for "Not a Through Way" signs to be posted on Route 135, at the entrance of Belmore Road, Edwards Road and Lodge Lane, as well as patrol enforcement in this area during rush hour to address motorists who use the turning lanes to pass illegally: A request was received from the West Natick Neighborhood Association (WNNA) for the installation of signs at the above intersections to stop motorists from attempting to use these roads as a cut-through in an attempt to circumvent the Route 135 lights. The committee **VOTED** to recommend approval of the request for "Not a Through Way" signs on Speen Street at Belmore and Edwards Roads as well as on Lodge Lane. The committee agreed that Mr. Hladick and Lt. Lauzon would visit the area to see if there were any unnecessary signs that could be removed.

Request for "Autistic Child" sign in front of 34 Bennett Street and at the cross of Forest Avenue Extension: A letter was forwarded to the Safety Committee from the Board of Selectmen, requesting the installation of an "Autistic Child" sign. The committee discussed this request and **VOTED** to make the recommendation to the Board of Selectmen in favor of erecting "Children" signs in this area. Lt. Lauzon and Mr. Hladick will plan to meet in this neighborhood to determine where best to place the signs.

Request from residents in the area of Route 135 and Washington Avenue, inquiring about the possibility of setting the signalized intersection to "flash" nightly from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.: Lt. Lauzon, the Traffic Safety Officer, and Mr. Gordon Vantassel, Superintendent of Communications of the Natick Fire Department, brought forward a request that the committee consider the possibility of changing the light sequence in this area to flash at night. Mr. Vantassel (in an email to Lt. Lauzon) stated that we stopped setting lights on "flash" twenty

years ago at the direction of Chief Mannix. The committee **VOTED** to table this request in order to provide Mr. Reffett, town of Natick Community Development Director, an opportunity to research any available traffic studies that may have been conducted at this intersection as a result of the Route 135 re-construction project. Mr. Reffett will report his findings to the committee at their next meeting.

Request for Change of Address: A request for an address change was forwarded from the Natick Housing Authority to accommodate the agreement they have with the Natick Service Council to renovate and relocate to a portion of the Coolidge Gardens building's unused "gym area." Their occupancy is anticipated to begin in September of 2009. The request is to have the area leased to the Natick Service Council designated as #2 Webster Street (at the corner of Cottage and Webster Street). The committee **VOTED** to table a recommendation on this issue until the building inspector weighs in on his recommendation. The committee will revisit this issue at its next meeting.

Utility Poles Causing a Safety Hazard on Speen Street: Lt. Lauzon sent an email to Joanne O'Leary, at Nstar, regarding the fact that "upward of 17 utility poles on Speen Street, which have been replaced by new poles, but not removed from the areas immediately adjacent to the roadway, some of which have existing utilities on them, that are obstructing the use of the sidewalks and forcing pedestrians out into the roadway. One pole was said to have already been hit and damaged (Boston Edison #87) located directly across from Nottingham Drive, and leaning so far out into the roadway that it has visible signs of being struck by box type commercial vehicles. Lt. Lauzon was informed by Ms. O'Leary that "Comcast has transferred its wires onto the new pole. Verizon is next to take action and has been notified. The committee **VOTED** to request the attendance of representatives from Nstar Electric, Verizon, Comcast, and the Natick Fire Alarm, at the next Safety Committee meeting. Mr. Hladick and Lt. Lauzon also agreed to walk this area to identify those poles that need to be removed or moved to another location.

Request to revisit the pedestrian safety issue in Natick Center: Mr. Ostroff, Town of Natick Board of Selectmen Member, requested the committee revisit some of the suggestions made during a meeting which was held on July 23, 2009 between Mr. Ostroff and Selectmen Connolly, Patrick Reffett, Community Development Director and Lt. Lauzon. The specific ideas proposed at that time included the installation of high visibility blue paint at certain crosswalks on both Main and Central Streets; crosswalk signage where it will be visible; the installation of a "watch for pedestrians in x-walk" sign on Route 27 north, at the intersection of Rte. 135; the revision of the parking spaces that impede visibility; and a review of the existing signage that may not be visible or suitable: The committee **VOTED** to recommend favorably the suggestions recommended by Mr. Ostroff and Lt. Lauzon as they pertain to parking in and around the Albanian Orthodox Church at the corner of North Avenue. The committee **also VOTED** to recommend favorably the following six pedestrian safety improvements in and around Natick Center:

1. Paint the center of the crosswalks on Main Street at Union Court and South Main Street at Cottage Street with high visibility blue paint.
2. Recommend favorably the installation of electronic pedestrian crossing lights on East Central Street in front of the Town Hall.
3. Recommend overhead illumination of the Town Hall Crosswalk.
4. Recommend public education and police enforcement regarding pedestrian crossings.
5. Recommend one parking space be removed on Main Street on the southeast corner of South Avenue in front of the Citizen's Bank, and to move the handicapped parking space one spot south.
6. The construction of signage indicating "watch for pedestrians in crosswalk" on Route 27 northbound as you approach the intersection of Route 135.

The following items were not listed on the proposed agenda, but were brought forth by members in attendance:

Mr. Slamin, Safety Committee member citizen-at-large, asked Lt. Lauzon to look at the Pedex light on Route 135 in front of Saint Patrick's Church to see if it is functioning properly. Lt. Lauzon agreed to do this and will report back to the committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Ostroff, Board of Selectmen member, asked that the member listing of the Safety Committee be updated on the web page. Lt. Brian Grasseley agreed to take care of that.

Mr. Ward, Safety Committee member citizen-at-large, asked that the overgrown tree blocking the sidewalk at Mill, Pond and Speen Street be addressed. Lt. Lauzon and Mr. Hladick will look at it and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Committee members were briefed regarding the removal of the crossing guard on Bacon Street in front of the Lilja School and the condition of the crosswalk. Members will review this and discuss at their next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.