



Durham Public Safety Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 2, 2007

6:00 PM to 6:30 PM - Higganum Road (SITE WALK)

6:30 PM to 7:30 PM – Durham Public Library

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Frank DeFelice at 6:30 PM.

The following members were in attendance:

- Frank DeFelice
- Bill Smith
- Jim Rossi
- Dan Murphy
- John Szewczyk

Past Minutes: Minutes of the December 13, 2006 meeting were read and accepted:

- Motion to Accept: J. Rossi
- Seconded: D. Murphy

The following items were discussed:

Higganum Road Lighting: Committee members (DeFelice / Rossi / Murphy / Szewczyk) met on Higganum Road immediately prior to this meeting to assess traffic conditions, safety improvements and to discuss possible installation of new roadway lighting. Noted items include the following:

- Higganum Road presently has three (3) street lights; these are located at the entrance to Mauro Meadows, and the intersections of Higganum Road and Cherry & Bear Rock Roads.
- The painted centerline stripe is faded and no roadway edge identification is present.
- There does not appear to be speed limit signs posted along the entire length of Higganum Road.
- Roadway widths are generally adequate, with the exception of the curve located at Strawberry Hill; whose west-bound lane borders along a steep bank which contains a private driveway.
- Motor vehicles appeared to be traveling in excess of the road's rated speed.
- A curb-cut for a new sub-division appears to be in-progress along the road's east-bound travel lane. This location appears to be suitable for the installation of a new street light.

The committee voted unanimously (Motion by J. Rossi / Second by D. Murphy) to recommended that the following actions be taken:

1. The roadway's centerline should be re-painted using high-reflectibility paint (glass beads) to improve nighttime visibility.
2. Speed Limit Signs should be posted along the length of the roadway (both directions).
3. Reflectors should be installed on all guardrails.
4. Planning & Zoning should be contacted regarding the possible inclusion of a street light at the entrance to the sub-division on the east-bound travel lane. (Note: This has been done – FCD)
5. The committee (PSC) should revisit the site upon completion of the above items, to assess the need for possible additional measures, including street lighting.

Maple Avenue Issues:

Long-term solutions were again discussed by the committee. F. DeFelice presented information on "Milled Rumble Strips", which are milled directly into the existing pavement. DeFelice commented that he had spoken with Kurt Bober from the Durham Public Works Department and that Mr. Bober did not see any problems with the installation of milled strips from a maintenance perspective; but recommended that the installation should proceed after Maple Avenue has been chip-sealed (scheduled for 2008). Other "traffic calming" devices were presented by the committee members. Dan Murphy suggested that temporary calming devices could be used, but acknowledged that the town's insurance agreement may have to be revised; as it contains language stating that no obstacles may be placed within the roadway. Dan noted that it may be worthwhile to see if new language could be incorporated which would permit the temporary placement of traffic calming devices.

Bill Smith presented information obtained from a Bridgeport construction firm regarding "Speed Humps"; including specifications and cost. The "humps" would be approximately four inches tall and ten feet long. Smith stated that the cost would be approximately \$1,500 per hump.

Noise associated with the Milled Rumble Strips was discussed. Committee members and Maple Avenue resident Deb Hoyt agreed that the frequent noise as vehicles traverse the strips might be objectionable to neighbors.

The committee discussed the possibility of installing of a three-way stop sign at the intersection of Old Cemetery Road and Maple Avenue. Resident Roger Kleeman asked if such an installation of a stop sign along a length of roadway for the purpose of slowing vehicular traffic was permissible. The committee responded that since the sign would be located at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Old Cemetery Road, it would be permissible to install and would serve to calm traffic along Maple Avenue in addition. The temporary closing of Old Cemetery Road was noted, since a three-way stop could not be installed if this road was permanently closed. Vehicle stacking space during inclement weather and approach to the intersection was discussed at length. Committee members felt that the existing stacking space and guard rails were adequate; but recommended that "Stop Ahead" signs be posted along Maple Avenue to forewarn drivers of the need to stop at the intersection. Alternatives for revisions to traffic flow along Old Cemetery Road and possible re-alignment of the corner at the top of the hill (near the Cemetery) were also discussed.

The committee voted unanimously (Motion by D. Murphy / Second by J. Rossi) to recommend that the following actions be taken:

1. A three-way stop should be installed at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Old Cemetery Road. This should include new signage and wide (12"-18") painted "stop-bars".
2. "Stop Ahead" signs should be posted on Maple Avenue a reasonable distance ahead of the approach to this intersection.
3. Additional Speed Limit Signs should be posted along the entire length of Maple Avenue.
4. All signs should be of the reflective-type.

Additionally, a majority of committee members agreed that Old Cemetery Road should be changed from its present two-way traffic flow to a one-way traffic flow (west-bound direction only) to improve sightline issues at the intersection of Old Cemetery Road and Rt. 17. This would require the removal of the existing centerline stripe, posting of new "one-way" traffic signs at each end of Old Cemetery Road and the posting of "no entrance" signs which would be visible from Maple Avenue.

Fowler Avenue Signage: Residents contacted the committee regarding the placement of signage which has been improperly posted along the east-bound travel lane of Fowler Avenue, directly across from the Post Office. This sign was posted by a previous owner of this property, and reads “No Parking from Here to Corner”. Photos of the sign and a map indicating its location were presented to the committee. The sign is not an identified state or town sign, and as such it is improper and unenforceable.

It was also noted that the sign’s language would only apply subsequent to its location (in other words, from the sign’s location to the corner of Fowler Avenue and Cherry Lane); which was unintended by the properly owner who installed it. The committee voted (Motion: J. Rossi / Second: D. Murphy / Abstain: DeFelice) to recommend the removal of this sign.

Other Business: D. Murphy’s proposal that the committee develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to more efficiently address residents’ concerns regarding traffic issues will be discussed in detail at its February 6, 2007 meeting.

Adjournment: There being no other business before the committee, the committee adjourned.

- Motion to Adjourn: D. Murphy
- Seconded: J. Szewczyk

Respectfully submitted,

Frank C. DeFelice
Committee Chair