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**TOWN OF DEDHAM
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 18, 2014
7:00 p.m., Francis O'Brien Meeting Room**

- Present:** John R. Bethoney, Chair
Richard Schoenfeld
Paul Reynolds
Mark MacLean
Paul Reynolds
James Antonizick
- Ex-Officio:** Jason L. Mammone, P.E.
Police Chief Michael D'Entremont

Mr. Bethoney called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

LOCATION:	Barrows Street
REQUEST #:	2013-002
TOPIC:	Discussion and Vote

The Committee met to discuss the decision that Barrows Street does not meet eligibility for traffic calming measures. Jeff Carnegie, 79 Barrows Street, made a traffic calming request in September 2013, and was present for this meeting. His concerns were speeding and high volume of cars.

Mr. Mammone gave a summary of the concerns and the findings. The concerns were speeding, volume, and traffic on Barrows Street. Studies were conducted in 2009 and 2013, one before the street was paved and one after. In both instances, the volume and speed were below the prima facie speed limit of 30 mph, and the volumes were consistent with other residential streets with a similar make up. Based on the data, there is no apparent speeding or volume problems on the street. The recommendation was that the street does qualify for traffic calming measures based upon the initial evaluation and eligibility requirements set forth in the traffic calming policy. The Committee had no comments on this report.

Mr. MacLean said that Mr. McCarthy, Planning Director, was going to try to find the traffic management plan from when the Middle School was built. He wondered if the residents would benefit from having a copy of that. It is mostly parents doing pick-up and drop-off, and it may be something the residents could take up with the School Department, who could ask parents to slow down or use a different route. It is not known if Mr. McCarthy was able to find that. Mr. Bethoney said that the Committee had discussed outreach from the School Department in the event that nothing was found that the Town should be doing.

Mr. Carnegie commented that he talked with the principal of the Middle School, who e-mailed parents to slow down. However, he does not believe it helped. He said that police have been present, and this has had an effect. There had been a sign in place that showed cars what their speed was, but this has been taken down, and people are back to speeding. However, he cannot judge if they are going beyond the speed limit. Mr. Mammone said they are probably going 25-26 mph in each direction with the new pavement. Chief D'Entremont said that Officer Crump was on the street for several mornings and issued a few citations. He said the department can only have someone on the street sporadically. The sign was present for about two weeks, but had to be moved to another location, as the department only has three signs available. Mr. Carnegie said the sign is still there, but it is not working. Chief D'Entremont said the battery is dead.

Mr. Bethoney asked Mr. Carnegie what he thought would work to slow down traffic on his street. Mr. Carnegie said that the best thing would be having the sign turned on. He would be fine with speed bumps, but he could not speak for the neighbors. He wants traffic slowed down enough to make cars go down Whiting Avenue instead. Mr. Bethoney said that anytime people are deterred from speeding in one place, they will re-route to another street and speed there. He said that the recommendation is that the street meets the standards and has average volume. Based on that information, there are no problems.

Mr. Mammone's recommendation is that Barrows Street basically meets within the standards that the rest of the roadways are within the Town at under 30 mph, and traffic volumes are average, based on the traffic calming policy. There needs to be a speed of at least 5 mph over the 85% percentile. This is a Town policy.

Mr. Stillwell noted that speed must be at least over 5 mph according to the Board of Selectmen. He said this is an inadequate standard, but they must follow the Selectmen's ruling. He asked if the Committee had any authority, and Mr. Bethoney said they can only recommend. According to Mr. Reynolds, it is within the purview of the Transportation Advisory Committee to do more. Mr. Stillwell said there needs to be a level of consistency, but Mr. Reynolds said they do not have all the information. Mr. Bethoney said that 85% is pretty liberal, and to see significant speed over that consistently, it would merit traffic calming measures. Mr. Antonizick said that the only way to reduce speeding is to reduce speed limits. Mr. Bethoney said precedents will be set if exceptions are made. He said that the Committee could make a recommendation that the criteria for action be reduced. Mr. Stillwell made a suggestion that the residents work with the school and the flagmen and see what happens. The Board should revisit the street if there is still an issue.

Mr. Stillwell asked if the Board should consider the difference between the size of the streets, and make recommendations for further refinements. He said that the smaller streets should not be the same as the larger streets, i.e., East Street and Sprague Street. Mr. Reynolds said that an attribute that makes the issue sensitive is that the problem is not cars and street width, but children. This should be the priority for protection. The Board of Selectmen could give special consideration above and beyond the standard. Chief D'Entremont said that width is the issue. Picking streets would be difficult due to turnover of neighborhoods. Mr. Stillwell said that a busy street makes

for lack of safety, but the Chief countered that streets are not playgrounds, and children should stay off the streets.

Mr. Bethoney said that there has been a lot of discussion regarding traffic mitigation for large projects, as well as recommendations for speed humps. However, once the majority hears what a neighbor wants, many will say they do not want them. This is the only time the Committee hears from those neighbors. He said that they need regulations to stand on, but to be prepared for complaints from neighbors. Mr. Stillwell felt that this issue should be tabled and the Committee should ask Engineering to discuss differentiating streets with the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Mammone said that he goes by engineering standards. He said that traffic calming is for residential streets, not minor and major collector roads.

Mr. Carnegie was curious about where traffic went if it was deterred, noting that Whiting Avenue is the only choice, and it has a lot of speeding. He asked if it would be a burden on the Police to deal with traffic if there is a calming measure on Barrows Street, but Mr. Antonizick said cars may just go down other residential streets. Mr. Carnegie asked if other streets could be investigated, and whether traffic calming measures could be on Barrows Street if it does not cause issues on main roads. He said, however, that he did not want Whiting Avenue or Mt. Vernon Street to become more dangerous for the sake of his street. He did ask whether, if the neighbors all contributed, the speed sign could be reinstated. Chief D'Entremont said this would be fine, but that the sign would cost approximately \$3,500. He wondered if it could be hard-wired or solar powered. Mr. Mammone said they would have to go to the Board of Selectmen, and specifications are necessary.

LOCATION:	Harvard Street
REQUEST #:	2012-001
TOPIC:	Discussion and Vote

Mr. Bethoney said the Traffic Calming Request from Meaghan Santom of 64 Harvard Street cited people using Harvard Street as a cut-through, speeding, and a high volume of traffic. Ms. Santom did not attend the meeting.

Mr. Mammone explained that there is a 30 mph prima facie speed limit. Average daily traffic is 407 vehicles and the combined 85th percentile speed was 25 mph. His study did not show it to be a cut-through. The recommendation was that the street does qualify for traffic calming measures based upon the initial evaluation and eligibility requirements set forth in the traffic calming policy. There has been one accident with a parked car, but none with pedestrians. There are no pedestrian or bicycle safety issues.

Mr. Stillwell said traffic calming measures should be denied unless the Committee wants to table the discussion. He did not see anything that would merit traffic calming measures. He made a motion to deny based on lack of necessity according to the data.

Mr. Stillwell said that, in comparing Harvard Street to Barrows Street, Barrows is a narrower street. There are not as many cars parked on Harvard Street. Chief D'Entremont said that there is something off the charts on occasion, but this could be an ambulance, fire truck, police car, or an "idiot." Mr. Bethoney said that people's perception of speed can be skewed in that they think cars go faster than they actually do. Mr. Stillwell then said that in fairness, Harvard Street should be tabled as well. He suggested to Mr. Mammone that a bar graph and pictures should be obtained for traffic studies from here on.

Mr. Reynolds said that a lot of regulations are put in place by engineers, i.e., widen the streets or let cars go faster. He brought up the Woonerf concept from the Netherlands in the 1960's. He asked how roads could be integrated with people. He asked if there is a policy about notifying neighbors if the Town is going to do a traffic calming measure. It might be a good thing to do prior to it being built. Mr. Bethoney agreed and Mr. Mammone said there is a policy in place. Mr. Bethoney said, for example, that this is the action level and the Committee has exceeded it, so it needs to be done. If the action level has not been exceeded, he said the Committee should be prepared for people to come in who have been very happy with the situation they are in. Therefore, the action level is very important in making a decision.

Mr. Bethoney said this discussion should be tabled. It was suggested that the issue about the policy be tabled, but the Engineering Department should be asked to think about consulting with Chief D'Entremont for any simple way to differentiate between small residential streets and larger streets. He asked about presence or absence of sidewalks, width standards, etc., that the Committee could use in its evaluation.

Mr. Stillwell then asked about considering all the residential streets in Town and how to define them simply, as this would show distinction between big streets and residential streets. Mr. Mammone said the traffic calming policy only focuses on purely residential streets, and the standards are only for those streets. He used a combination of other towns' traffic calming policies to create the standards, as well as other engineering standards from AASHTO and Mass. Highway. Mr. Bethoney encouraged the Committee members to say their piece.

Mr. Bethoney will get the information from Mr. McCarthy as to traffic demand policies and programs for the Middle School. Mr. Schoenfeld made a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting, seconded by Mr. Antonizick. The vote was unanimous at 6-0.

TOPIC:	Discussion re: Traffic calming solutions
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Mr. Reynolds said he was pleased that the Committee was waiting to make a decision. He would like to think that Dedham can be innovative about establishing common measures on residential streets that take into consideration variable factors. He has been researching the subject of livable streets with vehicles coexisting, which is a national issue. Mr. Bethoney said they would talk about this at the next meeting, and then make a decision.

Mr. Carnegie will be told when the next meeting will be. He asked, if he was able to convince enough people to take up a collection, if they could buy a speed sign. He has in fact identified that the sign has been the most effective instrument. Chief D'Entremont had no problem with this. Mr. Mammone said they would need to go before the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bethoney did not think they would allow it. Mr. Stillwell said this is an example of something they could do, and have the Town pay a portion. However, the Board of Selectmen has to deal with that and whether the residents can put up the speed sign. If not, maybe the Board of Selectmen will consider them on a case-by-case basis since they are the street commissioners in the Town. Chief D'Entremont said having a hard wired sign would be best, or possibly solar powered. Mr. Mammone noted that the more speed signs there are, the more people will get used to them and begin to ignore them.

Mr. Bethoney asked if there was anyone from MAPC or another organization who has experts in traffic calming and who can come before the Committee with recommendations. Mr. Mammone will look into that.

Mr. Antonizick said that the list of solutions needs to be enlarged. He suggested that the Board of Selectmen be consulted about agreeing to relax the criteria so the Committee can do something, but the question is still what to do. Speed limits are set by the State, although the Board of Selectmen can make speed limits slower, not faster. There are 26 strategies for traffic calming mitigation, eight of which can be done by the homeowner, i.e., flag men. Other ideas would require the consensus of the entire street, and those neighbors would need to appear before the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bethoney said this discussion should be tabled, and the Committee agreed.

LOCATION:	Jersey Street
REQUEST #:	2012-002
TOPIC:	Discussion and Vote

The request for traffic calming measures was submitted by Katherine Bartlett, 48 Jersey Street, who was not present for the meeting. Her concern was speed, volume of traffic, and children's safety due to lack of sidewalks. However, she has moved from the area.

Mr. Mammone performed the usual study and provided specifications for the street. It is 24 feet wide from Central Street to York Street, then 22 feet from York Street to East Street. It was repaved in 2008 and had an overlay in 2010. There is a limited sidewalk that is five feet wide from East Street to 31 Jersey Street. Vehicles are sporadically parked along both sides of the street. A portion of street is up against wetlands and has significant drainage culverts. The prima facie speed limit is 30 mph. In his study, there were 377 vehicles per day, a combined 85th percentile speed of 31 mph, and there was no crash data from 2004 or 2010. It is not a cut through and has had no accidents. The recommendation was that the street does qualify for traffic calming measures based upon the initial evaluation and eligibility requirements set forth in the traffic calming policy.

Mr. Stillwell requested that this be tabled or denied because the person requesting traffic calming measures has moved. However, Mr. Mammone noted that fifteen people signed the request, so the denial was rescinded. Mr. Antonizick made a motion to table this given that there were a great number of signatures. Mr. MacLean seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous at 6-0.

On further discussion, Mr. Reynolds discussed the different standards, i.e., flag men, etc. He said that foundation work would be to build a set of tools for consistency. The request should also show the conditions of the road. Mr. Bethoney cautioned that if you get away from standards, everyone who feels unique will come in. It will be neighbors vs. neighbors, and not everyone will be satisfied. He said he would talk with Mr. McCarthy to see if there are any creative solutions.

TOPIC:	Selection of Next Traffic Calming Request
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This request was submitted by Catherine Tauro for Kiely Road. Her concerns are pedestrian safety, sign placement, speeding, and poor road conditions. Her request was signed by three residents. The Committee decided to hold this request until they have more data, which Mr. Mammone will collect.

Mr. Schoenfeld made a motion to change the language in the reports, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. The vote was unanimous.

TOPIC:	Approval of Minutes from December 16, 2013
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Mr. Schoenfeld made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. The vote was unanimous.

TOPIC:	Old/New Business
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None.

TOPIC:	Discussion of Meeting Dates
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Mr. Mammone noted that the third Tuesday of the month seems to be a good time to meet. Mr. Stillwell did say that the third Tuesday in August is not a good date for him. Mr. Bethoney said that meetings will be figured out as it gets closer to vacations. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 20, 2014, in the Selectmen's Chambers.

Mr. Reynolds said that after April 12, 2014, he will no longer be a selectman, and therefore not on the Committee. He said that the Board of Selectmen will appoint someone as their designee.

Mr. Schoenfeld made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Antonizick. The vote was unanimous. The meeting ended at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Webster
Administrative Assistant
Town of Dedham Transportation Advisory Committee