

**Public Safety Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2024
6:00 PM
Council Chambers**

Members Present

Councilor Bryan Karolian, Vice Chair
Councilor Chuck Creteau
Councilor Kevin Sullivan
Councilor David Herman

Members Absent

Councilor Timothy Fontneau, Chair (excused)

Others Present

Deputy Chief Andrew Swanberry, PD
Jarrod Norris, P.E. Assistant City Engineer
Gina Golden-Silvestro, GIS/AM Technician
Suzette Richards, 5 Walnut Street

Councilor Karolian brought the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

- 1. Approve Minutes from February 21, 2024 Public Safety Meeting** *Councilor Sullivan MOVED to approve the minutes from February 21, 2024. Councilor Creteau seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.*

- 2. Public Input**

Suzette Richards of 5 Walnut Street was present to discuss her concerns about traffic coming from the traffic circle onto Walnut Street. She stated that the speeding issue is happening around 5:45 AM and around 6 PM. She would like to see a speed bump or speed trap at this location. She mentioned a noise ordinance cars are back firing and are very loud. Councilor Sullivan asked Ms. Richards if the section of fence that the City removed has helped with the visibility pulling out of her driveway. She stated this has helped with the visibility.

- 3. Lowell Street- Streetlight between Westview and Royal Crest**

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. He asked if Deputy Chief Swanberry had anything new on this. Deputy Chief Swanberry stated he does not have anything new on this. Councilor Sullivan was hopeful that a resident would show up for or against the light. No one showed up for or against the light. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to remove from committee. Councilor Herman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.**

- 4. Meaderboro Rd/ RT202A- Intersection**

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Councilor Creteau said he avoids this intersection coming out of Meaderboro Road it is hard to see with the house to the left and there is a fence that you need to look through. Councilor Karolian asked if Public Works had any updates. Mr. Norris stated that they are aware of the line-of-sight

issue and are working with DOT to address the issue. Meaderboro Road and 202A are State of NH streets. Councilor Sullivan said this was kept in committee to get regular updates on. Councilor Creteau asked if there are any accident or issue statistics available at this location. Deputy Chief Swanberry stated that he could get the data in a five-year spread for next month. Councilor Karolian asked Deputy Chief Swanberry if he could still pull data for vehicular and pedestrian incidents. Deputy Chief Swanberry had the data pulled for 5 years to include pedestrian and bicycle incidents. Over 5 years there were 25 pedestrian/ bicycle accidents. Of the 25 accidents 16 had minor injury, 6 had no injury, and 3 had serious injury. About 75% were in the compact part of the city verses rural. Councilor Creteau asked how they define serious injury. Deputy Chief Swanberry provided examples of a broken bone or unable to walk as a serious injury. Bumps, bruises, scrapes, and road rash would be considered minor injury. Councilor Herman asked the committee what the solution may entail. Councilor Karolian recommended engaging with the state to get a definitive answer for the public prior to taking it out of committee. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Creteau seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

5. Traffic Circle/ Walnut St- Signage/ Speeding

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Mr. Norris stated that he reached out to the engineer to discuss the options to address the driveway and speeding concerns. He said Walnut St is under the urban compact agreement with the state of NH, any changes would need to go to them for review. Councilor Karolian asked about the other measures putting in a speed table and the impact on DPW, Fire and PD that were discussed last month. Mr. Norris stated the concern with a speed table is it would affect the actual movement of traffic in the circle. There is also a concern that drainage would have to be redesigned. Mr. Norris also said that adding a blind driveway sign in this area would create an overload of signage with there already being so many signs in this area. Blind driveway signs are usually put in where there is no line of sight such as on a curve. This would be an unconventional use of that sign. Mr. Norris also called the traffic bureau about changing the speed limit and this would require a speed study by the traffic bureau. The recommended speed limit would then be based on a state statute that establishes a reasonable and prudent standard . The speed study is a public document and may not return with a beneficial result of signing the speed limit lower. Mr. Norris reviewed other measures and said that when you come out of the circle traveling 15-20 MPH onto Walnut Street you immediately see the 30 MPH sign. Mr. Norris suggested moving the 30 MPH sign down the street. He thinks this would be easily approved through the traffic Bureau. Councilor Karolian asked Deputy Chief Swanberry his thoughts on the signage. Deputy Chief Swanberry said he has discussed this with Mr. Norris and thinks if the sign could be moved two poles down if possible. He has been in the area observing in an unmarked car multiple times. He observed cars are going into the circle to avoid the speed table and also going into the circle to pass the cars going over the speed table. If speed tables added to another slip lane or lane may cause similar problem. Past discussion on speed tables suggest sending then to the Technical Review Group

for further review and comments. Councilor Creteau said that he believes it would be helpful if the sign was moved down two poles. Mr. Norris will contact the traffic bureau to get their review and will update the committee next month. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Creteau seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

6. Portland Street/ Salmon Falls Road – Speed and Enforcement

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Councilor Sullivan asked Deputy Chief Swanberry if they were able to do patrols. Deputy Chief Swanberry said they did in that area, there were no stop sign violations of the 48 stops 34 were for speed. Monitor progress of patrols for one more month. **Councilor Creteau MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Herman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

7. Portland Street – School Drop Off/ Pick Up

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue of cars backing up and others going around them. Deputy Chief Swanberry stated he did reach out to the school to see if they could stagger pickup times to help with the traffic back-up on Portland Street. Councilor Karolian asked if Deputy Chief Swanberry could follow up with the school next month to find out the response. Deputy Chief Swanberry stated he would follow up.

8. Jamey Drive- Signage (Prescott Estates MHP)

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Councilor Sullivan asked if Deputy Chief Swanberry was able to look at the area for line of sight or turning issues. Deputy Chief Swanberry said visibility of the MHP sign is excellent heading from Somersworth to Portland Street. Heading in the opposite direction the sign is blocked partially by tree's not being familiar with the area you might not know that road is coming up. The speed limit is relatively low at 35 MPH. Councilor Sullivan said he believed the issue was cars in danger of getting rearended as they wait to turn into the MHP. He said this could be distracted driving. Councilor Creteau stated he believes that this is about driving the speed limit and using blinkers. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to remove from committee. Councilor Creteau seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.**

9. Hanson Street- Going Wrong Direction

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Councilor Creteau stated he brought this up at last month's meeting. Someone he knows moved her business to Hanson Street and on four occasions she saw cars driving in the wrong direction. Mr. Norris stated Ms. Golden went out to the location to review the signage and there are no changes in the signage. Councilor Karolina asked if there was arrows or a red sign showing one way. Mr. Norris said there is a red "Do Not Enter" sign at the Wakefield St. / Hanson St. side of the road. Councilor Creteau said that he believes the people cut through the bank area come out and go the wrong direction. He asked if

it is posted for the people coming out of the bank area. Councilor Karolian asked if this can be reviewed by Mr. Norris. Mr. Norris said he would review and speak to it at the next meeting. Councilor Creteau asked if it could be reviewed as there is a development going in and this will increase traffic as well. Will reassess the need for further signage. **Councilor Creteau MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Herman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

10. Rt 125/ Oak St Intersection- Traffic Light Timing

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Councilor Karolian said where at the signal both Colby and Oak Street turn simultaneously. The traffic have to cross over each other to turn left. There could be two options to help this issue. Change the light to let one street go then the other street or move the stop line in the north bound lane back. Deputy Chief Swanberry stated the issue as described has been his experience. He believes this was brought up in 2020 and this is a state intersection. Changes would be at DOT discretion. Mr. Norris will reach out to the state to ask what they would recommend in this situation. Councilor Karolian said that with two new developments, one with 80 units and the other with 60+ units the traffic will continue to increase. He asked if Deputy Chief Swanberry has seen an increase in the traffic and he stated he has definitely seen an increase. Councilor Sullivan asked that the city contact the state on the issue. The city will communicate with the state. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Creteau seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

11. Other

Councilor Karolian summarized the issue. Mrs. Goodwin from 5 Second Street called concerning children playing in the road in front of her home and traffic not slowing down. Councilor Karolian asked Deputy Chief Swanberry if he could have this road worked into the schedule for patrol. Deputy Chief Swanberry said he would put it on the list. Councilor Karolian read email on request by Councilor Creteau. Mrs. Goodwin asks if a slow children sign can be put up. Mr. Norris suggested a homeowners private sign could be put up. Signs are available at home improvement stores. Signs and their placement should receive approval from Public Works. Councilor Sullivan asked if a resident they could attach a sign to a pole. Mr. Norris suggested getting permission from whoever owns the pole. Signs cannot be put in the street or on a sidewalk or where people travel. Councilor Karolian to communicate this discussion for continued consideration in committee. **Councilor Sullivan MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Herman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote. (kept in committee)**

Mr. Norris stated that Public Works is working with consultants to provide informative sessions to the PSC that would last 15-20 minutes and would be added to the agenda. Topics that have been selected are traffic control devices and traffic calming measures. Mr. Norris said please reach out with any questions and they can make sure those questions are answered by the consultant. Councilor Sullivan asked if there could be more information on other types such as streetlights or urban compact agreements that would helpful as well. ***Councilor Sullivan MOVED to keep in committee. Councilor Herman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.***

Councilor Karolian ADJOURNED the meeting at 7:24 PM.

The minutes were respectfully submitted by Ronda Boisvert, Administrative Assistant II