Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2013

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services
Ed Roberge, PE, Engineering Services
Steve Henninger, Planning Division
Jim Major, General Services
Greg Taylor, Police Department
Dave Florence, Police Department
Rick Wollert, Concord Fire Department
Terry Crotty, Concord School District

A. Regular Discussion Items

1) **Overview of city-wide accident data, including prior-month accident summary and discussion of select accident locations, circumstances and potential action.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Traffic accident data for January 2013 was reviewed. There were 97 reportable accidents in January 2013. This compares with 101 and 146 reportable accidents in January 2012 and 2011, respectively. 16 accidents resulted in total of 19 people injured, 3 of which occurred on Loudon Road. There were no fatalities.

There was one accident involving a pedestrian: a pedestrian aged 38 years walking southbound on South Street and crossing Broadway in the crosswalk and being struck by a Broadway vehicle attempting to make a right turn onto South Street (minor injury, vehicle fled scene).

2) **City Council meeting update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None

3) **Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

1) **Referral from City Council to consider establishing a No Parking/Standing/Stopping zone along Conant Drive between South Street and Rundlett Street to mitigate adverse effects of parking for traffic related to school drop-offs/pick-ups at the Abbott-Downing Elementary School.** ***(Council: 10/9/12).***

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Following TOC discussion last month, Terry Crotty described efforts by school staff to improve on-campus traffic management at the pick-up lane and parking areas. Staff is trying to actively control traffic flow with intent to direct entering traffic to go as far west as possible (into the campus) before parking or stopping with goal of maximizing storage of traffic on-campus. Notices had also been distributed to parents of the parking situation and the desire to avoid parking in the vicinity of the South/Conant intersection. The school is also considering adding lane markings to delineate two lanes instead of one on the short one-way driveway segment just in advance of the parking area with idea that if the pick-up lane is filled, that all other traffic will be directed to enter the parking area rather than queue in the one-way entrance driveway from South Street. TOC suggested an option to board children at the far (western) end of the pick-up lane rather than near the beginning of the lane at the first crosswalk for more efficient traffic management.

Rob Mack visited the area last Friday during the afternoon school dismissal period and noted that on-street parking issues had remained unchanged. About 12 vehicles were parked (and generally left unattended) along the shoulders on both sides of the street at the South/Conant intersection. The vehicles not only restricted sight lines for traffic exiting Conant Drive, but created safety conflicts with South Street traffic due to drivers opening car doors and loading children in the street-side doors and within the moving travel lanes. As observed since late last year, several vehicles continue to park on the north side of Conant Drive just west of South Street. These vehicles are left unattended for 10 to 15 minutes while the drivers walk to the school to return later with their student; these vehicles restricted westbound traffic flow unable to pass due to the extended line of eastbound traffic blocking the available street width. The Conant entry driveway was blocked at the parking lot lanes and the queue of standing traffic extended back to South Street on one occasion.

TOC felt that school staff efforts, alone, to better-manage on-campus traffic would likely not mitigate the prevalent practice of on-street parking near the South/Conant intersection. Some formal parking restriction to prevent ongoing safety and operational issues at this intersection, coupled with school efforts in better manage on-campus parking, appears to be an appropriate course of action. As such, TOC concurred with a recommendation to pursue restriction of parking in the vicinity of the South/Conant intersection. The recommendation is two-fold: extend the current No Parking/Standing/Stopping zone on South Street to a point south of the Conant Drive intersection in order to maintain intersection sight lines; and develop a No Parking/Standing/Stopping zone on the short segment of Conant Drive between South and Rundlett Streets in order to maintain two-way traffic flow there during peaks. The latter restriction should consider a time limit, perhaps during school peaks only, so that on-street parking generally remains available for the neighborhood at all other times. The TOC recommendation will be presented to the Parking Committee on February 25, 2013. If the Parking Committee also concurs, it is anticipated that nearby residents along South and Conant Streets will be given notice and invited to attend a March Parking Committee meeting to provide feedback prior to developing a potential Ordinance change.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

1) Discussion of CIP 283 Pleasant/Warren/Fruit Intersection Improvements.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack described the Pleasant/Warren/Fruit Intersection Improvement Project (CIP 283 FY2013) which includes traffic signal equipment upgrades and operational improvements. $200,000 was budgeted in FY2013 for full traffic signal replacement including pedestrian crossings. Engineering Services has compiled survey base plans of the intersection area and analyzed 2035 design-year traffic projections which include effects of the future Langley Parkway North (Phase 3) as well as area

traffic growth at the hospital campus to the west and the NH State Office Park South. In addition to necessary signal updates, staff assessed additional improvements needed to make the project comply with the 'complete streets' aspect of the City's Comprehensive Transportation Policy, including pedestrian and bicycle accommodation. The current intersection configuration does not accommodate bicycles as there are narrow multiple-lane approaches without shoulders. Sidewalks on the intersection corners also require upgrading for pedestrians.

Upgraded traffic signalization would generally result in new equipment, but existing lane use and signal operation would continue. Additional intersection capacity cannot be achieved without substantial widening for additional approach lanes. The existing diagonal crosswalk would be retained as it is the primary crossing for walkers between the high school and the Memorial Field area. Additional improvements to provide a complete-street improvement include: revised approach-lane markings along all intersection approaches with slightly-narrowed travel lanes and provision of five-foot shoulders for bicycles; and reconstructed sidewalks, curb and ramps on intersection corners. All lane-marking changes can be accommodated on the existing paved width except the high school side of Warren Street which would need to be widened about five feet between N. Fruit Street and the turn-around driveway at the school main entrance. This widening would require some right-of-way from the school district and relocation of several significant utility poles. The overall project, with complete-street compliance, would cost more than the current budget for the signalization upgrade.

Another complete-street option includes removal of the traffic signal control and reconstruction of the intersection into a single-lane roundabout. The roundabout option would outperform the signalized option in terms of reducing vehicle and pedestrian delays and queues as well as allowing for additional future traffic growth. Some right-of-way would be needed from both the school district and the State's office park, although all road widening would be limited to the intersection proper; additional lane widening along Warren Street to the east is not necessary. It appears that adequate space can be made available to develop an appropriately-designed roundabout able to accommodate all travel users including large trucks. This option also costs in excess of the currently-budgeted amount for CIP283.

Each of the above complete-street improvements can address long-range needs of the corridor, particularly after completion of the Langley Parkway north extension. The new corridor will act to remove a substantial volume of traffic from the Pleasant-to-Warren travel direction, redefining the future needs of the intersection. In that regard, staff suggests reconsideration of the current FY2013 project to avoid construction of substantial signal equipment improvements when the long-range needs of the intersection suggest potentially revised intersection geometry. An option is to install minimal signal hardware improvements now for the short-term viability of existing signal operation, and defer a more comprehensive complete-street improvement for several years, preferably following the Langley Parkway project (currently scheduled for completion in FY2018. Minimal short-term signal improvements include replacement of the controller cabinet and signal control equipment. This can be reinstalled on the existing cabinet foundation, and could be reused/relocated later at this intersection or relocated to another signalized intersection in need of a control cabinet replacement. Other minor improvements could include upgrading several signal displays to conform to current standards and installing some temporary wiring runs to bypass several underground cables that cannot be serviced due to conduit failure.

TOC concurred with the need and appropriateness of the larger complete-street improvement and that it may be reasonable and cost-effective to defer this project to follow the completion of the Langley Parkway North project. The current CIP 283 project could provide minimal signal equipment improvements needed to maintain current signal operation over the coming several years, with objective that much of the new equipment installed could be relocated at a later date or reused at another city intersection. Installation of

large, permanent structures such as new signal pole and mast arm supports would not be included at this time.

It was noted that CIP 380 includes a proposed sidewalk/crosswalk improvement project on Warren Street near the high school. Proposed in FY2014, this would be a jointly-funded project with the Concord School District to construct two high-visibility pedestrian crosswalks on Warren Street (including bump-outs) at Westbourne Street and at the school main entrance walkway to the west. It would be cost effective to construct this project concurrently with a complete street upgrade of the Pleasant/Warren/Fruit intersection.

This project will also be discussed at TPAC's meeting on February 28, 2013.

D. Open Discussion Items

1) Staff response to miscellaneous inquiries (refer to correspondence in agenda packet).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer
Chair, Traffic Operations Committee

The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.