



Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – April 21, 2015

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services
Jim Major, General Services
Kevin Partington, Concord Police Department
Matt Cashman, Concord School District
Rick Wollert, Fire Alarm Division

A. Regular Discussion Items

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None. Data not available.

- 2) City Council meeting update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its April 13, 2015 meeting, City Council accepted TPAC's report and recommendation and set a May 11 public hearing to amend the city's Comprehensive Transportation Policy.

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its March 26, 2015 meeting, TPAC finalized and approved a proposed amendment to the city's Comprehensive Transportation Policy.

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

- 1) None.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

- 1) Discussion of periodic blockage of Sewalls Falls Road by queued vehicles waiting to pick up students at Beaver Meadow School (*Police: 3/27/15*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is an observation by police staff that vehicles are standing on and along Sewalls Falls Road near Beaver Meadow School in the afternoon prior to school release time waiting to pick up students and potentially blocking through traffic movement along the street. The issue becomes more pronounced in winter with snow banks along the street causing stopped vehicles to encroach further into the travel lanes.

Rob Mack visited the site and observed traffic operation before and during the school release period. Due to buses waiting near the school front door, there was limited driveway and parking lot space to accommodate parents in vehicles waiting to pick up students. Over two dozen vehicles were queued along the northbound and southbound sides of Sewalls Falls Road approaching the school driveway. These vehicles parked partway off the edge of the road and did encroach in the travel way, restricting two-way travel for about 10 minutes. After the buses left the school, parent vehicles slowly filed into the school driveway. At this time, all the Sewalls Falls vehicles pulled fully into their respective travel lanes to alternately enter the school driveway as space allowed. For a few minutes, Sewalls Falls Road through traffic was fully blocked and any through vehicles had to wait behind the line of school-related traffic.

On the school site, staff was observed controlling the parent-pickup operation. A very efficient operation was observed, with an advance staffer recognizing an approaching driver and sending word ahead via walkie-talkie that the particular student's parent or guardian was next in line to pick them up. Respective students were ushered to the pick-up area and quickly boarded into the vehicle as it arrived. Matt Cashman noted that the current parent pick-up system has been in place for about five years and has been a marked improvement over prior operations insofar as managing student pick-up traffic.

Regarding emergency response access, neither the police nor fire department was aware of any incidents where responders were affected by the subject condition. It was noted that all observed standing traffic had drivers in the cars, thus if there was an emergency responder approaching, the standing vehicles would be able to make way for the responder. This was different than the condition observed in past years at Abbott-Downing and Broken Ground Schools, where some parents would leave their vehicles parked and unattended along the street and walk into the school grounds to pick up students.

TOC members concurred that the current condition seemed to be working about as well as possible given constraints within the school grounds. As no adverse traffic issues had been reported in the last five years, and as no simple solution appeared available, it was felt that the current operation was reasonable. If in the future, traffic flow impedance due to standing vehicles becomes a significant issue, an option could be to post no parking along the west side of Sewalls Falls Road (along the cemetery) and let all waiting vehicles queue only along the east side of the street (as approached from the N. State/Sewalls Falls intersection).

D. Open Discussion Items

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

Respectfully submitted,

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

***The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on
Tuesday, May 19, 2015 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.***