

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting of March 20, 2019

Volume 66

No. 3

Members Present: Thomas Soyk, Deputy Commissioner of Parking, Acting Chairman
John P. Larson, Commissioner of Parking
James M. Bradley, Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety (for D. Chong)
Rick Hope, Commissioner Department of Public Works
Daniel Spencer, Deputy Corporation Counsel (for J. Callahan)
Eileen McClain, Senior Planner, Planning Department (for C. Gomez)
Ken Burford

Staff Members Present: Edward Ignaszewski, Supervisor of Enforcement
Nicholas Kralik, Capt.-Commander, Traffic Div.
Anthony Marena, Transportation Engineer
Stefania Mignone, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works

Members Absent: Melissa Briggs

Staff Members Absent:

Others Present: Lisa Lopilato, Secretary to Commissioner Larson

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the minutes of the February 20, 2019 meeting was approved.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. – Request from Mr. Daniel Coots, New York State Department of Transportation, Region 8 to allow the “Hudson Link” buses to utilize the existing bus stop between Main Street and Hamilton Avenue.

The staff conducted observations during the PM rush hour. The Hudson Link buses are presently utilizing this stop. Staff observed an articulated County bus blocking the travel lane and unable to utilize the stop due to a Hudson Link bus picking up passengers. The observations confirmed that this stop is over capacity and that it cannot accommodate additional bus volume. Based on this, the staff recommended that the Hudson Link buses utilize the stop that was initially approved on Main Street.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that Hudson Link cannot use the stop on Main Street because that stop is inbound. The proposed stop is to be used as an extra outbound stop only. The present stop location is not working. Signage in the area has been placed too close to the existing stop. He stated that the signs at this location were temporary installations on utility poles. Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk proposed that if the signs are moved further down the street, and the operators adjust their stop, the area should improve. After these adjustments are made there will be additional observations to see if the area improves. This specification was added to the staff recommendation.

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the Commission recommended the approval of the modified staff recommendation with Daniel Spencer opposed.

2. Manor Avenue – Request from Ms. Melissa Zappavigna Guerin, 16 Manor Avenue to consider a speed bump, a one way, or “No Thru Traffic” to reduce the speeds of drivers.

This item is being held to allow time for staff to conduct additional review and also collect speed data.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that when the speed monitor is available it will be placed at the Manor Avenue location and data will be collected.

This item is held.

3. Grandview Avenue – Request from Ms. Joan Conca and Ms. Shauna Prusky to discuss the parking problems on Grandview Avenue due to The Church in the Highlands Preschool.

This item is held to allow time for the Department of Public Safety to meet again with the Church.

Deputy Commissioner James Bradly provided the Commission with a brief update. The school is trying to be a good neighbor. They have sent out letters to the parents. Unfortunately, he stated, because of the amount of activity we may never resolve this to the satisfaction of the neighbors. He stated that they will continue to follow up. Ms. McClain asked if Public Safety was aware of the time available to park in that area and it was confirmed that it is 15 minutes.

This item will be held for an additional update.

4. 1203 Mamaroneck Avenue – Request from the Department of Public Safety to review this location. Patrons are often backing out of the parking spaces directly onto Mamaroneck Avenue. They have received complaints from residents and have observed vehicles illegally parking on the shoulder of Mamaroneck Avenue.

The Department of Public Safety requested this item be held until a response is received from the Building Department in order to relay the information to the initial complainant.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk upon his review of the area found he needed clarification as to parking locations so that he could accurately notify the Building Department. Mr. Burford confirmed that backing out is definitely a problem in the area and reviewed the area for Mr. Soyk.

Captain Kralik stated that the driveway further away from the building was the driveway in question. The area has been and will continue to be enforced by the Police Department and they will continue to deal with the problem of cars parking in the shoulder. Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that he will update his memo with the information and it will be forwarded to the Building Department for their review.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Greenridge Avenue at Rutherford Street – Request from Ms. Judith Meyer, 30 Greenridge Avenue for an all way stop at this intersection. She feels that this intersection is accident prone and suggested an all way stop.

The staff field reviewed the location and the accident history. The accident history did not show a pattern of accidents correctable by the installation of an all way stop. The federal warrants for an all way stop are not met. Based on the warrants not being met, the staff did not recommend an all way stop.

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the Commission recommended the approval of the staff recommendation.

2. Westchester Avenue at South Kensico Avenue – Request from Mr. Daniel M. Monteforte to create a “No U-turn” on Westchester Avenue eastbound. He states that eastbound Westchester Avenue drivers are making a “U-turn” during their green left arrow phase while vehicles on South Kensico have a green right arrow. He feels that this is a conflict since both vehicles feel they have the right of way. He requested that a “No U-turn” be created to eliminate the potential conflict.

The staff discussed Mr. Monteforte’s concern. New York State law requires a “U-turning” vehicle (even with a green left arrow) to yield to pedestrians and any other traffic. The current design is

in accordance with the New York State manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The staff reviewed the accident history, one accident was reported during the past five years which involved a U turning vehicle and a right turning vehicle. Based on this, the staff did not recommend any changes at this intersection.

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the Commission recommended the approval of the staff recommendation.

3. Coralyn Avenue and Hazelton Avenue – Requests from Mr. Douglas Smith, Ms. Erynn Albert, Ms. Rhianna Jones and Ms. Elizabeth Illberg to lower the speed limit on Coralyn Avenue. Also requested were the installation of speed bumps on Coralyn Avenue and Hazelton Avenue, and the installation of stop signs and children at play signs on Coralyn Avenue. They feel that Coralyn Avenue is used as a shortcut and that motorists are speeding through their neighborhood.

The staff field reviewed the location and the accident history. The Department of Safety also conducted enforcement in this area. A large volume of cut through traffic was not observed. Based on the request, the possibility of a right turn restriction at the intersection of Secor Road and Reynal Crossing to eliminate cut through traffic was discussed. However, this intersection is outside the jurisdiction of the City of White Plains.

The City complies with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The manual does not recommend the installation of “Children at Play” signs in typical residential neighborhoods.

The staff also reviewed the sight lines at the intersections along Coralyn Avenue. The sight lines at the intersection of Coralyn Avenue and Helena Avenue is reduced by the roadway elevation. The visibility for motorists traveling along Coralyn Avenue approaching Helena Avenue is adequate. The accident history did not show any accidents at this intersection. The federal warrants for an all way stop are not met. Based on the warrants not being met, the staff did not recommend an all way stop.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that there was a correspondence received from Mr. Smith regarding the agenda. Based on his letter he was primarily concerned with the details of the accident history.

The accident history was reviewed. There were zero accidents at Helena and Coralyn for 34 years. Although it appeared that visibility is limited, sight lines were measured and were found to be adequate. Also reviewed was the history of accidents between the intersections. There were six accidents over that same 34 year period at the intersection between Brentwood and Helena. Four of those accidents involved backing vehicles. Two accidents, one in 2012 and one more recent in November of 2018, involved a fire hydrant. This was consistent with comments that Mr. Smith made with regards to tire marks on his front lawn.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that the area where the fire hydrant is located should be reviewed again and that area should be edge lined. There is also a need, he stated, to re-evaluate the signage in the area to make sure there are advisory speed signs in both directions. The area should also be reviewed for the installation of a sign, at least in the northern direction, for a school bus stop. A speed display sign installation has been scheduled to collect more accurate speed and volume information. With this information the Commission can decide if additional changes need to be made in that area.

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the Commission recommended this item be put on hold.

IV. COMMON COUNCIL REFERRALS

1. 37 DeKalb Avenue – Communication from the Planning Board regarding a proposed amendment to the City of White Plains Zoning Ordinance on behalf of 37 DeKalb Owner, LLC, to allow

multifamily dwellings in the R2-2.5 Zoning District as a Special Permit Use to permit the adaptive reuse of a vacant former nursing home to reconstruct as a 21 unit rental apartment building.

The staff was not opposed to the amendment provided they meet the number of parking spaces currently required by zoning for the 21 units.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk questioned if the amendment was adopted would the 21 spaces be enough for the proposed project. Does the special permit, he continued, contain a specified parking requirement.

Ms. McClain stated that this is a special permit that would allow buildings that are currently non-conforming to be re-used as multi-residential buildings. There are approximately five buildings in White Plains that meet the requirements for this special permit. Ms. McClain stated that the permit specifications for parking states; as determined by the approving agency but in no case less than one per unit. Currently, the zoning for that area, Mr. Soyk replied, requires more parking. Ms. McClain stated that yes, it is a one or two family district, so it does allow for more cars. The applicant is proposing 21 spaces at this location because that is what they can fit.

Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated that the Commission would like to see a provision made for additional parking that is more realistic for this project. Additionally, when it is available, a site plan referral should be submitted to the Commission. After review of the proposed site plan, the Commission can recommend an appropriate parking requirement.

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the Commission recommended the approval of the referral and requested the review of the proposed site plan when submitted.

V. ADDENDUM

1. Old Mamaroneck Road and Gedney Way – Request from Mr. Matthew Welling, to install a pedestrian signal at this intersection. He feels that many of his classmates from Highlands Middle School walk to school and that adding both visual and audible signals would improve safety.

Staff did review the location, an older signal installation on utility poles, would definitely require updating. Acting Chairman Thomas Soyk stated he was not sure if it could be one crossing or if all of the crossings would have to be updated. Currently, there is a crossing guard in that area and is covering this intersection.

As discussed in previous meetings, a sidewalk was planned on the west side of Old Mamaroneck Road between Bolton and Gedney Way which would connect to this intersection. The question is could we include some signal improvements as part of that project. Commissioner Hope replied that there is currently no funding and no project for that sidewalk.

This item was held for further review.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made, seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:55AM.