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Town of Plaistow - Highway Safety Committee
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE – Friday, September 20, 2013

PRESENT - Chief Stephen Savage, Chairman; Chief John McArdle, Vice-Chairman; Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager; Michael Dorman, Building Inspector; Dan Garlington, Highway Department Supervisor; Leigh Komornick, Town Planner; Dan Poliquin, Selectman Representative; and Lisa Withee, Citizen's Representative

EXCUSED – None

ABSENT - Ernie Sheltry, Citizen's Representative and Richard Latham, Citizen's Representative

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - 9:35 a.m.

MINUTES – S. Fitzgerald motions to accept the minutes of 7/26/13. Seconded by D. Garlington - No discussion – None opposed – All in favor except Chief McArdle who abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

NEW BUSINESS – Discussion concerning placement of rumble strips along Route 121A north of the Sanborn Candies intersection.

S. Fitzgerald discusses the meeting he had a few weeks ago with NH DOT that Chief Savage and Kingston Police Chief Briggs also attended where they discussed the State's plan to place rumble strips on upper Route 125, north of Old County Road. Explains how he brought up the suggestion of rumble strips on Route 121A but he's not sure NH DOT will consider it since they are only looking at roads such as Route 125 at this point. Explains the PowerPoint NH DOT provided at the meeting and their offer to meet with this Committee to show the PowerPoint presentation. Suggests the Committee invite them down to look at their presentation. Also, mentions his conversation with the Board of Selectmen and how they don't feel rumble strips are necessary on the northern end of Route 121A.

Chief McArdle confirms the rumble strips are being placed north on Route 125 of Sanborn's Candies. S. Fitzgerald confirms they are since there are too many exit/entries south of the intersection. Chief McArdle questions why NH DOT isn't looking at starting placing them at Route 125/Old County Road intersection instead of starting at the Route 125/Route 121 intersection.

Chief Savage confirms that the rumble strips will begin at the Old County Road/Route 125 intersection and proceed northbound and explains that the agenda speaks about Sanborn's Candies intersection with regard to Route 121A.

S. Fitzgerald doesn't believe Route 121A fits with NH DOT's Federal Grant and mentions their willingness to meet with the Committee so they can get into the merits as to whether or not rumble strips would work on north Main Street.

Chief Savage asks if there are any other comments on this matter. – No further comments.

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OLD BUSINESS – Further discussion of possible relocation of radar panels to shorten the distance between them.

Chief Savage explains that currently the southbound radar panel is down and being replaced, which is covered under warranty and would like to hear thoughts anyone has in regards to moving the radar panels closer together.

D. Garlington suggests moving one across from Maple Avenue. Chief Savage questions if there is a pole located there. D. Garlington confirms there is.

L. Komornick explains how one of the recommendations discussed at the last Planning Board meeting was actually to have more radar panels along Main Street spaced between the two current units to help reduce the gap.

S. Fitzgerald mentions his discussion with Chief Savage about how it makes sense to have them closer to the school and how he'd like to bring them closer. Feels the southbound radar panel is at a good location since it sits before a dangerous curve in the road but explains how they are still placed too far away from the Village District. Understands part of the placement issue is due to the need to place them where a power source is located.

M. Dorman suggests placing one at Forrest Street. Chief Savage explains the advantage of the northbound radar panel where it's currently placed is how it sits right before the dangerous East/West Pine Streets intersection. Mentions how these panels run approximately \$8,000.

S. Fitzgerald comments on the need to speak with NH DOT, mentions how he'd like to avoid cluttering the road with signs, and that he'd like everyone to think strategically think about placement of these panels.

D. Poliquin comments that he's not seen any data from the current panels. S. Fitzgerald discusses how the data has been skewed due to ongoing road projects, the gas line project, as well as some minor difficulties in obtaining the data.

D. Poliquin suggests utilizing the current locations they're at and placing the new mobile radar trailer with recording capabilities in between them to see if patterns change and collect data from all three. Also comments that he, and probably other Board of Selectmen members, would like to see data before deciding on any changes.

Chief Savage believes the previous data collected was before the gas line project along Route 121A. S. Fitzgerald comments that a few things did skew the data at that time. D. Poliquin mentions how the northbound panel didn't seem to work on weekends.

L. Withee suggests that if the concern is the Village District then instead of placing additional radar panels, to possibly do something within the school zone by adding yellow lights similar to ones at UNH by the crosswalks. S. Fitzgerald likes the idea and mentions how he's looked at a number of signs/lights to place near crosswalks that are high and very prominent. Believes if the Town made these crosswalks and sensitive areas on the road more prominent, drivers might understand that they are on a Town main street.

D. Garlington suggests bringing in NH DOT on this matter since it's a State road. Is concerned they could at some point suggest turning the road over to the Town. S. Fitzgerald explains how the Town can't afford to take over Main Street. D. Garlington agrees.

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Chief Savage explains that once they get the panel back from the manufacturer they will install it and collect data shortly thereafter.

S. Fitzgerald would like to meet with Chief Savage to get a standard presentation that they can print out monthly showing the traffic patterns/data that he can provide to the Board of Selectmen. Feels this would help recognize patterns to help enforce speeding along Main Street.

L. Withee reiterates the need for the Town to put something out in the media. Feels more enforcement should be out in these areas during the time school starts and ends. Stresses her concern about the children at bus stops, on bicycles, and walking to school and the risk they are in with all the speeding traffic.

D. Poliquin questions what the distance of the school zone is. Chief McArdle believes it goes to the blinking light. D. Poliquin mentions that it's in the Village District but how it's not designated real well. D. Garlington explains that there's a defined school zone and how it's not very long since the State is responsible for maintaining any crosswalks within the school zones.

D. Poliquin suggests making the school zone area more visible which could help reduce the speed of traffic.

S. Fitzgerald suggests inviting Kevin Russell from NH DOT to discuss Main Street and to get his thoughts/ideas. D. Garlington questions if he's with the Bureau of Traffic Division. L. Komornick confirms he's with the District. D. Garlington suggest bringing down someone from the Bureau of Traffic to discuss Main Street since they would have better answers for us since they regulate issues such as sight distance. Feels if the Committee invites Kevin Russell down he will most likely have to go back and speak with the Bureau of Traffic.

Chief Savage suggests starting with Kevin Russell. S. Fitzgerald would like to get Mr. Russell onboard first and suggests bringing in Senator Morse and Rep. Norm Major to the meeting when the Town is ready to make a recommendation to NH DOT. He briefly speaks about the \$300,000 Safe Routes to School Grant application, which is currently pending for the Elm Street intersection.

Chief Savage states that for now, he will get the second radar panel up and running again and collect data from both. D. Poliquin asks that the police department use the trailer in between the two radar panels. Chief Savage confirms they will. D. Poliquin agrees with L. Withee also about needing to grab the attention of the drivers.

L. Withee suggests utilizing police officers, if the department has the resources, to run radar shortly after the posted radar panels and ticket speeding drivers. S. Fitzgerald explains that the Town has an officer outside of Pollard School with the Crossing Guard every day at the start and end of school and defers this suggestion over to Chief Savage. Chief Savage explains that the department can do this, as long as staffing levels permit it.

S. Fitzgerald would like to review the next round of data from the radar panels and place this on the Agenda at a future time.

COMMENTS – Land Use Summit

S. Fitzgerald mentions that the Planning Board met earlier this week and hands out a document labeled, "Follow-Up from the Land Use Summit", which the Planning Board made changes to recently. Explains that at the Land Use Summit the Planning Board was encouraged to review the Main Street Traffic Calming Study and provide the Board of Selectmen with recommendations of what they thought were

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priorities in terms of roadway and infrastructure projects. S. Fitzgerald explains how he believes it would be helpful for this Committee to take a good look into the Planning Board's recommendations.

Chief Savage believes the Planning Board's charting and establishments under the comments seem to be right on point. Feels it's reflective of what this Committee has spoken about for years with the priority being Main Street/Elm Street intersection and then the East/West Pine Streets intersection. Suggest possibly placing funds in the CIP as a placeholder for the East/West Pine Streets intersection.

S. Fitzgerald comments that the Board of Selectmen will be meeting at the end of October to review the list so the Committee has a month to pull together their recommendations and some analysis that would help the Board of Selectmen evaluate the recommendations. States that he'd like to meet with Chief Savage, Chief McArdle, L. Komornick, M. Dorman, and D. Garlington to review the list to come up with information they can supply the Board of Selectmen and asks this matter be place on the next Agenda in October.

Chief Savage asks everyone to view the list prior to the next meeting and be prepared to discuss it. L. Komornick states that she'll provide the Committee with a final list shortly. S. Fitzgerald asks everyone to look at the various intersections and provide the technical review that he knows this Committee is capable of.

COMMENTS – Site Development

Chief Savage mentions the site development plan for the redevelopment of the old Shaw's plaza which, L. Komornick provided him. Mentions how the Committee doesn't consider site plans but the police, fire, and highway department heads will look at it and offer their comments to the Planning Board. L. Komornick confirms that this plan is before the Planning Board and would like all the department heads to review it.

S. Fitzgerald explains how he wanted the Committee to have an opportunity to review it for information purposes only.

D. Poliquin questions if they'll be any traffic pattern changes. M. Dorman explains that the only traffic pattern changes will be within the parking lot. L. Komornick mentions that a traffic study will be completed by NH DOT but no changes in traffic patterns will occur along Route 125 and Route 121A.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn by M. Dorman and seconded by Chief McArdle. None opposed. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah E. Gibbs,
Recording Secretary