



Meeting Minutes TSAC August 18, 2021

DATE: September 16, 2023
SUBJECT: Transportation Safety Advisory Committee Minutes from August 18, 2021

This meeting was held via the Zoom online platform.

Meeting called to order by Michael Diluiso at 8:12 AM

Members Present:

- Michael Diluiso, Parking Department
- Director Steven Calla, Department of Public Works
- Deputy Chief John Goodwin, Police Department
- Captain W. Scott Wiley, Fire Department
- Ben Schad, Resident Representative

Members Absent:

- John Eade, Resident Representative
- One vacancy on the committee for a Resident Representative

Mr. Diluiso advised the public in attendance that there is a vacancy on the committee and asked anyone interested in serving on the committee to email TSAC. He also reminded those in attendance that TSAC is an advisory committee and not a policy making body and explained the process of what happens with a recommendation from the committee going to the Town Manager and Town Council for further action if deemed necessary

Public Hearings:

Agenda Item:

Proposal to restrict parking on Terrace Ave between Cottage Ave and the Dead End

Mr. Diluiso advised those in attendance that this issue had been on last month's agenda and in the time between meetings there had been an accident caused by the parking conditions on this street. He explained that the agenda item was expanded beyond the original scope so that the entirety of the street could be looked at rather than a specific, small area. He displayed a map of the area showing measurements he had taken for the purposes of discussion of this issue. The map shows that Terrace Ave varies in width from 16 feet 6 inches to 15 feet 4 inches, and there is a 4 foot 6 inch berm on the North (left) side of the street. He asked if the committee had anything to say before opening the matter to the public and nobody wished to be heard. He opened the floor to public comment on the issue.

Mr. McGovern of Terrace Ave stated that the reason this issue was brought up was that parking was fine until a fire hydrant was removed and that allowed parking on both sides of the street. All he is asking for is no parking where the hydrant used to be and there hasn't been any other parking issues. The berm was put in by former Selectman Dimes to allow for the flow of traffic. Mr. Diluiso advised that when issues like this come to a public hearing, they are often expanded to look at the entirety of the street rather than a specific spot.

There was no further public comment on this issue so the public comment was closed. Director Calla stated he would have no issue with a no parking between signs in the area originally proposed, but he would like to take a closer look at the area before making a motion.

MOTION: By Director Calla to postpone this item to the next committee meeting

SECONDED: Mr. Schad

DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION: None

VOTE IN FAVOR OF MOTION: Unanimous

Agenda Item:

Proposal to make Cottage Ave a one-way between Terrace Ave and Hillside Ave

Mr. Diluiso stated that this was something that the committee had discussed previously as part of another agenda item and was sent back by the Town Council asking TSAC to hold a full public hearing on the matter. The hearing was delayed in an effort to allow the neighborhood to adjust to the last traffic pattern change made in the neighborhood on Terrace Ave between Park Ave and Cottage Ave. He again showed a map with the measurements of the street width varying from 19 feet 4our inches to 18 feet 10 inches. The configuration of this portion of the street is currently two-way traffic with parking on one side. Mr. Diluiso asked the committee members if they had anything to add before the floor was opened to public comment.

Director Calla stated this was brought up because this should not be operating as a two-way street based on the parking, but it is difficult to do anything with it until a policy is put in place since similar situations exist throughout town. He stated he will not vote on this matter in the interest of consistency. Mr. Diluiso stated that TSAC has a policy that was adopted at the committee level but respects Director Calla's decision. Mr. Diluiso opened the floor to public comment.

Tom Ruffing of 67 Cottage Ave stated that he is in support of making the street a one-way and asked that the committee look at the intersection of Cottage Ave and Hillside Ave due to dangerous driving practices, whether a stop or yield sign or something to mitigate the flow of traffic.

David Correll, corner of Cottage & Terrace Ave, stated he echoes the previous statement, but also states that these issues are necessitated by the previous change to the one-way portion of Terrace Ave to keep parking and believes that should be revisited.

Robert Ferullo, Prospect Ave, stated that if you make Cottage Ave a one-way then the residents who live on the top of the hill would only have two remaining ways to get off of the hill which would be two of the steepest hills in town and he is concerned during times when there is snow and ice. He has witnessed cars go through intersections when they just couldn't stop or have gone sideways, and difficulty with emergency vehicles responding in inclement weather. He things Terrace Ave should go back to a two-way street and eliminate the 4-5 parking spaces and Cottage should remain a two-way street to give vehicles another option to get off of the hill during icy conditions.

Chuck, and area resident, echoed the previous statement from Mr. Ferullo.

Tom Ruffing stated that if we consider leaving Cottage Ave a two-way then we need to look at the parking since larger delivery trucks often go up on the sidewalk or people's property. Leaving the street two-way would mean we need to eliminate parking near the intersections.

David Correll stated he thinks this stems from the incorrect decision to make Terrace Ave a one-way and icy conditions may lead people to disregard the one-way and travel that way against the traffic flow.

Shannon Poulos of Terrace Ave agrees with Director Calla that this issue exists in multiple areas of the town. She stated she has lived in the area her entire life and understands the concerns about inclement weather. She believes the decision on the Terrace Ave one-way between Park and Cottage should be left to the professionals, but safety should come out ahead of convenience in the decision making.

There was no further public comment on this matter. Mr. Diluiso brought it back to committee discussion. He stated that he would not be prepared to vote on this issue today and reminded the committee of the street-width policy that they voted to adopt. He also asked Director Calla if it would be possible to measure the slope of Faun Bar Ave between Cottage Ave and Beacon Circle, Terrace Ave between Park Ave and Shirley St, and Shirley Ave between Terrace Ave and Shirley St. Director Calla stated he would do his best to get those measurements. Mr. Diluiso stated he felt it would help to have those numbers to make a decision.

MOTION: By Mr. Schad to postpone this item to the next committee meeting

SECONDED: Captain Wiley

DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION: None

VOTE IN FAVOR OF MOTION: 3-0 with Director Calla and Deputy Chief Goodwin abstaining

Agenda Item:

Proposal to restrict parking on Crystal Cove Ave between Hillside Ave and Park Ave

Mr. Diluiso stated this came to the committee when a resident reached out after signage was installed and it was realized there was no accompanying ordinance. He shared a map showing the area in front of 30-32 Crystal Cove Ave which sits between Hillside Ave and Park Ave. He stated that from street to street is 106 feet, but the area where someone could reasonably park due to the curbs is 55 feet with 10 feet of that being prohibited due to a fire hydrant. The street is 24 feet 4 inches wide. When he was taking the measurements, he observed cars have a difficult time passing due to cars parked on the southern side, and when a postal truck was parked in front of the house as well, a car could not get through until the truck moved. Mr. Schad asked about the size of the postal truck and Mr. Diluiso stated it was a standard size sprinter van. Mr. Schad said this is a pretty critical intersection for the area given the number of streets that intersect. Mr. Diluiso added that there is no proposal to touch the parking on the South side of Crystal Cove Ave, only the North side between Hillside Ave and Park Ave which would eliminate two parking spaces.

Mr. Diluiso opened the floor to public comment.

Robert Ferullo, Prospect Ave, stated as you come down Hillside Ave, it is difficult to pass on Crystal Cove Ave if cars are parked on both sides. He also stated that there is a sign on Park Ave stating that there is no parking on that side of the street. Mr. Diluiso clarified that the parking restriction he mentioned is specific to Park

Ave and does not cover Crystal Cove Ave, so new signage and ordinance language would need to be in place for Crystal Cove Ave.

Brian Ruffing stated that if you're driving on Shirley St and take a left on to Crystal Cove Ave, it is impossible for two vehicles to pass when there is parking there which creates a dangerous condition.

Tom Ruffing stated this intersection is a bit of a free for all with a 5-way intersection and it needs better signage and lighting. He states nobody yields or pays attention to the stop signs. Mr. Diluiso stated that the lower portion of Crystal Cove Ave between Shirley St and Hillside Ave is not on the agenda for this meeting but he understands the concerns.

Chuck Cubic reiterated that this is an unusual multi-way intersection and he has nearly gotten into multiple head-on collisions. He believes this no parking area will help and is a first step to make the intersection safer. He also commented on the lack of crosswalks.

David Correll stated he had similar experiences and the intersection can be difficult to navigate. He stated that the previous one-way on Terrace Ave between Park Ave and Cottage Ave forces more traffic into this intersection.

There was no further public comment. Mr. Diluiso opened the discussion back up to the committee. Director Calla supports the no-parking area as discussed and believes it is needed. He understands the comments and agrees it can be a dangerous intersection. He mentioned that even though they are not on this agenda, Hillside Ave between Beacon St and Crystal Cove Ave and Crystal Cove Ave between Shirley St and Hillside Ave should both either be one-way streets or have no parking allowed.

Mr. Diluiso reiterated the issues he saw when he was taking measurements of the area and also added that a car had to back out of Hillside Ave because the road was blocked for a response by the Fire Department. He stated that normally he is not in favor of eliminating parking, but eliminating two parking spaces in this situation to increase the safety of this intersection seems like the right thing to do.

MOTION: By Director Calla to eliminate parking on the North side of Crystal Cove Ave between Hillside Ave and Park Ave

SECONDED: Mr. Schad

DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION: None

VOTE IN FAVOR OF MOTION: 4-0 with Deputy Chief Goodwin abstaining

New Business:

Agenda Item:

Correspondence

Mr. Diluiso advised there was no correspondence for the committee since the last meeting

Old Business

Mr. Diluiso asked if the committee would object to taking an item out of order since there was at least one member of the public in attendance to speak on the matter. Nobody on the committee objected.

Agenda Item:

Resident request for “No Parking Here to Driveway” near 381 Revere St

Mr. Diluiso brought up the Google Maps satellite view of the area to be discussed and opened the floor to public comment.

Patricia Malizia of 381 Revere St stated that there are a number of issues. There is a curve in the road, she believes the speeds of passing cars is 35-40 mph with steady traffic and there are homes with multiple cars. She states that she looks and it appears safe to come out of the driveway but by the time she reaches the street, traffic is upon her. She has needed to call the police multiple times for vehicles parked at the end of the driveway so she has to back straight out into the street before turning the wheel. There are times people park in front of the home and the street isn’t swept or plowed. She states the problem has gotten worse since she moved into the home in 1999 and is looking for relief of a couple of feet so she can turn her wheels before being in the middle of the street. She added a concern of visitors parking until after midnight, throwing trash and making noise, but is mainly concerned for her safety when backing on to Revere St.

No other members of the public wished to be heard so the discussion was brought back to the committee. Mr. Diluiso stated that the committee looked at the issue of speeding on this stretch of Revere St at a previous meeting before the 25MPH speed limit was enacted and agreed to revisit it after the lower limit was put in place. He added that now that time has passed, it may be good to review both issues at the same time.

Deputy Chief Goodwin stated that Revere St is always in the top three areas of traffic enforcement each year. Mr. Diluiso recalled that the last recording of speed data showed that the speeding wasn’t as bad as had been perceived. Deputy Chief Goodwin stated that he does sympathize with this situation with the safety concerns of pulling out of the driveway, but the issue is consistent from the Revere line to the East Boston line. Mr. Schad states he doesn’t feel like the speeds have changed since the lowering of the speed limit

Mr. Diluiso asked if Deputy Chief Goodwin could get fresh speed data and he said he could do so. He explained that the data shows us the day of the week, time of day, and the speed range of vehicles in each direction as well as what percentage of vehicles are in excess of the enforcement buffer over the speed limit. The data helps the Police Department focus their enforcement efforts at the appropriate time of day. Director Calla stated that the speed data will be a useful tool but the issue seems to be that there is no ordinance prohibiting vehicles parking right to the corner stone and we may benefit from an ordinance that creates a set distance. Mr. Diluiso stated that the current ordinance prohibits blocking or impeding a driveway and added that his concern about a set distance may create a situation where someone is in compliance but someone still can’t get out of the driveway. Director Calla believes that setting a distance would solve this problem and improve the situation town-wide. Deputy Chief Goodwin stated he is in favor of a town-wide policy regarding a set distance from a driveway. Mr. Schad stated that Boston has a three-foot setback. Mr. Diluiso stated that he’s not opposed to the idea, but we need to be careful so that we don’t inadvertently make things worse.

MOTION: By Mr. Schad to postpone this item until the committee has the requested speed data

SECONDED: Director Calla

DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION: None

VOTE IN FAVOR OF MOTION: Unanimous

Agenda Item:

Proposal to eliminate currently posted on-street time limits along Shirley St from Irwin St to the vicinity of Beacon St and allow businesses to request a limited number of time restricted spots adjacent to their storefronts

MOTION: By Captain Wiley to postpone this item to the next committee meeting

SECONDED: Deputy Chief Goodwin

DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION: None

VOTE IN FAVOR OF MOTION: Unanimous

Agenda Item:

General committee discussion of parking, traffic, transportation, and committee issues for possible inclusion on future agendas or other action as the committee sees fit

Mr. Diluiso stated he would take today's discussion that the committee would like to take up the idea of an ordinance to create a set distance for parking near a driveway at a future meeting. There was no other input from the committee.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Mr. Schad

SECONDED: Deputy Chief Goodwin

VOTE IN FAVOR: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 AM

Date Minutes Approved: September 20, 2023