



BROCKTON TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023
6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

The Traffic held a Special Meeting at the Arnone School Cafetorium, Little Theater, 135 Belmont Street, Brockton, MA 02301, at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023.

Present were Traffic Commission Members: Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro, Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan, Stephan Hooke, Councilor Jeffrey Thompson and James Sweeney.

There being a proper quorum, the meeting was called to order by Traffic Commissioner Captain Porcaro at 6:01 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

1. EAST STREET

Requested by: Ward 4 Councilor Susan Nicastro o/b/o Tony and Janelyn Sostre of 12 Cappy's Way

Issue/Request: Review by the Traffic Commission of the stretch of East Street located near its intersection with Hopkins Road, for the trimming of trees overshadowing existing lighting, the addition of street lighting, signage marking curves, etc. and painted crosswalks, and such other actions as the Commission may deem appropriate to keep drivers and pedestrians safe by adequately illuminating the street at night and to encourage drivers to reduce speed.

******CDM SMITH ENGINEERING STUDY DATED APRIL 16TH, 2023******

Conclusion: Based on the criteria outlined in the Guidance and Regulations section of this report and field observations, CDM Smith provides the following near-term options to enhance safety along the corridor:

- **W11-3 Deer Crossing signs installed throughout the corridor, warning drivers of the possibility of deer entering the road from the forested areas.**
- **W1-2 curve warning signage to encourage reduced driver speeds:**
 - o **-Curve 3 in southbound direction**
 - o **Curve 4 in northbound direction prior to curve and in southbound direction**
- **Additional chevron signs installed in both directions within Curves 1, 3, and 4 every 80 feet to match the MUTCD standards.**
- **W13-1P Advisory Speed Plaques installed before Curves 1, 3, and 4 informing drivers that the recommended speed is 30mph.**
- **Reflective post panels added to chevron signposts.**
- **Flashing chevron signs for Curves 1, 3, and 4.**
- **Additional radar speed limit signs along the corridor to make drivers aware of their speed and encourage a reduction in speed.**
- **The following long-term measures are also considerations to enhance safety, but would require design input:**
 - o **- Speed tables installed within the tangent (straight) section of the roadway to discourage motorists from picking up speed through these sections. Appropriate warning signs should be installed in conjunction with the speed tables.**
 - o **- Installation of centerline rumble strips to alert drivers when deviating from the travel lane into the opposing lane. While this is not usually recommended on residential streets due to the noise caused when vehicles drive over the strips, these could be considered within curves and along the forested portion of the corridor.**
 - o **- An alternative to centerline rumble strips is raised pavement markers on either side of the yellow centerline to better delineate the centerline within the curves. These need to be installed properly to avoid damage from snow plowing.**
 - o **- Provision of power supply to support street light installation along the unlit section of the corridor. Photometric evaluation to confirm the appropriate output of light along the corridor would be required.**

o-The installation of sidewalks may also be appropriate to increase pedestrian safety along the corridor. However, this may be difficult due to the number of utility poles, mailboxes, guardrails, trees, and other objects along the roadside. These would have to be removed, and some objects relocated, to install a sidewalk on either side of the roadway.

Discussion: Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that we are here tonight to review the Engineering Study recently conducted by CDM Smith. He also stated that the Traffic Commission has done a lot regarding East Street. The Traffic Maintenance Man recently put up 18 signs on East Street. He further stated that East Street has a lot of signs. At last month's meeting it was brought to our attention about the fog lines and the double yellow lines that were lacking and/or nonexistent, after that meeting he stated that he went there, as we do the line painting every year and he noted that the fog lines and the double yellow lines on East Street are pristine, they are in excellent condition. He also stated that there was a solar powered speed sign installed on East Street and that he has directed many traffic enforcement patrols onto East Street. East Street has gotten a lot of our attention, therefore, we put it out to a full engineering study from Plain Street to Summer Street. The engineering study, of which was 221 pages report has come back to us, every square each of East Street has been studied by a team of engineers. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro read into record the summary of the Engineering Study. He noted that 85% of the drivers on East Street were driving between 39-42 MPH. He also stated that the crash history of East Street stated that there were 35 crashes from 2020-2022, zero pedestrian involved crashes, 7 out of the 35 crashes were crashes involving deer. He further stated the difference between a speed bump and a speed table, as it was recommended in the study to install speed tables on East Street. There was discussion as to the speed tables that are in the Town of Easton by the Farmer's Daughter, those are speed tables, the purpose is to slow drivers down. Also discussed were rumble strips, Belmont Street has them. When you start to move over to the next lane, there are rumble strips. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro read from the CDM Study, that rumble strips are usually not recommended on residential streets, however, these could be considered on the curves and along the forested portion of the corridor. Present were Council President Susan Nicastro and Resident Tony Sostre. Mr. Sostre stated that he likes the speed table idea. There was discussion among the Traffic Commission members as to where the Deer Crossing signs that are recommended would be placed on East Street, that they could be spaced out so that they are seen, especially down by the power lines. National Grid did put up some fencing by their property, however, the deer can jump that fence. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson asked if our plan would be to recommend all of the recommendations or some of them of which Traffic Commission Captain Mark Porcaro stated that when he was looking at the study earlier and the Traffic Commission

can deal with the near-term recommendations, as they deal with mostly signage, the flashing chevron sign, we have never dealt with, however, we could reach out to Marlin Controls and see if they sell those and we could order those. He further stated that the long-term recommendations, will require a letter to the Mayor's office asking him to find the funding and have the DPW implement those. James Sweeney stated that he supports the speed tables, they should be implemented however fast we can, considering a budget, throughout the city, in trouble spots, they work. Mr. Sostre stated that in Dorchester they have speed tables on Nowell Street. He stated that people would fly through there all the time until one day someday cut the curve and an individual was killed cutting his grass, that's when they finally put a speed table in. He also stated that he lost his son on East Street and that he doesn't want to see anyone else lose a loved on East Street. James Sweeney further stated that we can spend money on signage but in his opinion he believes that the speed tables really work. Council President Susan Nicastro asked how involved are rumble strips? Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that he doesn't know what would go into installing rumble strips, that it would be something for the DPW to determine. Traffic Maintenance Man, Eddie Sylvester stated that they have to take road textures when they do those things because if they are not thick enough they will break the road. He further stated that they usually put rumble strips on new roads. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that at the end of the day if the Traffic Commission votes to send a letter to the Mayor with the long-term recommendations, then the ball is in their court as to whether or not a rumble strip is going to be feasible on East Street. Council President Susan Nicastro brought up the 3 year crash history and stated that there were 35 crashes, was it further broken down into causes of the crashes, you stated 7 were deer. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson stated that they also mentioned that that is twice the nationally average of crashes. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that they noted 7 of the accidents involved deer. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that he spent a lot of time reading the 221 page study and the crash history, he looked at all the charts to see what time these crashes were occurring. He also stated that he believes the biggest problem on East Street is speeding, every crash involved some type of speeding, other than the car that came out of Edson Street, blew the stop sign and hit a car on East Street. If you look at the charts, 40-45 MPH, it seems to be a pattern between 7,8 and 9 in the morning and 3,4,5 and 6 in the afternoon. East Street north of Edson 7am-9 pm, with the exceeding of the speed limit, there were a couple over 50 MPH. Cars are heading north between 7,8 and 9 am and maybe heading south 3,4,5 and 6pm. He wonders if it's people going to Massasoit Community College that are up East Street cutting across to Thatcher Street. If there were some police patrols at those times, it would give us some directive as to what time we need to do some traffic enforcement on East Street. He further stated that several of the crashes were of impaired drivers. He also stated that there were a number of crashes that involved deer. He also spoke about street lights that need to be installed near the power lines. There are no National Grid poles in this area and they would have to put up at least a dozen poles to put street lights up. When you come around that

curve near Oakland street, it gets very dark. He also spoke on the chevrons that were recommended and stated that he believes we did a good job at putting up chevrons on East Street. He stated how do we regulate speeding? If we put rumble strips down the middle of the street, you can almost guarantee that people are going to drive down the rumble strip just to make the noise. Councilor President Susan Nicastro stated are they warranted though, whereas the crash data states there are cars crossing the road? Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan that we don't know what the blacktop on East Street can sustain and if it can even sustain the rumble strips. He suggested to Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro that there be traffic enforcement during the peak hours that we indicated in the Engineering report. He believes that speeding is the contributing factor in everything down on East Street and with the number of deer crossing accidents, that's warranted and see if we can get some street lights on the curve where they cleaned out all the trees. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson asked if we have flashing chevrons anywhere in the city? He knows there's one up on Centre Street, however, he believes that was installed by the state, right there at the curve coming over the Abington Brockton line. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that the city has one at N. Quincy and N. Cary Street and the city installed those. Traffic Maintenance Man, Eddie stated that that's a flashing curve sign not a flashing chevron. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that the Traffic Commission has a contract with a particular vendor, Marlin Controls, that sells stuff like that and I can see if they sell the flashing chevrons. If we vote to have one of those signs, it doable. There was discussion between Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan and Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro as to whether a solar powered speed sign was put on East Street and Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that yes, there is one on East Street, maybe around the 200 block, near Edson maybe. James Sweeney stated maybe we can get some of our mobile ones, if any are available. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that the solar powered speed signs are permanently installed whereas the battery powered ones, the more they get used it drains the battery. East Street is a busy road and you would probably only get 2-3 days out of a battery operated speed sign. Council President Susan Nicastro asked if we get any data from them of which Traffic Commissioner Mark Porcaro stated that we can, there is a data package that you can buy from the company and have them install it, it's an extra cost but from those particular signs we don't download anything from those. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson stated that that would probably be a drain on the battery as well which Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated could be, yes. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro further stated that those battery operated signs are more for quieter side streets and they aren't meant for a spot where they are going to be flashing all day long and kill the battery on them. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson asked about the bigger mobile one that's on a trailer, do we still have any of those? Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that that was bought years ago, maybe under Captain DiBari, when he was the Traffic Commissioner, it's orange. That was on West Chestnut Street for a while years ago and it's may be down at DPW. I will ask Captain Hallisey because it was in the station parking lot for a while and he may

know where it is being stored and see how it runs and if we can use it. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that a while back we had talked about sidewalks and one of the thoughts we had was to do it in phases. Councilor President Nicastro stated before Larry Rowley retired, he told her that it would cost approximately 1 million dollars and she further stated that the buses are picking up children when all these accidents are happening between 7 am-9am. James Sweeney asked if there was any way that we could work with Massasoit and get some awareness out about this, might help the cause if we are going to pin it down to a certain time and if the majority of the traffic is coming from the college, it wouldn't hurt to reach out. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that we can send a letter to Massasoit and let them know what's going on there and asking them to advise the students, if they do use East Street, please be aware of the speed limit. There was further discussion about speed tables and Council President Susan Nicastro asked how would we explore that and would they be allowed on our streets of which Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated he was unsure and he knows the engineer recommended it but that's more of a DPW thing, of which DPW Commissioner Hill would be able to expand on and he would have some valuable input for us. James Sweeney stated if we are looking for speed tables would it be helpful to get Easton's study on the area that they have speed tables, where they have already implemented them and see if it would be a drastic improvement or not. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated his very limited research into speed tables is that they have never been used to for the sole purpose of slowing cars down, they have been used because they want to slow cars down at pedestrian crosswalks and my guess is that's why two of them were put where they were in Easton. He further stated that he was surprised that the engineering study recommended the placement of speed tables on East Street for slowing cars down, maybe the rule has changed. Councilor President Susan Nicastro asked what if we find out where the bus stops are and if we place speed tables where the bus stops are located or some of the bus stops? Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that it would be helpful to have an engineer go look to see where the speed tables should be located because I don't know if we should put them at bus stops, before a curve, in a curve, after the curve, where the appropriate spot would be to put one. James Sweeney asked if there were any crosswalks on East Street and Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated he didn't think so. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that the 2 speed tables in Easton that were put in near the Farmer's Daughter during Covid when they had seating out at the edge of the street and cars coming through the center probably aren't going more than 20MPH because it's so narrow and so congested. If we put one of these on East Street, on a straight away and someone is going 50 MPH they are going to launch and what happens if someone is on a motorcycle and hits one of these, they could go up into a tree. In the center of Easton, it slows people down and I think they made it into a crosswalk at the same time. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro stated that if a speed table were to be put in, there could be signage warning people but I hope that it wouldn't get blurred into all the other signs that are already located on East Street. Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark

Porcaro stated relative to rumble strips and speed tables, we may vote that we are in favor of them, however, the residents on East Street may not want them and maybe Councilor Nicastro should engage with the residents and see what they think about the installation of rumble strips or speed tables. As the ward councilor you may want to engage the residents first and we can still send our letter off to the Mayor, saying what the engineer study recommends long term, it up to the Mayor to fund it, if he believes it's appropriate. Mr. Sostre stated that there have been 2 recent accidents at the house where his son's accident was. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that the cause of those accidents was speeding. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson stated that's why I think anything that catches the eye, a deer crossing sign, you're not really paying attention to, the blinking signs, the speed limit signs, a blinking chevron, those are probably the most effective. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated he believes the speed signs that we put up on Pearl Street and West Chestnut, I think they are very effective of which Councilor Thompson agreed. Council President Susan Nicastro stated the one that is placed on West Chestnut Street is very well placed. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that if we have one of those solar powered speed limit signs on East Street, maybe we should think about placing another one on East Street going in the opposite direction. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated that we should have a discussion as to what is the accepted speed limit on East Street, is it 30 MPH, is it 35/40 MPH, it's 30MPH now. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson asked how that was set of which Retired Fire Chief Galligan stated that we went down there put the 30 MPH and he further stated is 30MPH too slow for that street for the purpose of discussion. Councilor Jeffrey Thompson stated that once we start going beyond that, like we've seen in these curve tables, once you get to 40MPH, you are outside of their comfortability limit. Retired Fire Chief Kenneth Galligan stated with the number of driveways on East Street, 30 MPH is certainly an appropriate speed limit for East Street. There was discussion between Councilor Jeffrey Thompson and Traffic Commissioner Captain Mark Porcaro as to the cost for the solar powered speed limit signs, whether we should see if there is any grant money for them, and that the Traffic Commission has a yearly contract with Marlin Controls, of which the Traffic Commission uses to purchase the solar powered speed limit signs. The Traffic Commission Secretary, Michelle Yaffe can check to see how much is left on its' yearly contract to determine if we have money left on the contract to purchase more of the solar powered speed limit signs. The Traffic Commission Secretary, Michelle Yaffe, explained to the commission that the money for the solar powered speed limit signs comes out of the Traffic Line and Signs budget line item, via the contract with Marlin Controls. There was further discussion among the Traffic Commission members what they can vote on tonight, the near-term recommendations can be voted on and implemented, whereas the long-term recommendations, a letter would need to be sent to the Mayor and he will rely on the DPW Commissioner and Engineer for their input on the long-term recommendations as to whether or not they are feasible.

VOTED: To accept the near-term recommendations #'s 1-7 and to send correspondence to the Mayor supporting the long-term recommendations and the installation of street lights along East Street between Oakland and Edson Streets.

Motion was made by Councilor Jeffrey Thompson, seconded by James Sweeney to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Yaffe

Michelle Yaffe

Secretary to the Traffic Commission