



# **Town of Hudson**

## **Internal Traffic Committee**

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## **Minutes of Meeting 8-28-2020**

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*A meeting of the Town of Hudson's Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) was held on Friday 8-28-2020, at 10:00 AM via Zoom consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus." Jeff Wood, Chair convened the meeting at 10:10 AM.*

The following ITC voting members were in attendance:

Jeff Wood, Building Commissioner, Chair  
Richard DiPersio, Police Chief  
Bryan Johannes Fire Chief  
Eric Ryder, Director of Public Works

The following non-voting ITC members were in attendance:

Kristina Johnson, AICP, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development  
Richard Braga, Executive Director, Downtown Business Improvement District  
Charles Randall, Randall Properties/Downtown Business Improvement District

### **Mason Street- Cut-through traffic and speeding**

Tara Sullivan, resident of Mason Street, at the corner Giasson Street and Walnut Street expressed concerns to the ITC members that Giasson Street functions as a cut-through roadway, with motorists traveling at high rates of speed trying to save time. Ms. Sullivan noted that Giasson Street has a high rate of pedestrian activity with two schools and a daycare facility and the close proximity of the Assabet Rail Trail. Ms. Sullivan indicated that she has contact the Police Department regarding the speeding.

Eric Ryder acknowledged that Ms. Sullivan has taken the correct action in contacting the Police Department, and inquired with the Police Chief if the speed trailer was in service; to which Chief DiPersio said that it's not operational. Chief DiPersio noted that the Department is looking to purchase a smaller version that can be mounted on telephone poles. The Police Chief then inquired if there were specific timeframes when the speeding occurs more frequently in the neighborhood. Ms. Sullivan indicated that the morning and afternoon rush hours and during the daytime on the weekends is when the neighborhood experiences the most amount of speeding.

Ms. Sullivan also noted that motorists are not seeing the crosswalk at Giasson and Walnut Street and drive through the crosswalk without stopping, even when pedestrians are making their way across the street. Ms. Sullivan suggested that another crosswalk be installed at Giasson and Overland Street. Chief DiPersio pledged to continue targeted enforcement along Giasson Street. Mr. Ryder noted that installation a crosswalk requires some level of engineering so that it's not creating any additional safety hazards for pedestrians and meets

the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He also noted that there is no existing sidewalk network on Overland Street, which would make the engineering of crosswalk in this location more difficult.

### **Chapin Street- Speeding**

Kristina Johnson presented an overview of the concern that was emailed to her regarding speeding on Brigham Street South heading towards Marlborough. Chief DiPersio stated that he would look into the issue further, and send officers from the Traffic Control Unit to conduct targeted enforcement.

The ITC did not take any further action.

### **Walk signal time Main Street/Villa De Porto/ 425 Main Street**

Eric Ryder noted that the pedestrian signal at Main Street and Villa DePorto and 425 Main Street is actually controlled by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as they installed the equipment when the Rail Trail was constructed. Mr. Ryder stated that he would look into whether the walk signal could be adjusted to allow for more time to cross at those locations.

The ITC did not take any further action.

### **MassDOT Grant- Shared Streets and Spaces Program**

Kristina Johnson presented an overview of MassDOT's recently released Share Street and Spaces Program which is intended to provide grants as small as \$5,000 and as large as \$300,000 for cities and towns to quickly implement or expand improvements to sidewalks, curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces and off-street parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce in their communities.

Eric Ryder noted that implementing street closures, or the blocking off of parking spaces for outside dining or retail spaces was not a safe idea with the rotary still under construction, and even when the construction is finished, there could be added costs to the Department of Public Works for the removal of temporary installations. Ms. Johnson suggested that she contact some of economic development professionals in the metrowest area to get a better understanding of the local costs associated with taking advantage of this program.

No action was taken on this item.

### **Felton Street- Traffic Rules and Orders amendment to reflect new parking spaces**

Kristina Johnson brought to the attention of the ITC that there are five (5) new spaces that have been created along the westerly side of Felton Street in conjunction with the Downtown rotary project. The new spaces have been striped and signed for "two-hour" parking Monday through Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. It came to the attention of the Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) that the Traffic Rules and Orders prohibits parking on the westerly side of Felton Street between hours of 6:00 AM and 5:00PM from Main Street to the intersection with Russell Street.

Eric Ryder seconded by Chief DiPersio moved to amend Article IV Stopping, Standing, and Parking, Section 2: No Parking Zones, delete the following Felton Street westerly side from Main Street northerly to the intersection of Russell Street and add the following Felton Street westerly from approximately 7 Felton Street to the intersection of Russell Street. Under Article IV Stopping, Standing, and Parking, Section 12: Additional Limited Duration Parking Zones, add the following Felton Street – the five spaces on the westerly side northerly from Main Street to approximately 7 Felton Street. 4-0-0 Unanimous

#### **Downtown Parking Audit- commercial loading needs**

Kristina Johnson discussed the issue of commercial loading needs in the Downtown. Ms. Johnson noted that back in January 2020, this Department completed an audit of the Traffic Rules and Orders regulations governing public parking facilities Downtown. One aspect of parking space usage in Downtown that has not been discussed or addressed is the possible need for loading zones. Both of the loading zones (Houghton Street and Main Street between 91 and 93) originally designated in Article IV Section 5 of the Traffic Rules and Orders have been removed. No further discussion of whether new loading zones should be designated to serve the needs of the downtown businesses. Furthermore, Ms. Johnson underscored that designated loading zones with a specific timeframe, for example, early-morning deliveries and waste pickup, can revert back to general-purpose parking during the critical peak periods.

Jeff Wood indicated that any commercial loading should be done on South Street, and that it would not be safe or feasible to block off any spaces within the rotary for commercial loading areas. He also noted that the businesses adjacent to Felton Street already have loading access via existing alleyways, and expressed his opposition to creating new commercial loading areas, and suggested that businesses adjacent to the rotary have deliveries scheduled for early morning or late in the evenings to avoid congestion.

Chief Johannes expressed his concern about having commercial loading areas designated within the limit of the rotary and noted that it was not practical to have tractor trailers loading and unloading in this area. Furthermore, he noted that the Felton Street on-street spaces was only envisioned and designed to have regular passenger vehicles using the spaces, not delivery trucks.

#### **Charles Randall- Randall Properties/Downtown BID**

Charles Randall indicated that he owns the Odd Fellows building, and noted his own observations with respect to loading activities within the Downtown. He reminded the ITC that during the design process for the rotary the Board of Selectmen made it clear that the project would not result in any loss of parking in Downtown. The new on-street parking spaces that have been created on Felton Street was to ensure that the Board of Selectmen's wishes to maintain the number of parking spaces in Downtown prior to the project was honored. Furthermore, Mr. Randall indicated that the businesses in his buildings have managed to get deliveries to and from their respective businesses notwithstanding the new parking spaces created on Felton Street. And finally, Mr. Randall expressed his belief the creating loading zone areas sounds easy on paper, but tends not to be practical in application.

**Dick Braga, Executive Director of the Downtown BID**

Mr. Braga wholeheartedly agreed with the prior comments made about having businesses schedule deliveries off-peak hours away from Main Street to greatest extent feasible. Mr. Braga stated, however, that this is not always possible for all businesses in the Downtown and that the creation of a loading zone area or area (s) with very specific timeframes could be created.

Eric Ryder expressed concerns about the equity of creating commercial loading area to serve one business, and cautioned that other businesses may request that the Town follow the same action near their respective businesses.

Jeff Wood seconded by Eric Ryder moved to not take any action relative to creating loading zones anywhere within the Downtown area and to monitor delivery activities to see if future action would be needed. 4-0-0 Unanimous.

**Handicap Parking Space Relocation**

Eric Ryder noted that significant ledge constraints were discovered on the south side of Main Street in the midst of the Rotary construction, which required the relocation of a fire hydrant. With the fire hydrant relocation, the existing handicap space as per the Rotary Design plans on Main Street would not be feasible. Mr. Ryder with all members of the ITC agreeing that the new location of the handicap space should be located at 45 Main Street, immediately after the newly constructed bump-out on the south side of Main Street.

Eric Ryder seconded by Jeff Wood moved to amend Article IV Stopping, Standing, and Parking, Section 13 Handicapped Parking, add the following: Parking Space immediately in front of 45 Main Street, southerly side.

**Other Business**

Eric Ryder noted that his Department would be applying for funding under the MassDOT Complete Streets program, and that he would recommend that Giasson Street be added to the list of locations eligible for pedestrian improvements.

**Minutes from 5/22/2020**

Before voting, Chief Johannes inquired if there had been any follow up done in regards to a resident from last month's ITC meeting who expressing concerns about the Eversource work in the area. Eric Ryder noted that Eversource will be back out before the winter to complete all the remaining construction work, including the final paving.

Chief Johannes seconded by Eric Ryder moved to approve the minutes from May 22, 2020 ITC meeting. 4-0-0. Unanimous

**Adjournment**

August 28, 2020

Jeff Wood moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 AM. Seconded by Chief Johannes 4-0-0. Unanimous.