

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of March 13, 2019 meeting
7pm at the Public Services Administration Building
Needham, MA

IN ATTENDANCE

TMAC Members: Stephen DeLisi - Chair, Lt. John Kraemer, Justin McCullen, Suzanne Stein, Rhain Hoyland, Donna Mullen, Tony DelGaizo, Bob Wilson

Guests: Jeff and Whitney Nelson, Roy and Jane Lockhart, Will Yu, Suzanne Skolnik, Katie Schooling, Mary Ellen Doherty, Phillip Doherty.

Not in Attendance: Seth Bauer, Kara Holmquist

CALL TO ORDER – 7:00pm

I. APPROVE MINUTES FROM February 13, 2019

The minutes of the February 13th, 2019 were approved.

II. OTHER BUSINESS/STATUS REPORT

Kara Holmquist has resigned from Committee. A replacement has been named and will attend the April meeting.

The April meeting will be the last meeting for Lt Kramer as he is retiring from Needham Police Department. A replacement representative from NPD has not been named.

A TMAC status report from the DPW has been posted on the website with updated action items and follow up.

III. INTERSECTION OF KENDRICK ST & 4TH AVENUE

Petitioner was not in attendance. Since this was the second instance of a “no show”, the item will be removed from future agendas. Petitioner may submit concern for future consideration by committee.

IV. INTERSECTION, SIGNAGE AT MANNING STREET/GIBSON STREET/HOLLAND STREET

R. and J. Lockhart presented their concerns of an increased number of vehicles parking at the intersection of Gibson and Manning as well as on Holland Street. They said they observed that some of the parked vehicles were students and has notified the High School principal's office. In addition, the petitioners reported 20-30 cars parked at those intersections during dropoff leading to “chaotic” and “dangerous” conditions during that timeframe. It was noted by the petitioners that cars were parking on the berm as well. They suggested ‘No Parking’ signs (7am-3pm, Sept-June) at Gibson and Manning as well as “No Pickup and Drop-off” signs at Holland and Manning. Lt Kramer indicated that the No Pickup signs are not enforceable. The committee asked R. and J. Lockhart go back to seek approval from

the impacted residents of both streets and have them sign a petition indicating both sign requests separately and return to a future session for a vote.

V. PARKING, SIGNAGE ON OAK STREET/LINDEN STREET

K. Schooling presented to committee seeking regulatory 'NO Parking' signage along Linden Street near Oak Street. She observed cars parking overnight and on berm and indicated that the parked cars can be a hazard for vehicles approaching or entering the intersection @ Oak. Lt Kramer clarified the overnight parking and berm parking can be remedied by notifying law enforcement. After further discussion, petitioner was satisfied with enforcement of current regulations could alleviate her concern.

VI. INTERSECTION, CROSSWALK, SPEED ON NEHOIDEN STREET AT MAY

J. and W. Nelson addressed the committee about their concern of speeding around the intersection of Nehoiden and May streets. The petitioners expressed safety concern of both pedestrians and motorists at the intersection. They submitted a letter from resident C. Watt detailing his concern especially with the geometry of the intersection leading to limited sight line combined with a grade change. IN addition, the petitioners have concern with the number of trucks that travel on Nehoiden even though there is a sign prohibiting trucks. The committee explained that the "no trucks" sign prohibits trucks in excess of 2.5 tons that travel through the area. There was discussion about speeding of motorists on Nehoiden. The most recent speed study was completed on Nehoiden "near May street" in September 2018. It reported NB traffic @ 32MPH and SB at 35MPH.

The petitioners asked for a three way stop sign at the intersection. **A motion was made to complete a full traffic study (Count, Speed and Type) in front of 286 Nehoiden Street.** The motion was seconded and **approved unanimously** with no abstentions. The committee will consider recommendations depending on the data from the traffic study.

VII. Adjournment 8:16pm

Minutes drafted and respectfully submitted by J. McCullen

Attached:

Letter from Chris Watt RE: Nehoiden @ May

3/13/19 TMAC Sign in Sheet

We have lived at the intersection of May & Nehoiden Streets for more than 20 years (273 Nehoiden St.). We moved into our home when our 2 kids were toddlers; they are now adults. As a result, we have directly experienced this intersection from many different perspectives = as parents with young children crossing this intersection, having our kids ride bikes through the intersection on the way to Hillside school, of both our kids learning to drive and back into the intersection from our blind driveway each day, to our own adult driving experiences.

Nehoiden St. and this intersection are both poorly suited for the realities of today's Needham traffic levels. It's no exaggeration to say that we hear beeping horns at this intersection on a daily basis, indicating ongoing visibility and traffic flow issues. I witnessed the most recent accident and have seen many other incidents over the past several years.

Here are the facts that make this intersection dangerous:

• Nehoiden St. is an old, narrow street with poor visibility, little/no shoulders, sidewalks with little/no separation from the street, in many locations without a curb or grade difference between the street and the road surface

- The visibility for cars turning left out of May Street is perhaps the worst of any street in Needham, particularly when the trees have leaves on them. The angle of the 2 streets....turning left uphill at an angle tighter than 90 degrees....with very limited visibility to the right, and difficulty looking back to left because of the street angle all contribute to a dangerous situation. The safest way for left turning cars to proceed is actually to take multiple looks left and right before proceeding. It's impossible to check for traffic using peripheral vision. Even at the speed limit at 37 feet per second, cars coming from the right in this scenario can go from unseen to "in" the intersection in the time it takes to complete all these checks. This dynamic also makes it difficult to keep track or spot pedestrians.
- With the change in traffic flow in downtown Needham with the added stop light, there appears to be an increase in cars using Nehoiden St. as a shortcut to avoid back-ups.
- In addition to the factors described in the left turn scenario above, there is a blind driveway (ours) directly across the street from the intersection....and this driveway is sloped uphill from our house towards the street. This makes it almost impossible for us to see whether there are cars waiting to turn left out of May Street as we back out uphill into Nehoiden Street. These left-turning cars have little/no ability to keep an eye on our driveway while they are turning left given the poor visibility described above. Add the high fence installed by our neighbors next to our driveway making our visibility severely reduced when backing out.....it's not optimal. I get beeped at almost weekly as I back out, as with the fence, drivers coming uphill towards the center of town are surprised even when we back out slowly.
- There is a sidewalk that ends at our driveway, with no cross walk. As a result, pedestrians or kids on bikes often stop in our driveway trying to cross and there is no cross walk)....multiple dangerous variables
- The fence in our neighbor's yard was reviewed and apparently approved by Needham building inspector when issuing cert. of occupancy; this has contributed to dangerous conditions at this intersection

- General speeding on the street as if it is a main thoroughfare, which unlike, May, Webster or other major roads in the town is absolutely not designed to handle speed or heavy traffic.
- There are signs that say trucks prohibited on Nehoiden St.; we see this violated on a daily basis and past examples of power lines (ours) being run into by large trucks
- Several accidents over the years at this intersection, but also daily horns and verbal altercations due to near misses

For the Traffic Management Advisory Committee to understand the dynamics of this intersection, all you need to do are 2 things during a busy traffic time: (1) When leaves are on the trees make the left turn from May on Nehoiden. (2) During a similar busy traffic time, pull into our driveway all the way towards the garage and then back out onto Nehoiden. After doing these things, imagine the following being introduced while you were doing 1 or 2 = 1 & 2 happening with 2 drivers simultaneously. Pedestrians (particularly kids) involved. Speeding, distracted drivers. leaves on the trees

Proposed solution = cheapest and most effective would be a 3 way stop sign at this intersection.

Best Regards,

Chris Watt
273 Nehoiden St.
Needham
781.400.6148

3-13-19

Sign-In Sheet

Name

Address

Whitney + Jeff Nelson

286 Nehoiden St.

Roy + Jane Lockhart

268 Manning St

Will Yu

323 Nehoiden St.

Suzanne Skolnik

34 Glendora Rd.

Katie Schouling

90 Linden St.

Mary Ellen Dooker

22 Gibson St

Phil Dooker

22 Gibson St.