

**CITY OF WOBURN
CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC LANDS
WOBURN CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**

Voting Members present: Chairman Richard Gately, Councilor Lou DiMambro, Councilor Charles Viola, Councilor Jeffrey Dillon, and Councilor Darlene Mercer-Bruen

Non-Voting Members present: President Michael Concannon, Councilor Robert Ferullo, and Councilor Joseph Demers. Absent: Councilor Joanne Campbell

Also present: City Engineer John Corey

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Resolve for Committee on Infrastructure and Public lands meet with City Engineer regarding Washington Street Corridor: Chairman Gately said Engineer Corey is here to answer any questions about the lights in the Washington Street corridor. Engineer Corey said two months ago the city engaged traffic consultant Vanasse Hangen Brustlin to review the intersections of Washington Street and Salem Street and Washington Street and Cedar Street. He said the Cedar Street intersection is under the jurisdiction of MassDOT and the Salem Street intersection is under local jurisdiction. He said the two traffic signals had a communication system installed when the assisted living facility on Cedar Street was permitted. He said the equipment worked well for about three years but then it malfunctioned. He said the equipment was sent out to be fixed but it never came back. He said the processor was upgraded recently. He said funding was obtained about 6-7 months ago to fix the field monitoring units in the Cedar Street control cabinet. He said the cameras atop the signals tend to malfunction due to repetitious vibrations from vehicles. He said they waited for schools to re-open to get more current data. He said they have data from September and October and have created a model to optimize the signals. He said they will be meeting with MassDOT. He said the signal timing will be coordinated and there will be a platooning effect. He said the signals are designed to maximize the volume to capacity ratio. He said stacking occurs when volume exceeds capacity. He said when the highways become congested, GPS directs drivers to local roads and they get congested. He said there is nothing that can be done about that. He said the engineering can only optimize the a.m. and p.m. commute periods. He said hopefully all this equipment will be in place by Thanksgiving. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said this has been an ongoing issue for well over a year. She said she would like to compliment Mayor Galvin and President Concannon for listening to her concerns. She asked if there is a report from VHB. City Engineer Corey said he expects to have a report by Wednesday. He said he would like to have the changes to the traffic signal in place in time for the holidays. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said the traffic on Washington Street is crazy. She said sometimes it is backed up beyond the old St. Joseph's Church building. She said she is hoping this fix will also alleviate problems on Salem Street. She said there seems to be a lot of stacking happening near the condo development opposite the Benchmark facility.

City Engineer Corey said if the cameras detect traffic, they will extend the lights cycles that have the traffic. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she is referring to the island at the intersection of Salem Street and Cedar Street. She said the island seems to be causing a lot of traffic delays and it is a dangerous situation not only for cars but also for pedestrians. City Engineer Corey said there have been numerous complaints. He said what was previously there was a slip lane. He said the island makes the intersection safer but it is annoying to some residents. He said MassDOT installed the island and he does not think that will change. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she hopes someone can take a look at it. She said sometimes when the council gets traffic reports they don't take into account what is happening in real life. City Engineer Corey said there will be people on the ground and he can explain to them what is going on. He said he hopes the queues will be reduced somewhat. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she is glad this issue is almost at the finish line. Chairman Gatley said he and City Engineer Corey have been working together for a long time. City Engineer Corey said he and Chairman Gatley have been collaborating for 25 years. Chairman Gatley said City Engineer Corey is doing a good job. He asked who is doing the work. City Engineer Corey said VHB has assigned its best traffic engineers to this project. He said it is like a dream team.

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MOTION made by Councilor Viola and seconded by Councilor Dillon to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the meeting of October 23, 2023, and to approve; all in favor, 5-0.

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MOTION made by Councilor Viola and seconded Councilor Dillon to adjourn, 5-0. Chairman Gatley adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees