

**MEETING OF THE  
CITY OF WOBURN  
TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 17, 2022 – 4:00 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBER  
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Attending: Comm. Tina Cassidy, Comm. John Corey, Comm. Lou DiMambro, Comm. Joseph Foley, Comm. Anthony Langone, Comm. Peter Socorelis, Comm. Charles Stokes, and Comm. Jeffrey Dillon (Chair).

Absent: Comm. John Duran.

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Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and to approve, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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**2022-09**

On the request for crosswalk and crosswalk sign on Alfred Street at Forest Glen Road, City Clerk Higgins read the following communication dated November 17, 2022 from Comm. Duran:

Chairman Dillon and City Clerk Higgins:

I am unable to make the traffic commission meeting this afternoon. I was requested to take another look at the line of sight distance pursuant to this petition. I made 3 different trips to the area and concluded that even at this time of the year, there is limited sight distance for the installation of a crosswalk. I requested a survey to be conducted by the engineering department. Please see attached worksheet of their findings. The majority of the problems are trees located mainly on private property. There may be an additional tree on the street right of way line. If final determination is that one or more are city trees they would be subject to tree hearings prior to removal.

I am sympathetic to the neighborhood concerns. However, given the foregoing, I don't believe that the traffic commission should take action on this matter until the visibility issue is resolved. The Woburn DPW can not remove private trees to accomplish this. Putting a crosswalk in without resolution would be reckless and present a false sense of security and an immediate threat to public safety.

The petition could either be denied or tabled until such resolution. I hope this clarifies my position on this matter.

Please feel free to call if you have further questions.

Jay Duran

City Clerk Higgins stated the petitioner, Craig Markiewicz, 11 Forest Glen Road, also submitted a communication dated November 13, 2022. City Clerk Higgins stated there were also several emails from residents as well. Comm. Foley stated there would be a benefit from the crosswalk and he agrees 100% with DPW Supt. Duran. Comm. Foley stated there are five trees on 36 Alfred Street and one on 38 Alfred Street that effect the sight lines. Comm. Foley stated until those trees are removed there is no way they can put a sidewalk there in a responsible manner. Comm. Corey stated that the eastside has five trees. Comm. Corey stated it is a bad location. Comm. Corey stated he would support an alternative location that is about 100 feet to the east. Comm. Corey stated the roadway is dense and would need to find a mitigation account for a flashing beacon. Comm. Corey stated that the petitioner gave an alternative to the peak off the curve. Comm. Cassidy stated this option is much more likely than to cut trees on private property. Comm. Corey stated that the City cannot spend money to cut down trees on private property. Comm. Foley stated there are no sidewalks on that side of the street and there is not good terrain, and it is difficult to get to. Comm. Foley stated that there could be a liability if people are walking on private property. Comm. Corey stated he agreed. Comm. Corey stated there are no sidewalks there are no sidewalks, and the sidewalks would need to be extended, which would require taking land. Comm. Corey stated the City Council would then have to vote on it. Comm. DiMambro stated he thought there may be enough room before the driveway, or that the sidewalk could be continued. Comm. Corey stated at the intersection with Forest Glen Road the pocket is still restricted, unless the trees are removed. Comm. Corey stated that if the crosswalk is moved further down there is a better view but you are dealing with no sidewalks. Comm. DiMambro stated he continued the asphalt sidewalk further down is more appropriate. Comm. Corey stated that could work. Comm. DiMambro stated the trees definitely hamper the sight line. Councilor Demers, the Ward 4 City Councilor, stated that he has spoken to the constituents and neighbors and there are concerns. Councilor Demers stated they need to look at ways to work a solution for everyone. Councilor Demers stated there needs to be a crosswalk in that area without increasing safety issues. Councilor Demers stated he does not want to see a denial. Councilor Demers stated he would like to meet on site to have a better plan created, as the average residents are not civil engineers. Councilor Demers stated if you are not going to vote in the affirmative, he asked the Commission to lay the matter on the table and more work can be done. Councilor Demers stated something needs to be done for the neighbors and pedestrians. Councilor Demers stated everyone is cutting across Woburn. Councilor Demers stated he has seen people leaving the 99's Restaurant on Mishawum Road and take Alfred Street to the rotary to get onto I-95. Councilor Demers stated this is a growing issues as over the years the population has change and families are growing with more kids walking. Councilor Demers stated he believes a resolution can be reached. Mr. Markiewicz stated he appreciates the Commission's time spent on this matter. Mr. Markiewicz stated at the last meeting he heard that going west would be a great location, where the road is pretty wide into that property. Mr. Markiewicz stated there could be a sidewalk after the tree which is most easterly. Mr. Markiewicz stated they need to come up with at least something. Comm. Langone stated the proposed location makes sense where the sidewalks end. Comm. Langone stated he would like to see this matter tabled until discussions with the property owner to see if the trees can be cut down. Comm. Langone stated public safety already at risk, and residents are already crossing street regardless. Comm. Langone stated it is disjointed. Comm. Corey stated it could work if there was enough of the public right of way without taking away from the road. Comm. Corey

stated they can do additional studies. Comm. Corey stated assuming they find a location, sidewalk construction will need to be allocated in the budget. Comm. Corey stated that a crosswalk has to go from sidewalk to sidewalk. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to table the matter to the next meeting and have the City Engineer to do more research into the feasibility of the crosswalk, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to cancel the December 2022 Traffic Commission meeting, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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## 2022-16

On the request for flashing pedestrian crossing sign from Pine Street to Orange Street, the petitioner, Councilor Mercer-Bruen, 22 Richard Circle, thanked the Commission. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she would like the Commission to investigate installing a crossing pedestrian signal at the Pine Street and Orange Street crosswalk. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated there are a shortage of crossing guards since COVID, and there are still shortages now. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated perhaps there can be some sort of permanent solution as residents walk and run in this area. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated several years ago there was an accident here when a pedestrian was crossing. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she is not sure of the requirements, but she is very much aware to get funding she will passionately pursue with the Mayor and the City Council. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she cannot go after funding unless it is approved. Comm. Corey stated the crosswalk may not be ADA compliant, but that is minor to improve. Comm. Corey stated when the Police Sgt. Stokes finds the traffic study in the morning and in the afternoon for school related for sufficient queues. Comm. Corey stated there is a good sight distance for Pine Street but in the morning if there is additional traffic may be an issue. Comm. Corey stated also there needs to be handicapped ramps there. Chair Dillon stated as a temporary measure the crosswalk signs could be used across the city. Comm. Langone stated the MBTA bus stop is there with the 354 Bus, so a lot of people get on and off there. Comm. Langone stated that during daylight savings, pedestrians need an actuated sign there. Comm. Cassidy stated that the traffic is quick there. Comm. Langone stated that the line of sight is good there. Comm. Langone stated he has noticed that Pine Street and Salem Street getting off the busses is harder at nighttime. Comm. Foley stated he would support as he is stationed at the fire station there and it is busy as it funnels to the school. Comm. Foley stated he supports this as it is safer for the kids. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to have the DPW install crosswalk signage, and crosswalk ahead signage at the crosswalk from Pine Street to Orange Street, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent). Comm. DiMambro stated he would like to see if the fluorescent paint that is reflective paint that glows could be used. Comm. Corey stated that paint is more expensive but he could ask the DPW Superintendent. Comm. DiMambro stated that the reflective paint could be more cost effective. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated not to take into consideration the cost, as that is her responsibility. Comm. Stokes stated there was no data for this area, but that he could do a survey. Comm. Stokes stated for the school alone it should be warranted but will still do the study. Comm. Corey stated if there is no need for a study then we can just do it. Motion made

and 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve flashing beacon and handicapped ramps at the crosswalk from Pine Street to Orange Street, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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**2022-17**

On the request for pedestrian crossing signs on Montvale Avenue in the area of 149 Montvale Avenue, the petitioner, Jane McLaughlin, 6 Holden Place, stated that she would like to install the rectangle signage on either side of 149 and 150 Montvale Avenue, which would be installed just after Vernon Street. Ms. McLaughlin stated it is hard to see the crosswalk after Holden Place and Ingalls Street. Ms. McLaughlin stated at 149 Montvale Avenue the sidewalk ends and you have to cross Montvale Avenue as there is a bus stop by Ingalls Street. Ms. McLaughlin stated pedestrians are at the mercy of the drivers racing up the hill, and there have been close calls there. Ms. McLaughlin stated she would like a rapid blinking sign so drivers are aware. Comm. Corey stated there are tactile pads missing and can be added to the next Ch. 90 season of the DPW. Comm. Corey stated in the short term, a crosswalk sign as well as a leading and following crosswalk sign ahead can be installed in the short term. Comm. Corey stated that with respect to the flashing beacon signs, the Commission does not have the authority to spend money. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to have the DPW install crosswalk signage, and crosswalk ahead signage at the crosswalk on Montvale Avenue in the area of 149 Montvale Avenue, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent). Comm. Foley stated it is very dangerous coming around that bend and up the hill. Comm. Foley stated he is in favor subject to funding availability, as it needs to be safer there. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the matter be tabled until the next meeting pending more information, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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**2022-18**

On the request for traffic regulations and signal issues at the intersection of Salem Street and Washington Street, City Clerk Higgins stated the petitioner did not leave contact information on her petition. Comm. Corey stated he is aware of the matter. Comm. Corey stated that the Salem Street/Washington Street signal is a local signal, and the Cedar Street/Washington Street signal is a state signal. Comm. Corey stated when Benchmark Assisted Living was permitted about 10 years ago, they were required to do rhythm adaptation at two intersections. Comm. Corey stated that three years ago a unit malfunctioned and was sent to the state for repair, and we still do not know where it is. Comm. Corey stated when the proposed grocery store was going in they were supposed to do two things: the field monitoring units so lights could talk to each other, and the controller. Comm. Corey stated there were upgrades to the processor. Comm. Corey stated even after the updates there is still a problem with Cedar Street. Comm. Corey stated that District 4 of MassDOT uses hardwiring when it comes to field monitoring and Woburn cannot do it because we have our own IT. Comm. Corey stated they are trying to get something that will work so they can talk. Councilor Mercer-Bruen, 22 Richard Circle, thanked Comm. Corey. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated the intersection is very difficult and many constituents have contacted here. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated traffic is back, and the state intersection we need to move the bar on this. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated there was mitigation tied to this being done before

occupancy permit was to be issued. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she has sent a letter before asking for help from the state. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated the City needs to put up the money. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated Mayor Galvin is very much aware of the situation. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she was concerned when the light is managed by the state and there is money from groups how is it executed. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated the work is supposed to be done. Comm. Corey stated there are 26 signals in Woburn District 4 has 675 signals. Comm. Corey stated when money is put into mitigation account, the petitioner works with directly with the stated, as it is generally developed with the state. Comm. Corey stated that the MWRA GRIDSMART just went to the state. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated she would like a letter to be sent to the state to get this resolved. Councilor Mercer-Bruen then thanked the Commission. Comm. Langone stated it is a question of whether we are finding the right person to send the letter too. Comm. Langone stated the letter should be sent to Representative Haggerty, Mark Kratman, Assistant Operations and Tewksbury Selectman, and "cc" Representative Haggerty, and State Senator Cindy Friedman. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the Traffic Commission send a communication to District 4 of MassHighway, State Senator Cindy Friedman, State Representative Richard Haggerty and Mark Kratman to look into the matter of business and traffic at Salem Street and Washington Street, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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## **PUBLIC HEARING:**

**2022-06**

On the request for enforcement of no trucking, slow dangerous curve sign, blind driveway sign, and Burlington school bus restrictions on Mountain Street, a PUBLIC HEARING is being held in with respect to the following:

No through traffic westerly from intersection with Main Street to the intersection with Winter Street between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and easterly from intersection with Winter Street to the intersection with Main Street between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Comm. Corey stated they have beat this horse to dead. Melissa Desimone, 274 Russell Street, stated she has family that lives on Mountain Street and they need to be able to have access to the house, and residents will now have to go down Kearsarge Avenue or Townsend Street. Ms. Desimone stated last time it wreaked havoc, and why it should have been brought to the table again. Ms. Desimone stated it is the same few residents trying to do this again. Ms. Desimone stated five years ago this was a nightmare. Ms. Desimone stated the Wilmington Bridge was closed then and now it is back open. Ms. Desimone stated it is unreasonable to drive through the center, and it takes 15 minutes to get from Winn Street to Peach Orchard Road. Ms. Desimone stated if you forget something you need to go all the way around to Pearl Street or Winter Street. Ms. Desimone stated this will take 25 minutes to get gas at Jimmy's. Ms. Desimone stated that if you make a turn at Kearsarge Avenue people put up signs out. Ms. Desimone stated with all the truck and bus restrictions traffic is just being pushed. Ms. Desimone stated every street is a cut-through street. Ms. Desimone stated that the end game seems to be to have fully private neighborhoods. Ms. Desimone stated they are city roads, and everyone should have same access.

Ms. Desimone stated Russell Street has real issues such as no sidewalks and the residents are not demanding sidewalks. Ms. Desimone stated Mountain Street has been on the last four meeting and is constantly being put on. Ms. Desimone stated the long-term residents do not want it. City Clerk Higgins stated there was a communication from Ellen Meuse, 23 Mountain Street. Comm. Corey stated that there has been seven years of testimony on this. Comm. Foley stated there is a question of inconvenience over safety and that this is a very dangerous road. Comm. DiMambro stated he is in agreement with Comm. Foley and they should restrict the time limit to enter. Comm. Stokes stated he is opposed to the restriction with the biggest reason because of the underwhelming support. Comm. Stokes stated only five or six residents are for it. Comm. Stokes state the side streets have over 100 residents or do not know that this is going on. Comm. Stokes this was done before and there was negative feedback. Comm. Stokes stated next will be Salem Avenue and George Avenue. Comm. Stokes stated a similar issues happened at Washington Avenue and Snyder Street. Officer Gately stated there was a similar issue at Salem Avenue and George Avenue and there was a meeting with the City Councilor ran and at first there were 22 residents in favor of restrictions. Officer Gately stated after the first couple of nights there were 25 tickets a night and second the police left; people would just come through. Officer Gately stated that 75% of the people violating the restriction was residents, even the ones that wanted the enforcement. Officer Gately stated the City Councilor's phone was being called nonstop, and they wanted changed back. Officer Gately stated the same will happen with Mountain Street if the restrictions are passed. Officer Gately stated when Mountain Street previously had signs, only a handful of people asked for it and they are ones who violated it. Officer Gately stated this would just be kicking the can down the road. Officer Gately stated if the issue is there are no sidewalk, then put in the sidewalks. Officer Gately stated the ticket will be \$55 if violated. Officer Gately stated that sidewalks would alleviate concerns, and there is no speed or traffic issue on that street. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated at Salem Street and George Avenue, 40 years ago there were restrictions from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Washington Street but were very rarely enforced. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated that around 2017 there were talks about speeding studies being done. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated Officer Pacheco was there and collected the data, speeding was not an issue but it was a cut through, so the Traffic Commission did a stop sting. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated in 2021 calls about speeding and the street being a cut-through, with some other issues. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated many people wanted enforcement of the do not enter signs or do a one way street and a lot of residents did not want that. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated when enforcement started, she started receiving calls and complaints. Councilor Mercer-Bruen stated in January they are meeting again and it is for the neighbors to decide what they want. Ms. Desimone stated there are crossing guards and that when the signs came down there was not an increase in traffic. Ms. Desimone stated that safety has not changed. Comm. Corey stated one individual early on indicated that the they were 75% in favor of this petitioner. Upon inquiry from Comm. DiMambro, Comm. Corey stated the sidewalks cost about \$250,000 just to build. Comm. Corey stated that on the southside of the street it will need for six to eight feet a retaining wall. Comm. Corey stated on the northside of the street there will need to be land takings and there are polls in the way, which will be two to three years. Comm. Corey stated there is barely 20 feet and you are required to have 20 feet of pavement. Comm. DiMambro stated that the road is narrowest is 17 feet. Chair Dillon state that emergency vehicles would not be precluded from going down the street. Comm. Langone stated he does not thing this is the best long term solution, as this will use undue resources on the police department. Comm. Langone stated that the one way is a long term

solution that will take three to four years, and perhaps there should be a communication sent to the Mayor so the Commission does not have to keep addressing it. Comm. Langone stated public safety has to be the priority and that is why he is supporting it. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the following be approved, all in favor, 4-4-1 (Cassidy, Dillon, Socorelis, and Stokes Against; Duran Absent), MOTION FAILS:

ORDERED Be it ordered that Schedule 2 Turning and Moving Restrictions of the 2017 Woburn Traffic Code, as amended, be further amended by adding the following:

MOUNTAIN STREET – No through traffic westerly from intersection with Main Street to the intersection with Winter Street between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and easterly from intersection with Winter Street to the intersection with Main Street between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Comm. Langone stated that perhaps a communication should be sent to the Mayor letting him know of the outcome of this vote and how the issues has come up multiple times and at some point he may need to allocate funds to this. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the Traffic Commission send a communication to the Mayor letting him know of tonight's vote and the need to have attention to this area to address a long term solution to recurring traffic issue, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent). Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> that the PUBLIC HEARING BE CLOSED, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent).

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Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to adjourn, all in favor, 8-0-1 (Duran Absent). Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

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Lindsay E. Higgins  
City Clerk and Clerk of Traffic Commission