



Minutes of the Meeting November 7, 2013

A special meeting of the Traffic Commission was held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 7, 2013, at the Brockton Police Station, 7 Commercial Street, Brockton, MA 02302, to address the issue of:

BOUNDARY AVENUE and NORTH QUINCY STREET

Request from Captain Steven Williamson and Councilor Michelle Dubois on behalf of Sara Kilifer and other residents of the area to have the Traffic Commission review the area of North Quincy Street and Boundary Avenue due to the amount and serious nature of accidents at that location.

There being a proper quorum, the meeting was called to order by Captain Stephen Williamson. Members present were: Kenneth Galligan, D.P.W. Commissioner Michael Thoreson, Fire Chief Richard Francis, Councilor Dennis DeNapoli and Ken Goldblatt.. Councilor Todd Petti and member Paul Sullivan were unable to attend. Also present were City Councilor Michelle Dubois and Mayor-elect William Carpenter. A number of residents were also present, including: David and Sarah Killeffer, James and Sheila Keene, Frank and Debbie Chaplin, Howard Rosen, Kathy Mullen, Carolyn Gray, Linda and Bill Semler, Cindy and Bill Kearney and Karen McKenney and her daughter.

Upon motion made by Councilor DeNapoli, seconded by Commissioner Thoreson and a unanimous vote of the members present, it was voted to waive reading and accept the September Minutes.

Captain Williamson informed the members and residents that this item was on the agenda in September 2013 and was referred to Subcommittee for review. The Subcommittee viewed the area on October 8 and made the following recommendations:

1. Drafting a letter to Mass DOT supporting the findings of the Old Colony Planning Council traffic study and the recommendation that the intersection be reconstructed with either traffic signals or a roundabout based on engineering discretion.
2. On Boundary Avenue, replacing the “+” intersection sign near #20 Boundary Ave. with two “Stop Ahead” signs, one on each side of the street.
3. On Boundary Av, installing an oversized double “Stop” signs at North Quincy Street on the northwest corner facing approaching eastbound traffic.
4. On Boundary Avenue, add an additional truck restriction sign for westbound traffic from the left side of the street to the right side affixed to the back end of the newly installed double Stop sign.

5. On the North Quincy Street northbound, replace the “Dangerous Intersection Ahead” sign with a new “+” sign and add reflective tape to the pole for more visibility.
6. On North Quincy Street southbound approach, remove the “Dangerous Intersection Ahead” sign from the telephone pole. Install a new pole with a “+” sign affixed to a new sign post in the same vicinity and add reflective tape to the pole for more visibility.
7. Submit a request to the town of Abington to have the vegetation on the east side of North Quincy Street cleared to provide better visibility and that the Town of Abington consider placing rumble strips near the water tower and where the yellow signs have been installed. And further that a recommendation be made that an oversized double Stop sign be added.
8. Recommend a new high-intensity street light on the southwest corner of Boundary Avenue to provide more visibility;
9. Recommend adding “SLOW” sign painted on the pavement on North Quincy Street, one for each direction before the intersection. This will be done in the spring of 2014.
10. Table the discussion on changing Boundary Avenue into a one-way street until the report is received from the road safety audit.

Captain Williamson told the members and residents present that the road safety audit meeting was held that day. He asked if any members of the public would like to speak. Frank Chaplin, Jr. stated that there was a very bad accident the week before and the vehicle launched across North Quincy Street and down in front of his driveway and rolled three times and ejected three people. He was the second person on the scene and found the accident victims and described their conditions. Mr. Chaplin said that he has been at the previous Traffic Commission meetings and asked what will happen in the meantime until a traffic light can be installed. He would like something drastic like making the street one-way or block off Boundary Avenue at the top. He is bothered every day by what he saw with the last accident. James Keene stated that Boundary Avenue is used as a shortcut to avoid lights in other areas and that needs to be stopped. There are no sidewalks for the children and it is a very narrow street. He stated that coming from Abington going to Boundary Avenue, there is a stop sign on the Abington side but you cannot see until you advance your car 20 feet before you can see what is coming over the hill northbound on North Quincy Street. He stated that if you are headed northbound on North Quincy Street and you are looking for Boundary Avenue you cannot see the street until you get to it. Another resident of Boundary Street said she uses Chestnut Street to commute to work every day and her concern is that the Stop sign on Chestnut Street is totally invisible coming up the hill because the telephone poles obscure the Stop sign, so if you are not familiar with that street you do not know that the Stop sign is there until you are on top of it. Captain Williamson stated that at the road audit meeting the Abington Police Chief, Town Manager and a representative of the Fire Department were all there and recommendations were discussed about putting double oversized Stop signs as you approach from Abington. One of the residents stated that he believed the signs had been placed that day. Councilor Dubois said that they were going to put a light on the pole in order to bring more light to the intersection. Karen McKenney and her daughter were present; her parents and friend were the individuals killed in the August accident. Her daughter has been working with her school and the town leadership in Abington to try to see what can be done to make changes. They were present in support of the residents who assisted her parents the day of the accident. She feels that based on the conversations she has had everyone is in agreement that changes need to be made at the intersection and to her the issue seems to be what to do in the interim while waiting for the major changes. Her daughter was informed that it could be a 3 to 5 year wait for installation of lights and Captain

Williamson said that is the typical time frame. She stated that she has spoken with Senator Kennedy's office herself and she understands that there are other dangerous intersections also, but based on the statistics she has seen it is hard to dispute that this intersection needs to be given a priority. Councilor Dubois said that there has to be a design for the lights done and that is about \$100,000 to \$200,000 and then that goes on a list for federal funding, and the traffic light itself could be up to a million dollars that the federal government would pay for, and that is why there is a 3 to 4 year time frame. She feels that regardless of how long it might take, we should move forward with the plan for lights. Commissioner Thoreson said that the City of Brockton and the Town of Abington are responsible for the design of any intersection changes, so an initial funding source has to be found to get the design done. The intersection at Main Street and Plain Street was recently done and it took four years from start to finish. After the design is done, then you get the design on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) list, and it will then be assigned a priority number; after funding is assigned to that project then it takes time to complete the project. Commissioner Thoreson said that is the federal/state funding route; another way would be to do it independently with the city, but there is no guarantee that it would be any faster or less expensive, and the city would have to pay the entire cost.

David Killeffer said that his family has lived there since 2008 and he has been witness to dozens of accidents. In his opinion, the overwhelming majority of accidents are people trying to cross from Chestnut Street over onto Boundary Avenue. He said that Chestnut Street is basically a drag strip. He asked if Boundary Avenue could be made one way going up to the intersection, to effectively cut off cars using Boundary Avenue as a cut through. He also asked if when the road safety audit was done, did they do analysis on Chestnut Street for that one mile stretch leading up to the intersection. Captain Williamson said that when the OCPC did the most recent traffic counts, they included every street which would take into account Chestnut Street. Captain Williamson said that he brought up the idea of making Boundary Avenue one way at the audit meeting with MassDOT and they did not recommend it. MassDOT said that if it were to be made one way, it should be done in the opposite direction; the reason being that when looking at the crashes at the intersection, there are 4 approaches to the intersection and if it is one way in the opposite direction it would limit it to 3 approaches to the intersection. Mr. Killeffer said that is counter to what he has seen living there for five years, as most accidents are cars leaving Chestnut and merging onto North Quincy Street or crossing over to Boundary Avenue. Captain Williamson said that the logic was that cars would still be coming out of Chestnut Street but they would now be turning instead of going straight and it would not diminish the crashes at the intersection, in theory. Councilor Dubois said they did seem to be more interested in going from east to west, From Boundary Avenue to Chestnut Street and Mr. Killeffer said that he did not care which way it went so long as the street is changed into a one-way street. Mr. Killeffer asked who would make the decision on making the street one way and Captain Williamson informed him that the decision would be made by the Traffic Commission. Linda Semler stated that she lives on Brookville Avenue and if the street were to be made one way, then the traffic would cut through her street instead of going up Boundary Avenue. She said that Brookville Avenue is a private way. She said that the street is already caving in and if you add more traffic it will make it worse. She also read a letter from a neighbor at the corner of North Quincy Street, who stated that the week before a car took down a tree in front of her house, flipped and hit her two cars and that the accident was caused by excessive speed. Mrs. Semler said that this has been an issue in the area for 45 years. Commissioner Thoreson said that you have to look at the issue as a wider scope than just the Boundary Avenue issue, and they need to figure out where the traffic will go.

Councilor Dubois said that if Boundary Avenue was made one way from North Quincy Street and make Brookville Avenue a one way going in the same direction from Boundary Circle to North Quincy Street, that would alleviate the right turn and left turn and everyone comes down to Boundary Street to take a

right turn. It also would alleviate truck traffic going down those roads as the truck traffic would go on Boundary Street. Howard Rosen, who lives on Brookville Avenue, said that if power lines go down in Abington everyone cuts through Brookville Avenue; Councilor Dubois said that the rest of Brookville Avenue would be 2 way, it is only the small section from Boundary Circle to Brookville Avenue. Councilor Dubois said that if the streets are made one way at least on a temporary basis then it if does not work it can be reversed. Bill Semler was concerned that all of the traffic would now go onto Brookville Avenue and Councilor Dubois explained that the morning traffic would use the street but not the return traffic at the end of the day. Sarah Killefer said that she believes signage needs to happen on Chestnut Street and that there are lots of different elements to this issue. She is convinced that if traffic has to go up North Quincy Street or use Boundary Street, then either way her neighborhood is protected from the truck traffic and possibly from crashes that could occur. Councilor Dubois said that the State said that if it was going to be made one way, it should be the opposite way, but she does not think they wanted it one-way either way. Bill Kearney of Boundary Street said that they use Chestnut Street and he would like to see a 4-way Stop sign like the one at the West Bridgewater/Brockton line, which has solar LED lighting on all 8 sides. Commissioner Thoreson said that he is presently waiting for a quote for that type of lighting. Captain Williamson said that what initiated this issue was the crashes at the intersection, but now it has become more keeping traffic off of Boundary Avenue and Brookville Avenue and those neighborhoods. The light will come as a result of trying to limit the crashes there, which is why the Traffic Commission went to the State, but there are also interim measures that can be taken.

Chief Francis said that he discussed the issue with his traffic signal men that service the traffic lights and he thinks they may be able to come up with enough parts to put a flashing red and yellow light, but he does not have the final details or final cost yet. He said that he knows it is frustrating waiting for results, and the members are frustrated also. Ms. McKenney, who lost her grandparents in August at the crash at that intersection said that Mr. Lafond sent her crash data report information and in the past 4 ½ years there have been 36 accidents averaging 7 ½ per year and she feels that most of the accidents are on Boundary Avenue. Captain Williamson said that this information came from the report that the Traffic Commission provided to Mr. LaFond and there are many different types of accidents at that location, but that a lot of them are in both directions. Sarah Killefer said that she has seen people stop at the Stop sign on Chestnut Street but then they are not able to judge it effectively and are flying toward her street because they cannot maneuver both sides of the road. David Killefer said that the common factor in most of the accidents seems to be speed and he asked about having the speed radar put there. Captain Williamson said that it was up on North Quincy Street, but it had to be put on North Quincy Street at North Cary Street first, and there was another issue on East Ashland Street where they had to place the radar trailer. The Traffic Commission only bought the radar trailer in August, and it is out at all times. The North Quincy Street location is the next priority. Councilor Dubois said that the engineers suggested having a permanent one mounted at that intersection. Captain Williamson said that they cannot have the police traffic enforcement units there as much as he would like but they are there when they are available. Mr. Garafoldis, whose girlfriend died in the most recent accident, said that he feels Boundary Avenue should be made one way and also that there is a street light there on the southwest corner that is not lit. Councilor Dubois said that if they get the pole number to her, she will make the call to Commissioner Thoreson to have the street light replaced. Roberta Flynn of Randolph Avenue said that the Stop sign on Chestnut Street is too far back from the road and people who stop have to then move up and stop again.

Ken Galligan said that the members spent a lot of time with the State engineers going over the project and he wants the residents to know that the Commission is working very diligently on the issue. He said that they asked the State to get involved and bring their engineers to give the Commission assistance and he wanted to summarize items that can be done very quickly without a large expenditure of money in

anticipation of having the traffic signals installed. The recommendations were that on Chestnut Street, the Commission agrees that Chestnut Street is a high speed street from Hancock Street in Abington to Brockton. The Abington Town Manager and Police Chief were with the Commission at that meeting, and the members let them know that there is a serious issue on the Brockton side and that their assistance is needed to do things on the Abington side. The suggestions made to the Abington representative are (1) that the stop sign there now cannot be seen and oversized Stop signs (larger than a standard stop sign) should be installed on both sides of Chestnut Street; (2) further back on Chestnut Street they should put two large fluorescent Stop Ahead signs with yellow reflective tape on the post coming east on the left and the right; (3) as you approach the intersection, there will be two large Stop signs with the red reflective tape on the posts; (4) on their last utility pole on Chestnut Street there is no light and the members asked them to install a street light on that pole; (5) the Stop bar on the street will be placed at the intersection; (6) the vegetation needs to be cut back substantially; (7) on North Quincy Street, at the crown in the road you come upon the intersection quickly. The long-term possible solution is to reconstruct North Quincy Street to take the crown out of the road; the short term solution is to cut out that vegetation and put double Stop signs and double Stop Ahead signs, reposition the Stop bar on Chestnut Street, painting Stop Ahead on the street on Chestnut Street and painting Stop at the stop bar on Chestnut Street and adding another street light to the pole that does not have a light. The signs that say "Dangerous Intersection" need to be replaced and the engineers told them that these signs were outdated and recommended the + signs in their place; the recommendation is for a new sign with "+ Ahead" with the yellow reflective tape on the pole and also a new sign heading north on North Quincy Street that says that same thing. Two large stop signs will be put on Boundary Avenue heading east and on the back sides of both of those signs will be 2 signs that say "No Trucks Allowed". On Boundary Avenue heading east there is a sign there now that says "Dangerous Intersection Ahead"; that sign will be replaced by a "+" sign and there will be two of them on Boundary Avenue heading east. The Boundary Avenue sign will say "Stop Ahead" like the one on Chestnut Street. They will also recommend that the street light on the pole at the corner of Boundary and North Quincy Streets will be upgraded to a high wattage sodium vapor light, which will shed a lot of light on that intersection. Chief Galligan said that one of the biggest problems at the intersection is the cars coming from Abington. Discussion was held about making Boundary Avenue one way, but the engineers had reservations about that as they were concerned about dumping traffic onto other streets and just push the problem to other areas. He stated that the intent of the meeting was to digest all of the ideas and submit the suggestions and recommendations and in approximately two weeks the State will come back to the Traffic Commission with recommendations. He stated that it would be wise to listen to the State's suggestions, based on their expertise in dealing with these issues. He stated that there are two issues: the crashes at the intersection and the speed on the residential streets. He stated that the Commission should move forward with getting either a roundabout or a traffic light at the intersection, whether its done with state and federal funds or local money. The State did not dismiss a roundabout, but Ken Galligan said that as a Commission they did not feel there was room enough for a roundabout. Captain Williamson said that the State engineers did explain that they are not talking about a really large roundabout, but a smaller one. He does not see that as being the solution but knows that the State has to look at all options. Ken Galligan said that the State has more experience in dealing with these issues with intersections around the state and they will come back with their recommendations. Councilor DeNapoli said that where his parents live in West Roxbury it is a similar intersection and the neighbors requested lights but the City of Brockton put a 4-way stop sign and he feels that this would stop the traffic. Councilor Dubois said that she would be okay with that, and several residents agreed. Councilor DeNapoli said that this has been done at several intersections throughout the city. Captain Williamson said that it was brought up and the state does not recommend it. Although it was not recommended to make the street one way or do a 4-way stop at that intersection, Councilor Dubois stated that if the Traffic Commission wanted to make it one way it was within their power to do so. Captain Williamson said that he did not recall that being said at

the meeting. The residents were encouraged by some intermediate steps that were taken on the Boundary Avenue side, but said that the problem area is the Chestnut Street side. Captain Williamson stated that although the serious accidents came out of the Chestnut Street side of the intersection there were almost as many accidents reported from the Boundary Street side. Councilor Dubois and Commissioner Thoreson stated that this intersection was in the top five percent in the state as far as accident count.

The residents and members said that Abington officials had already starting putting up new signage and Captain Williamson informed the residents present that what is voted on that night will result in a work order being processed and the Highway Department employees will perform the installation as soon as they get the oversized signs. One resident expressed concern at the speed of traffic on North Quincy Street with traffic coming from the Holbrook line. Captain Williamson explained that the speed limit in Holbrook and Abington is 45 mph and then it becomes 30 mph in Brockton, but that the city does not have any control over the speed limit set by Holbrook.

Captain Williamson stated that it appears the majority are in agreement that a long-term solution is a traffic light and the short term solutions can be decided by vote at this meeting. One of the residents asked if the one-way proposal could be tried to see if it would work. Councilor DeNapoli asked if the residents present at the meeting were all in agreement that they wanted it one way, and said that he would have it done if that is what they wanted. Captain Williamson stated that the issue was presented at the meeting that morning but the engineer's concerns were that it would create traffic problems on other streets. Captain Williamson said he was not against the idea but was concerned that the city went to the state for their input and now are going to ignore their recommendations. One of the residents suggested waiting until the final recommendations come from the state in 2 weeks before making a decision on the one-way issue. Commissioner Thoreson informed the residents present that if the streets are made one way there would have to be a published official notification before the change could be made. The suggestion was made to have the word "SLOW" painted on the roadway leading up to the intersection at the crown on the road on North Quincy Street. Captain Williamson said that this has been done in several areas in the city and it is not a problem to approve it but the painting itself would have to wait until the spring, when line painting starts again.

Councilor Dubois asked if the Traffic Commission could make a "next step" plan to look into the idea of making the streets one-way, even though the engineer did not recommend it, and possibly could a traffic study be done. Commissioner Thoreson that the area has to be looked at as a total package, so that traffic isn't just diverted from one street to another, but that the Commission could look into the idea. Captain Williamson said that by the December 5th meeting the Traffic Commission should have the final audit report so further discussion could be held then. Chief Francis asked what actions could be taken in the meantime and Captain Williamson said that the members could vote on all the other improvements.

A resident asked if the Commission could request that the Town of Abington install rumble strips on the road near the water tower and also right by where the yellow signs are being put installed. Another resident asked if a police officer could ticket speeders and Captain Williamson explained that he puts the traffic enforcement officers there as much as he can, but there are many locations throughout the city that need enforcement and only 3 officers assigned to traffic enforcement. Councilor Dubois asked if the Commission could check into the price of the street signs that show how fast cars are going and Captain Williamson said that he would get a price on it. A resident asked if Holbrook could put radar at their section of the road so that people coming onto North Quincy Street would be aware of how fast they are going. Residents asked how fundraisers could be done to give the funds to the city to purchase another radar trailer and the residents were informed that the City Council can accept gifts on behalf of a specific

purpose. Captain Williamson stated that he was in favor of the idea and the Commission would gladly accept a gift for that purpose and that he would get a price for the residents so that they would know the cost.

Upon motion made by Ken Galligan, seconded by Dennis DeNapoli and a unanimous vote of the members present, it was

VOTED:

- 11. Drafting a letter to Mass DOT supporting the findings of the Old Colony Planning Council traffic study and the recommendation that the intersection be reconstructed with either traffic signals or a roundabout based on engineering discretion.**
- 12. On Boundary Avenue, replacing the “+” intersection sign near #20 Boundary Ave. with two “Stop Ahead” signs, one on each side of the street.**
- 13. On Boundary Av, installing an oversized double “Stop” signs at North Quincy Street on the northwest corner facing approaching eastbound traffic.**
- 14. On Boundary Avenue, add an additional truck restriction sign for westbound traffic from the left side of the street to the right side affixed to the back end of the newly installed double Stop sign.**
- 15. On the North Quincy Street northbound, replace the “Dangerous Intersection Ahead” sign with a new “+” sign and add reflective tape to the pole for more visibility.**
- 16. On North Quincy Street southbound approach, remove the “Dangerous Intersection Ahead” sign from the telephone pole. Install a new pole with a “+” sign affixed to a new sign post in the same vicinity and add reflective tape to the pole for more visibility.**
- 17. Submit a request to the town of Abington to have the vegetation on the east side of North Quincy Street cleared to provide better visibility and that the Town of Abington consider placing rumble strips near the water tower and where the yellow signs have been installed. And further that a recommendation be made that an oversized double Stop sign be added.**
- 18. Recommend a new high-intensity street light on the southwest corner of Boundary Avenue to provide more visibility;**
- 19. Recommend adding “SLOW” sign painted on the pavement on North Quincy Street, one for each direction before the intersection. This will be done in the spring of 2014.**
- 20. Table the discussion on changing Boundary Avenue into a one-way street until the report is received from the road safety audit.**

There being no further items to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Florio
Secretary to the Traffic Commission