

## ***City Council Committee Reports for 2021***

**DATE:** October 5 2021 **RECORDER** **McCauley- Chair**

### **COMMITTEE** **Public Safety**

<b>Councillors Attending</b>		<b>Others Attending</b>	<b>Address</b>
Barry N. Connell		<b><i>Geordie Vining</i></b>	<b><i>City Nbpt Sr Proj Mgr</i></b>
Joseph H. Devlin		<b><i>Gary Tirone</i></b>	<b><i>5 Hines Way</i></b>
Afroz Khan		<b><i>Amantha Moore</i></b>	<b><i>10 No Atkinson St</i></b>
Byron J. Lane	<b><i>m</i></b>	<b><i>Rosemary Coleman</i></b>	
James J. McCauley	<b><i>m</i></b>		
Heather L. Shand		<b><i>Dana DeFranco</i></b>	<b><i>7 Kimball Hill Rd Haverhill</i></b>
Charles F. Tontar			
Bruce L. Vogel	<b><i>m</i></b>		
Christine E. Wallace			
Sharif I. Zeid			
Jared J. Eigerman			

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **ACTION TAKEN**

<b><i>Approval of Prior Minutes</i></b>	<b><i>N/A</i></b>
<b><i>APPL 51 9-27-21 PGA Hope Launch @BattleGrounds 10/16</i></b>	<b><i>Approve 3-0</i></b>
<b><i>ORDR 283 9-27-21 RRFBeacon at High and Sr Comm Ctr</i></b>	<b><i>Approve 3-0</i></b>
<b><i>APPT165 4-13-20 Re-appoint Robin Blair to BOH</i></b>	<b><i>N/A</i></b>
<b><i>COMM 345 8-30-21 Public Safety Concerns @ Parker St and RT</i></b>	<b><i>Hold</i></b>

### **Recording**

Your cloud recording is now available.

Topic: Public Safety Committee

Date: Oct 5, 2021 06:58 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Copy the link below to share this recording with viewers:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/jKdIb4eMy6L3\\_0eoTKnskMrSjHxQ0VD6cTxd\\_utbR5vCADOvdhXtSHVaUhI86Yjc.lABZOen6O2Vv7YdL](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/jKdIb4eMy6L3_0eoTKnskMrSjHxQ0VD6cTxd_utbR5vCADOvdhXtSHVaUhI86Yjc.lABZOen6O2Vv7YdL) Passcode: S\*1UBZ.8

## Agenda Items

Approval of Previous Minutes: None presented – N/A

### **APPL 51 9-27-21 PGAHope Launch @ BattleGrounds 10/16**

Review of Application, Dana DeFranco (owner of BG Coffee) gave an overview: In partnership with PGA, running a program to honor our vetrans through learning-to-play-golf. Will utilize Tracey Place 10-1 with walk-up offerings. Parks Dept has already approved this APPL  
Committee: Vote to Recommend to CC for review and approval 3-0

### **ORDR 283 9-27-21 RRF Beacon at High St & SCC**

Proposal to place a RRF Beacon at the crosswalk across High St at the Bresnahan/SCC. Beason was acquired via grant.  
Committee: Vote to Recommend to CC for approval 3-0

### **APPT 165 4-13-20 Re-appointment of Dr Robin Blair to BOH**

Postponed

### **COMM 345 8-30-21 Public Safety Concerns @ Parker St and RT**

Communication received from Gary Tirone. Gary gave us an overview of his observations, provided a signed petition from users of RT. Among Gary's observations: No speed signs on Parker, Lack of visible caution signs at RT head, Parking is not delineated, would encourage enforcement by NPD. G Vining from City Planning Office concurred with most of the observations. Added that Developer of Hines Way will be putting in a sidewalk in front of the development, but it may not be for a while (6mo-1yr). Much of the area of concern is in Newbury, and GV has spoken to Town of Newbury's PO to share information.

Public Comment:

Amantha Moore, in favor of any safety measures with undertake.

Ree Coleman, recounted a letter she had sent detailing a bicycle accident at this spot within the last 3mo. (see attached).

Committee:

Cnclr Vogel...could we communicate to developer to fast-track sidewalk?

Further discussion: 1. Speed signs,and/or electronic speed signs, 2. Add yellow warning signs (yellow) near trailhead, 3. Enforcement by NPD.

Hold in committee but seek advice from both TSAC and City Engineer as to an opinion on this stretch.

Additional Public Comment

*On Sep 27, 2021, at 12:42 PM, Geordie Vining <[GVining@cityofnewburyport.com](mailto:GVining@cityofnewburyport.com)> wrote:*

*Hello Gary,*

*I did touch base with the Town of Newbury's Planning Director Martha Taylor about this, as well as the Mayor, and recently sent some comments on to Councilor McCauley and the Public Safety Committee.*

*You are correct that there are currently no signs communicating the speed limit in the Newburyport section of Parker Street, which I believe is supposed to be the default of 25 mph. The City has largely removed most speed limit signs except for at various gateways. There is one existing speed limit sign just over the City line in Newbury indicating 35 mph for eastbound vehicles. Personally, I agree that some speed limit signs could be installed in the Newburyport portion of Parker Street near Hines Way to communicate the expected speed for motorists.*

*Speed radar signs can be effective in calming traffic, but there is a cost associated. I believe that depending on power supply, size, and features, the cost can range from about \$2000 to \$7000 per sign, and funding would need to be identified for acquisition, installation, and maintenance of such as sign. The DPS and the Police Department have addressed these items in other parts of the City.*

*I asked the Newbury Planning Director to consider coordinating with the Town Administrator and others regarding potentially lowering the speed limit along Parker Street in Newbury to, e.g., 30 mph (or 25 mph in a speed zone near the trailhead). However, as the jurisdiction is the Town and not the City, we have limited influence over that consideration.*

*Regarding the existing yellow diamond shaped advance warning signs, you are correct that one of the existing signs located in the Town of Newbury is partially obscured by branches from several trees, and I asked the Newbury Planning Director to coordinate with the Town's Tree Warden to prune those branches back.*

*The existing advance warning signs are located about 150 feet from the trailhead, and I think it could be appropriate to install an additional pair of "W11-15" standard advance warning signs with something like "next 500 feet" in the vicinity of Hines Way, if approved by the Mayor and the DPS. I think you may be asking about a more conspicuous alternative that could more effectively draw motorists' attention, such as advance warning/share the road signs that have solar powered LED flashing lights along the perimeter. Such signs apparently cost approximately \$1600, and funding would need to be identified for acquisition, installation, and maintenance.*

*In terms of speed limit enforcement by the police, I think you could certainly ask for their increased presence. As noted, there is generally a limited capacity for enforcement.*

*Thank you. -- Geordie*

**From:** Gary Tirone [mailto:[gary.tirone@gmail.com](mailto:gary.tirone@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:00 PM

**To:** Geordie Vining

**Cc:** Jim McCauley

**Subject:** [Ext]Re: public safety concern, Parker St

Good afternoon Geordie,

*My apologies for my tardy response to your email; I do appreciate your follow up and listing of issues/plans currently being addressed. I also understand the strain on resources(police) and budgets to address all the concerns, but do worry that there is little to no evidence that Parker St. is being monitored to reduce the excessive speeds of drivers throughout the day. As I indicated in my original correspondence to the city councilors, there are two long straightaways of approximately a half mile from each direction that end right at the Rail Trail entrance/exit. The little signage available is posted too late and in some*

*cases, obstructed. I do believe if efforts aren't put in place, even when the Rail Trail is complete, that the area is a serious accident waiting to happen due to excessive speeds.*

*I live in the subdivision being developed by Eddie Hill and know the extension being done by him will likely be completed next spring. In the meantime and to develop better driving habits on Parker St that wouldn't strain the budget, i would hope the following could be done:*

- *More signage that's visible to drivers with posted speed limits along with notifying drivers that they are in an area heavily used by walkers, bicyclists, etc. I also think there should be a 25mph speed zone at the entrance to the park...perhaps doing something similar to what's been done at the park/ballfields on Merrimac St.*
- *A flashing sign that let's drivers know the speed they are traveling several hundred yards before the Rail Trail entrance. I wouldn't think they are outrageously expensive and believe they help quite a bit. I'd be willing to help with a fundraising effort to accomplish this if necessary.*
- *I would hope the police could dedicate some times to monitor speed limits there. once or twice a week or a few times a month, especially during the afternoon commute times and weekend traffic to and from Plum Island to connect with RT 1 would be ideal. Let me know if it would help to write directly to the police dept to raise this as a concern.*

*Let me know too if a follow up phone conversation would be useful or however I might help in facilitating some areas along Parker St that will create more safety for an area that is more heavily used it seems on a daily basis.*

*Again, thank you for your response, and let me know if I can help.*

*Gary Tirone*

#### [5 Hines Way](#)

*On Fri, Sep 3, 2021 at 12:49 PM Geordie Vining <[GVining@cityofnewburyport.com](mailto:GVining@cityofnewburyport.com)> wrote:*

*Hello Gary,*

*I received a copy of your 8-21-21 letter today regarding your concerns about motorists vs. pedestrians and bicyclists along Parker Street. It is certainly a challenging issue – the risks of the lack of accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists along Parker Street, motorists travelling at excessive speeds, and increasing public use have been a primary impetus behind the initiative to establish the Parker Street Trail section of the Clipper City Rail Trail. As you note, the only real long-term solution is the establishment of the off-road trail. We have been and continue to work with partners and stakeholders (e.g., Eddie Hill as the developer of the Parker Hill subdivision, the Town of Newbury, the Coastal Trails Coalition, MassDOT, the City's leadership, etc.) to seek the authorization of funding to address these gaps, similar to the recently completed trail section between State Street and Shephard's Auto.*

*I am meeting with the Parks Director next week to review potential short-term measures such as additional signage and ensuring that the existing signs are clearly visible. I am also going to coordinate with the Town of Newbury's Planning Director. The situation is complicated by the jurisdiction of Parker Street being split geographically between the City and Town, and increased police traffic enforcement is constantly being requested in multiple different locations and unfortunately the capacity to attend to all these areas is very limited.*

*Please let me know if you would like to talk directly about this, my phone number is below. Thank you.*     *-- Geordie*

*Additional Comments*

**From:** Ree Coleman <[ree.coleman114@gmail.com](mailto:ree.coleman114@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** October 5, 2021 at 10:04:16 AM EDT  
**To:** [mccauleyward5@gmail.com](mailto:mccauleyward5@gmail.com)  
**Cc:** Rosemarie Coleman <[ree.coleman114@gmail.com](mailto:ree.coleman114@gmail.com)>, Tom Hubby Coleman <[tom.coleman731@gmail.com](mailto:tom.coleman731@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Rail Trail Accident 08/18/2021 for tonight's meeting

Good Morning Jim

Notice in the recently taken pictures below:

\*How many parking spaces are at the intersection Parker St. and the rail trail?

\*Is the car on the left in the picture below in a proper, legal space? You can clearly see there is NO ROOM to safely pass between the edge of this car and the road - a very dangerous place to park. See how far out the cyclists in the photo have to move into street?

\*Cars park along Oak Hill Cemetery despite "No Parking" signs. Parking here forces bikers and walkers to walk in the road into oncoming traffic.

September 18th about 8 a.m. on a glorious sunny day I took my daily ride around the entire trail and after crossing the fabulous new crosswalk and very effective lights at State Street (thank you!), I rode along the bike path, then dirt path in front of Oak Hill avoiding the street and oncoming traffic. It feels safer to me to ride on the dirt path than on the right hand side of the road for such a short time.

At the entrance to the Rail Trail a large SUV was parked in the non-designated parking space (as depicted below at the Trailhead). The intersection to the trail was busy with people, dogs, etc. so I slowed down to a near stop and stayed close to the large SUV on my left because there was oncoming traffic and there was scant room between the back end of the SUV and oncoming cars.

As I began to clear the SUV another cyclist suddenly appeared in front of me and we collided and I dropped directly to the ground as I was going so slow. I distinctly remember in that split second, "do I dare put my hand out or collide with the SUV - I'd hate to damage it?" It's amazing what goes through our heads in that split second time. Instead I simply dropped to the ground. My arm landed on top of my handlebar which was against the blacktop.

I knew I broke my arm and was in excruciating pain and was very, very lucky people saw the accident and rushed to help. The other cyclist was extremely concerned for me, and I for him being OK as well. A wonderful woman with her puppy rushed to help and thankfully she put me in her car, my bike in the back, drove me home, took off my helmet, locked my bike in our shed, got me an ice pack for my arm, water and a snack and drove me to Anna Jacques ER. All the while I stood in shock holding my forearm in agony because I could not remove my supporting hand.

I completely fractured my ulnar, was put in a cast and saw an orthopedist a few days later who got me into surgery the following day. I have a 5" plate in my forearm, lost more a month of working, I am unable to use a knife to cook my meals or wash dishes still at 53 days post-accident. Additionally, I am looking at another surgery around March 1, 2022 to remove the plate in my arm, again losing precious life and work time to recover from this second surgery.

Had the other cyclist and I been able to see OVER or AROUND the SUV in the non-designated parking space this accident would never have happened.

Accidents happen and this was a freak accident and fortunately the person I collided with is a wonderful person and I've been grateful for his support. However, this parking space needs to be designated a NO PARKING SPOT and, most importantly, needs to be monitored regularly by Newbury / Newburyport Police Departments, enforcing the regulations as a necessary step.

Rosemarie Coleman  
24 Hancock Street  
Newburyport MA. 01950

Rosemarie Coleman  
[www.eyesonyoga.com](http://www.eyesonyoga.com)

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