

## Plummer Ave Traffic Calming Plan/Meeting Comments

### Deb Casson (20 Plummer)

- (9/7) I'd like to let you know that I support the project and calming measures.
- (9/7) So the original plan didn't include so many bump outs. That was what I was in agreement with. Why the change? Seems excessive. Is there a formula for distance in relation to location of bump out? It's a lot. Why not just near park and school? Looking forward to your response. The initial plan was an improvement but I'm not convinced with the changes.

### Cliff Raskin

- (9/7) What about a trial using painted lines and cones like this? Try before you buy... so to speak.

### Stan and Diana Kulfan (50 Plummer Avenue)

- (9/7) Just following up on the Plummer Avenue Site Walk meeting earlier this evening. We fully support the Chikane Solution for Plummer Avenue that was developed by Diane and John. It is great to know that the City of Newburyport Leadership is engaging in this kind of innovative problem solving. Please let us know if there is anything more we can do to make it happen!
- (9/8) I agree with Barbara and Cliff. We would be happy to have a chicane in front of our house. More garden space!
- (9/11) We were out talking with our neighbors on upper Plummer Avenue this morning and discovered that a major concern with the plan are the lines drawn on the pavement. My experience with chicanes in the Netherlands is that on residential streets, it is just the chicanes, no lines. I found a photo on this site that visualizes what we seemed to get to as a consensus: <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/371771/complete+street+select+treatments+26+-+chicanes+and+serpentine.pdf/d257da1b-e578-4f3f-a04c-55b4a52ce8cd>. As you can see, it is a beautiful, Plummer Ave like street. And it is only Chicanes with granite curbstones - no lines.

### John & Gen Bleiler (3 Plummer Avenue)

- (9/7) Is there any way we can have a brief call to talk through a few questions?
- (9/12) Thanks again for hosting the meeting and allowing us to comment on the design proposal for Plummer Ave. While there are indeed issues with speeding and aggressive driving on Plummer Ave that warrant action, we feel that the proposed remedy shared with the residents represents more of a disruption than is likely necessary and seems overly ambitious given the underlying concerns. **In this context, we recommend the following:**
  1. Seek opportunity to accelerate the northern Atkinson Common master planning effort such that parking behind the day care center becomes available for users of the park, thus lowering some or all of the transient parking pressure on Plummer Ave.

2. Explore opportunities for the day care center to employ the rear lot, as well as the parking area on Merrimac Street as a drop off/pickup area, thus eliminating or at least minimizing the safety concerns on Plummer Ave.
3. Initiate a pilot study using temporary structures (as Cliff suggested) in place of hard chicanes and the bump-out at the Merrimac Street/Plummer Ave intersection for a trial period, coupled with quantitative and observational monitoring, to determine impacts on traffic, neighborhood, resident & visitor parking needs, and even snow removal.
4. If the Plummer Ave drop off for the day care center remains in place, restrict drop-off to the daycare center side of road.
5. Consider moving the Merrimac Street crosswalk from the easterly side of the corner to the westerly side of the corner, allowing pedestrian access to the daycare center with only 1 road crossing
6. Seek opportunities to restore parking in front of as many residential dwellings as possible on the northerly end of the street. The current design represents an inconvenience for several residents, and has the potential to introduce competition for available spaces that is not warranted given the scale of the underlying concerns
7. Proposed traffic calming measures, such as the colored pavement in front of the day care center, and the speed reducer adjacent to the Commons entrance have merit, and represent low impact solutions which may be surprisingly helpful

In summary, we believe that a judicious phased approach is warranted on Plummer Avenue – such a phased approach can be adaptively managed and upgraded to best meet the needs of all stakeholders, without large scale initial disruptions with uncertain returns.

**John Magnifico (44 Plummer)**

- (9/7) Cliff, I like that idea (for what it's worth). A test like this would provide a relatively low cost way to observe traffic and parking, and theoretically allow adjustments to the quantity and positions of the chicanes and/or necessity of a double yellow line.

**Barbara Gagnon (443 Merrimac Street on the corner of Plummer Ave)**

- (9/8) I am sorry to have missed meeting you this evening. I was given a map of the proposed changes to Plummer Ave. I have a couple of concerns that I would like to address. A couple of years ago the city decided to put a large yard in front of my house which inevitably I have to maintain and which eliminated parking in front of my house. Now it appears I will not have parking on the side of my house either. Also, According to your plan there appears to be a crosswalk to my front door. I don't understand why a crosswalk has to be across merrimac street on this side of Plummer Ave if these changes are to benefit the school. Please reconsider and place the crosswalk across merrimac street to the side of the school. I was also wondering why the school hasn't considered the side parking lot as a drop off point. There appears to be ample parking behind the school for staff and visitors. This would probably save a lot of money, time and effort rather than restructuring all of Plummer Ave.

Per our conversation, I do not think the crosswalk in front of my house is needed. There is a crosswalk at the beginning of the ball field already with a speed limit sign in the middle of it. The site planners did not spray paint the road in front of my house to see where this crosswalk was being considered. As the site plan stands now it appears to be leading to my front door. I would greatly appreciate you reconsidering this idea.

We also discussed the school moving its drop off to the side of their building which I believe you said they were willing to do. This would alleviate the need for a narrowing the entrance to Plummer Ave. As for the chicanes and speed bumps as I stated, I do not believe there has ever been a speeding ticket or a pedestrian accident on this street in over 50 years. I think it would be prudent to try signage as a less expensive way to possibly obtain the same result that you are looking for. (JE EMAIL)

- (9/23) I would like to be added to your email list for any information regarding Plummer Ave. I was unaware of a zoom meeting that took place the other evening and only learned of it through a neighbor. As I have stated in my other emails, I feel that the restructuring of Plummer Ave is rather extreme and costly. I was wondering if anyone has spoken to Amesbury regarding their efforts to calm traffic. There is a small stretch of road on Rocky Hill Rd between Main Street and Rte 110 that has 2 raised speed bumps without the need for narrowing. This definitely has an effect on speed and I am sure it wasn't as costly as what is being proposed for our street. Perhaps our city could pave other roads with the savings. Please take a ride over there and see for yourself. I would like to hear your thoughts on this.

#### **Kim Turner**

- (9/8) I spoke with the Mayor about this this morning and he would like Jamie's feedback on the plan as well before we move ahead.

Could we put out these temporary posts to give this a trial run? What would that entail? I think we'd need City Council approval, but I'd like to know the details around cost, etc before presenting that to them.

- (9/8) Jamie, just so you know, at least one resident at the site walk yesterday said she absolutely wants a brick sidewalk and understands about the pre-payment. Another would like to file a request to widen her driveway. We want your eyes on the plan that Jon-Eric and Diane presented yesterday. Let me know if you want to set up a meeting soon.

#### **Jon-Eric**

- (9/8) I was just about to reply to Barbara. She and I talked in length today on the phone. Here are our responses. I'm copying Councilor Wallace for record keeping of comments.
  1. The best location for this crosswalk is where we have it proposed now. It provides the outer limits of the proposed Safety Zone on Merrimac Street. Plus it helps to slow down cars running east to west. Intersections quite often have crosswalks on all corners and putting this one on the outer corner helps keep Plummer within an area that is visually safer, from traffic control perspective.
  2. I cannot speak to the reconstruction out front, losing a space and gaining a front yard. I am not aware of those details. We're still keeping some spaces on the east side of Plummer but outside of double crosswalks. This won't bring back parking nearer to your front door but it's there.

We also discussed the narrowing of Plummer at the chicanes, at the Merrimac St intersection, and the Atkinson crosswalk bumpout. She asked if we rec'd approval from the Fire Dept yet. I explained that we have a new acting chief and I didn't want to bother them yet until we get further along with the design. Although Diane contacted them to get stats of their trucks for turning radii, etc. Fire and police are part of our review process for these types of projects, mainly via our Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC), so it's a matter of time, but, no, we have not met with them yet. We will set up a mtg with them.

As for narrowing the road at those pinch points, we are providing 24-wide access thru those pinch points, which allows us to sleep easy at night – this is a normal roadway width, two 12-foot lanes each way. Emergency access can easily make these maneuvers. The raised crosswalk is my main concern with Fire at this point. Fire Departments elsewhere have maneuvered over them because their design specifications have been mastered over decades to accommodate their trucks. Hopefully our Fire Chief will concur and if not, we'll revisit other options.

- (9/8) The sooner we have that mtg, the better. The Contractor came down this morning to ask what our schedule is. He has major lead times and dealing with brick sidewalks is going to delay him immensely. Certain granite curb radii have longer lead times. Dealing with widening some driveways. That all takes time. Let me give a delineator post layout to Jamie and he can price it. So many posts per chicane, etc etc.

I'm totally in favor of giving the chicanes a test run for half a year. But we also need traffic monitoring, similar to tubes in the road, but via cctv mounted on poles so we can count the trucks. We'll get that cost, too.

- (9/8) Let's move the first one nearest High towards High and either eliminate the last one way below. I have more emails asking to do this, which justifies doing so – they live there, which is why we have public mtgs, to listen and revise. They know. In this case, I would have to agree, they are not unsafe ideas, just adjustments. (RT email)
- (9/9) She and I talked in length today on the phone. Here are our responses. I'm copying Councilor Wallace for record keeping of comments.
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- **Email (9/9) TSAC**

**Barbara Keeler (11 Plummer)**

- (9/8) I think Cliff's is an excellent idea. I also think that putting a chicane towards the top of the street—where there is plenty of stretches without driveways on either side—instead of two on the lower end not only reduces the burden at the bottom but also gives an early signal to drivers when they enter from High Street that traffic flow is being reduced.
- (9/13) I strongly support what the Bleillers have so clearly and thoughtfully spelled out in their email and, like them, have been increasingly feeling that a more measured, step-by-step approach is very much in order for something that impacts so many of us. In that vein, if chicanes have to be introduced, I would want to significantly reduce their number and make them initially temporary to help to determine if they are in fact the best options.

**Chris Bromby (27 Plummer)**

- (9/8) Just verifying that 20mph safety zone is not planning to go on the small island at the end of my driveway. That cannot go there. Please move it down.
- (9/8) Thanks, could also put it across the street next to the parking lot. People look more toward that area anyway. More visual across the street.

**Rick Taintor**

- (9/8) My only concern is the chicane just to the south of the Atkinson driveway: it results in a lane shift at the driveway without any physical guidance. It might make sense to eliminate that one chicane so that drivers don't have to make a lateral shift as they pass in front of the driveway.

**Jeanine Talks**

- (9/13) We agree - A couple of chicanes further up the street rather than all concentrated towards lower end would be helpful. We would love to see a way to demonstrate the use prior to installation if possible?
1. We remain concerned that the number of vehicles parking at the lower end of street during pioneer league play will create a bottleneck- if the expansion plans for the rear parking is not expanded in concert with these changes. It is essential that we have solid commitments of these two pieces before this is constructed. We understand that both Christine Wallace

and Kim Turner know the impact and vast number of cars during pioneer sessions. These start as early as 8 am and go on until 9:30 pm from April-September. Unfortunately, time and date of our meeting did not at all demonstrate the needs of the league parking.

2. Question: Can the signs we place at the "drop off" parking be writing much more prescriptive.
3. For example; since there is little (?) or no school during the summer months which coincide with major pioneer league activities. We suggest that the signs indicate these "drop off times" from September-June only. As well as indicating the exact timing of head start sessions? State it Excluded weekends ?
4. Also, we strongly suggest the signs state specific times like from (7am-8am) (11am-1pm), etc. versus the entire day? We know there are specific times when the majority of children arrive and exit.
5. It would be wonderful if head start could mandate drop offs at the rear or side entrance to assist in this process of safety.

### **Beth Platow (17 Plummer)**

- To add to Jen, John, and Jeanine's comment about parking, it is a concern for me as well given that part of moving to a community like Newburyport, and this neighborhood in particular (as opposed to the S. End), was to escape the chaos, competition, and challenge of parking in our former communities of Boston, Cambridge, and Salem, MA. The more I've considered the proposal, the more concern I have about limiting the parking on Plummer.

My concern stems from years living in communities where even public street parking spots were "guarded" by chairs and cones and were the cause of many yelling matches that I witnessed. None of us own the street parking on our street or in front of our homes, and folks have every right to park on our street. However, even on some non-game/non-event days, Plummer Ave. is often filled with parked cars from residents, residents' visitors, or people visiting Atkinson. On Sunday, nearly the entire lower half of Plummer from Christopher to Merrimac had vehicles parked on both sides of the street and there were no games that I was aware of. Personally, I love the vibrant community that is drawn to Atkinson and I cherish the Head Start school. Ideally, we would not limit access, parking, or safety moving forward. Therefore, I suggest limiting the chicanes to have one on the upper half of the street and one on the lower half of the street *or* have three bump outs -- one at the High Street end, one at the Merrimac end and one in the middle at the Atkinson parking lot entrance. I do believe this will help with safety, support the demand for parking on our street, and save some tax dollars by not integrating so much street calming.

### **Dan Warchol (47 Plummer Ave)**

- I am very much in favor of the traffic calming measures at the bottom of the street as well as the raised crosswalk at Atkinson. However, I am opposed to the chicane design for two reasons. First and foremost, the elimination of half our on street parking is too much. Second, I do not want to see the yellow line zigzagging down the road; it will change the character of our neighborhood from a quaint side street to a more urbanized thoroughfare.

### **Jeanine Murphy**

- (9/22) I hope some of my suggestions may be addressed such as adding the times to drop offs and exclude the summer months when we need the extra parking for pioneer and head start is closed.

Lastly most neighbors are open to trying these chicanes but feel there are too many and would like to start with a smaller number and focus a then more towards the top of the street.

Lastly the parking review by Jon Eric really will lot give a sound depiction of needs by doing this in September without pioneer in full force.

While there seems to be support for some of these ideas I know most neighbors feel rushed as this was only brought up at last meeting.

We went from some parking concerns to chicanes etc.

### **Daniel Morrissey (13 Plummer)**

- (9/22) That being said, I wish to share my with my thoughts with you regarding the project. Slowing down speeders is good. Reducing heavy truck traffic is good. New sidewalks, and paving our street, great. Lived here for over 20 years, the street certainly deserves some love and attention.



However.... Your solution is going to be a real ~burden for me. If you look at my black VW parked in front of my house, where it's "always" parked, it's directly in the lane of traffic negotiating the s-turn immediately up-street from me. Even if I move my car out of the way somehow, somewhere, I still get to sit on my porch, which I do all the time, watching cars turning right and coming directly towards my house. The headlight glare will probably ruin that experience. Not good for neither ones blood pressure nor peace of mind. Nor property values as well.

Secondly, and this is the dealbreaker for me. Winters are not easy here on Plummer. Or anywhere else here in town. But I've always been amazed at the DPW drivers who fly up and down this street all day long to keep this vital city connection clear for traffic. I can hear them coming down from up beyond Christopher street, like a train. Totally amazing, no stopping, no

turning. Top to bottom, up the other side, again and again.

Plummer is the first chance to get from High to Merrimac or vice versa. This street is the one the Fire Department or Police count on when needed. It's the one street we all need to be cleared. And your bump outs are going to really hinder these plowing and emergency trucks. If the city is prepared to send out multiple crews to plow and shovel all day, and to give me a way to snow blow my driveway to the "curb line as it now exists", go for it. I have nightmares of this mountain of snow, extending 10 or more feet from my curb, that the trucks never got to, because of this misguided attempt to slow traffic. This is really a Floridian solution to a New England traffic problem. What is wrong with some well placed and designed speed bumps and a bump out near Merrimac and the entrance to Atkinson Common? Speed-bump at the top, one at the bottom, and one in the middle should do it. Or at least place these obstacles on double lots and away from houses closer to the curb, as mine is.

If you look on any given day, there are always cars parked exactly like your proposal. The passing cars drive straight up or down the middle. They are going to follow your center line only just once.

All that being said, do pave it, do my sidewalks, slow down those speeders if you can. Just remember this is New England, and we get, literally, feet of snow. Very soon.

PS. I've also heard there are options and pricing for driveways and bricks. Please inform me of what options I have. And my curbing is in pretty good shape, do I have to get new? I've got mature plants out there.