



**ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION
Traffic Options Promoting Public Safety (TOPPS)
Ad-Hoc Subcommittee**

**MEETING
Wednesday, May 30, 2012
10:00 a.m.
Essex Town Hall
Meeting Room B – 2nd Floor**

MINUTES

1. Call To Order : Claire Tiernan called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. In attendance were Subcommittee members Stacia Libby, Susan Malan, Dave Caroline, and Janice Ehle/Meyer. Also in attendance was Town Planner John Guskowski.
2. Appointment of Subcommittee Chair: In acknowledgement of her role as representative of the Planning Commission, which created this Subcommittee, Claire Tiernan was appointed Subcommittee Chair by consensus.
3. Review of TOPPS Charge and Background Information: John Guskowski presented a brief overview of the origin of the Subcommittee, discussing the town-wide Transportation Study's recommendations for traffic calming and the decision of the Planning Commission to seek some implementation of these recommendations, beginning with Grove Street. He noted Stacia Libby's presence as a member of the Board of Selectmen, which acts as the Town's Traffic Authority and stated that the Planning Commission wished to work very closely with the Traffic Authority on Plan implementation.
4. Discussion of Grove Street Concerns: Susan Malan began the discussion by giving some history of the street itself and traffic data that she had collected during the Transportation Study. Traffic counts of approximately 2000 vehicles/day are seen on Grove Street, and the 85th percentile speed is 37 mph. Posted speed limit is 25 mph, and enforcement is inadequate. Janice Ehle/Meyer stated that she believed CRERPA may be able to get access to additional traffic-counting equipment. The resources on the Street include Town Hall, the library, Grove Street Park, the cemetery, and access to Hubbard Field across North Main Street. Speed along Grove itself, as well as traffic turning from North Main onto Grove are both major concerns. Additional concerns are the lack of sidewalk on both sides of the street, no crosswalk to access Grove Street Park, no sidewalk or crosswalk extending to and across North Main, and a general lack of recognition of Grove Street as a residential neighborhood.

Potential solutions discussed included reducing posted speed limit to 20 mph, making Grove Street a one-way road, encouraging more on-street parking, curb bump-outs, adding sidewalk on both sides of the road, narrowing traffic lanes, adding bike lanes, speed bumps, elevated crosswalks, and 'shared streets.' Several ideas were dismissed because of practical concerns with road or right-of-way width or difficult of maintenance.

By consensus, the Subcommittee decided to investigate a number of first steps. These included:

- Dave Caroline would investigate the right-of-way to add sidewalk from the current end of the sidewalk on the west side of Grove Street heading north to North Main. If the Town had adequate space to extend the sidewalk, he would add the sidewalk extension to North Main and a crosswalk across North Main to his 2012-2013 sidewalk improvement schedule.
 - Investigating the effectiveness of on-street parking as a traffic-calming measure. Janice Ehle/Meyer will look into getting traffic counters. John Guskowski and Susan Malan will measure widths of Grove Street and identify the extent of proposed on-street parking along the west side of the street between North Main Street and High Street. The experiment will involve parking cars along this stretch of road and record changes in traffic count and particularly travel speeds.
 - John Guskowski and Dave Caroline will discuss adding parallel parking striping on the west side of Grove Street between High Street and North Main.
 - John Guskowski will investigate the order-of-magnitude costs for an elevated crosswalk across Grove Street at High Street to access the Park.
 - John Guskowski will investigate order-of-magnitude costs for a section of 'shared street' with either slightly elevated crossing or textured/brick pavement between West Avenue and the entrance to the Grove Street Park, linking the library and Town Hall.
5. Establishment of Meeting Schedule: The Subcommittee decided by consensus that a monthly meeting during the day was most favorable. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 20, and subsequent meeting will be scheduled on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in Town Hall Meeting Room B. John Guskowski will submit this schedule to the Town Clerk and have it place on the town website.
6. Other: There was no other business.
7. Adjournment: Chair Tiernan adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Guskowski, AICP
Town Planner (Consulting)