

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Open Meeting Minutes
8/22/18**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2018 OCT -4 AM 9:43

Present: Ellen Allen, Jason Brown, Gregg McBride, Alison Demong, Joe Rull
Town Administrator Peter Morin was absent

Open session in the Selectmen's office at 7:02pm

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:02pm. She postponed the discussion about the Norwell Grange historic restriction agreement, noting that the buyer would like to review the edits made by the Mass Historical Commission before signing.

Approval of minutes

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the minutes of the 6/20/18 Open Meeting. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the minutes of the 7/11/18 Open Meeting. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the minutes of the 7/11/18 Executive Session. Unanimously voted

The Bylaw Review Committee will be scheduled to meet with the BOS on a future agenda.

Ms. Allen reported that she and Mr. Morin attended a TH/Sparrell Building project meeting today. She updated the board about the potential for shared meeting space and other plan updates. Mr. Habeeb, consultant for the space needs study, toured the 2nd floor of the building during the meeting. The next update will be on the 9/5 meeting agenda.

Mr. Brown reported receiving an email from a Bowker Street resident about the poor condition of this road, especially the end towards Main Street. Others had been contacted as well. All discussed their conversations with the Highway Supervisor about various road conditions.

John Adams Drive issues – A large number of buffer trees that screened this road were removed during the state's rehab project on Route 3, which has left many houses with an unsightly view of the highway and increased traffic noise. The street's residents are looking for mitigation from the state. Ms. Allen suggested talking to Sen. O'Connor. Various remedial options were discussed. Mr. Rull would like to get Mass DOT here to talk about these issues.

40 River Street AH project –The ZBA wrote into the permit conditions that payment of the building permit fee was a requirement and would range from \$55K-75K, depending on the cost of the project. Discussion ensued about payment options and alternatives. Metro West will meet again with the ZBA to resolve this issue.

The developers of Simon Hill filed another NOI with Con Com for a hearing on 9/4/18.

Mr. Rull shared photos of signage that he believes limited truck weights that he was told were on River Street several years ago. This will be discussed further during the Open Session.

Open Session, Continued in Osborn Room at 7:35pm

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen. All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Jason Brown, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted

Citizen Comments – No non-agenda items were reported.

Selectmen's Reports and Announcements

Mr. McBride reported that work on the AH project at 40 River Street has commenced with the asbestos abatement. The demo permit will be issued shortly.

Ms. Demong invited all residents to attend the Carleton property walk this Saturday, August 25 at 9:30am. Meet at Fogg Forest at the picnic bench.

Town Administrator's Report - None

Discussion/ Action Items

a) **7:35 Police Chief Ted Ross** –Fundraising Citation for Norwell Residents

Chief Ross read statements about the two Massachusetts police officers who recently lost their lives in the line of duty. He added that there has been a huge amount of support from the surrounding communities and our Town. He singled out 4 young residents who raised funds in memory of the two officers and support for the injured K9 officers through the Norwell Police K9 Foundation.

Max Allegrini and Gabriel Murray (ages 7 and 8) and Matilda Murray (age 10) raised and donated funds to the family of Sgt. Michael Chesna by setting up a lemonade stand at the corner of Prospect St. and Jacobs Lane. Their parents made a matching donation to bring the total amount raised to \$2000.

Gabby Hill (age 11) raised and donated over \$1600. Over several weeks, proceeds from her sales of keychains and cookies raised funds for Sgt. Chesna and the Norwell Police K9 Foundation.

Chief Ross presented each of the children with certificates recognizing their kindness and generosity. The board thanked Gabby, Max, Gabriel and Matilda for their outstanding community support and donations.

b) **Town Traffic Issues Discussion** – Chief Ross, Highway Surveyor Ferguson, Traffic Study Committee and Complete Streets Committee

Ms. Allen announced the ground rules for the discussion, which will be started with information from Joe Rull. Mr. Rull gave a background summary of this issue, noting that he would like to address Town-wide traffic problems in the next agenda section. The first discussion tonight will address only truck traffic on River Street. Mr. Rull summarized the history of the truck traffic on River street, starting with the town of Marshfield's 2002 ban of trucks on Bridge Street. Mr. Rull was unsure about the approval of this ban by the Town of Norwell, but said that truck traffic was diverted to River Street. The main offender is the PA Landers company, whose trucks drive from their Hanover facility on Broadway through Norwell on River Street to other destinations in nearby towns, using River Street as their "cut through" route. The Rulls and their neighbors have called PA Landers, but there has been no lessening of the trucks' frequency or speed. This has resulted in the need for additional repair and maintenance funds of approximately \$400K to re-surface River Street. Mr. Rull added that his research today discovered that there was a truck ban on River Street several years ago and he thinks that a weight limit sign was present as late as 2008 (photos of a blurred white sign were provided by Mr. Rull). He also noted that whatever sign was present has been gone for years. Other issues like Jake braking have increased on River Street. This brake system is used by trucks moving at a high rate of speed to slow down quickly.

Ms. Allen added that Mass DOT should get involved. Mr. Rull read information from Mass DOT of the steps necessary to obtain a heavy commercial vehicle exclusion. If the

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Town wanted to pursue a traffic study one could be done. Mr. Rull offered to share a copy of a DOT procedures booklet. Ms. Allen reported that the BOS received all of the postcards about traffic issues from the residents on River Street and have read them (they were copied and included in the meeting packet for BOS members). She noted that traffic issues are common as Norwell is a "cut-through" town. The board discussed the prior formation of the Traffic Study Committee to address the Town's traffic issues, adding that it includes a member who is a traffic engineer. The committee has discussed this specific issue.

Residents Comments

1. Neil Farmer, 483 River Street, gave a short history of the truck problems on River, starting in 2002. He asked the current board to right the wrong and work with Mass DOT to find a solution. Please keep us informed.
2. John Murphy, 250 River Street, noted that he is a former truck driver. He used the signage at the bridge at 3rd Herring Brook going into and out of Hanover as an example of signage for River Street. The sign restricted truck travel over the bridge. The sign is now gone, but the limitations are still there, which would exclude tractor trailers, cement mixers and other vehicles over 40 tons. Mr. Murphy gave a definition of Jake braking, adding that many towns have restrictions on engine brakes. Per Mr. Murphy, there is nowhere in the Town where Jake brakes are really needed if trucks are doing the speed limit. Ms. Allen reminded all of the *Town-wide* ban on all engine braking, even though there is currently no sign on River St. Mr. Murphy gave examples of the large trucks that have been traveling on River over the last year. Mr. Brown stated that he likes simple solutions; if the weight capacity on River could be determined, the sign could be reinstalled and a certified letter sent to PA Landers. The limit could then be enforced.
3. Linda Monahan, 253 River Street – addressed the speed on River Street by both cars and trucks, noting that the 40MPH limit should be reduced.
4. Peter Hainer, 427 River Street, discussed the topography of River Street, which is dangerous at high speeds or after a storm. The road doesn't have the capacity for such large trucks. Kids can't ride bikes; pedestrians have no place to go if any issues arise with traffic. State road requirements for width, grade, and composition should be reviewed and measures taken to limit this traffic. Mr. Rull also talked about the danger of the cement trucks on River. Mr. Brown questioned the destination of these cement trucks.
5. Deb Stuart 53 River, which is at the intersection of River and Dover Streets, noted the danger of trucks who turn onto Dover Street then head to Scituate. Dover Street is too narrow for these big trucks.
6. Mary Beth Shea, 52 Franklin Road, would like to have the entire Town represented. She stressed the need to have a comprehensive traffic study done for the whole Town. She added that people on River St. were not asked to write postcards and come to this meeting, which would have been appropriate if a town-wide approach were being taken. She agreed that there is a problem on River St. Mr. McBride agreed that no ban should be put in place before a traffic study is done. Discussion ensued about the best way to move forward.
7. Dusty Reardon, Main Street, asked about where the truck traffic will go. He is concerned about moving the traffic to Main Street and is not in favor of relief for River Street. Mr. Rull responded to him noting the weight limit of the culvert.
8. Don Mauch, 296 Main Street, has met with Mr. Rull, Mr. Farmer and Mr. Morin about this traffic issue in the Town. He would like to avoid polarization of neighborhoods, but added that the Town as a whole should recognize a problem that has gotten steadily worse. He offered suggestions to deal with the increasing truck traffic on the feeder roads in the Town.

Ms. Allen summarized the discussion of the meeting to this point: concerns about truck volume, speed and impacts from River Street residents and those in other

neighborhoods. She stated that she is hearing that the Town would like to have the board take a comprehensive look at this issue.

9. Dave DeGhetto, 303 River Street, noted his location at the bottom of 3 separate hills. He gave examples of truck traffic issues that he has had over the years.
10. Gordon Pulsifer, 55 Bridge Street, wants to have the weight limit signs put back on Bridge Street. He would be happy to work with River Street residents to put a truck ban on River Street as well. He gave the history of the truck ban that began on June 27, 2002, when it was made permanent on Bridge Street. He stated that the study done at the time said that the ban would have no effect on River Street. He added that the Bridge Street residents have made efforts to get the weight limit signs put back on Main Street and Bridge Street. He produced additional documentation supporting this truck ban.

Chief Ross, Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Moshier (traffic engineer) were invited to comment. Mr. McBride asked Chief Ross to elaborate about traffic enforcement on River St. and other areas in the Town. Chief Ross reported that his department has been doing traffic enforcement on River St. with the help of the Massachusetts State Police truck team over the last month. The State noticed a reduced amount of vehicles, but data about the number of ticketed violations was not available yet.

Mr. Ferguson stated that he is not a fan of truck bans, but wants to do what's best for the Town. He added that he and his crews have been working on River St. over the summer and have noted the heavy volume of trucks. He agreed that a traffic study needs to be done and presented at Town Meeting. He would like documentation on the weight limits over 3rd Herring Brook. He stated that he is not in favor of "backroom deals" like the truck ban on Bridge Street, and that he wasn't aware of any problem with the missing signs on Bridge Street. He would like to have the Town decide as a whole or have a court ruling about any truck ban decisions. Mr. McBride asked Mr. Pulsifer to confirm that a study was done by Marshfield. Answer: yes. Mr. Mauch told all that PA Landers found out about the impending 2002 traffic study and avoided the Norwell roads during the study. Ms. Moshier stated that she realizes that River Street has a problem. She would like the Town to come up with a thoughtful solution that includes data review and current traffic volumes. She would like to include Mass DOT in these procedures, and suggested a few things to do short term:

1. Noise – enforcement of speed and noise limits
2. Post "no engine brake" noise signs throughout the Town.
3. Where are the trucks coming from and where are they going? Ms. Moshier said that traffic counts should be done. Ms. Demong asked how that would be studied, which is more difficult. The study would need people out in the field recording license plates, etc., which is very labor intensive.

Mr. Brown noted that this issue is clearly all over the Town. He reiterated that if there is a missing sign with a weight limit on River Street, the sign should be there. He would like to determine the weight capacity of the River Street bridge and reinstall the sign if this is already a ruling. Mr. McBride added that this is an old culvert, and it would not be a straightforward task to figure out the capacity. It needs to be part of the study. Pat Campbell would like to add South Street to the study.

Ms. Allen would like Chief Ross and the State police to continue to enforce speed and noise limits and move forward with ordering a study.

Mr. Rull asked about the history of the Town's Traffic Committee. Mr. McBride reported that there has been a Traffic Committee that dealt with specific issues over the years. A year ago the formal committee was reconvened. Ms. Allen added that the Complete Streets Committee was dealing with some of the traffic issues.

Mr. Ferguson itemized his next steps:

1. Will see what he can do about returning the no trucks sign to Bridge Street, pending confirmation of the permanent truck ban on that street. He doesn't like the way the deal was done, as it affects the whole Town. Please give supporting documentation to Mr. Ferguson.

2. Ms. Demong would like to task Ms. Moshier with organizing the study. Contact a vendor for quotes on raw data counts and then address speed issues.

Mr. Farmer asked about engaging Mass DOT to help. The Town may want to revisit the Union Street ban in Marshfield as well as River Street. Ms. Allen confirmed that the Town will explore that and talk to Mass DOT.

Patricia Crumley 48 Green Street, gave a summary of Green Street traffic issues, noting that it is also a cut-through street. She didn't like the detour and wished she had been notified. All discussed putting scheduled detours on the reverse 911 system. The Police, Fire and Highway departments work together to organize details and information, but it is often hard to pinpoint work areas each day.

Ms. Allen summarized next steps for these traffic issues: enforcement, work with the Traffic Study Committee to do traffic counts and a more comprehensive study. Mr. McBride would like to investigate prior signage on River St. and see if it should be reposted. Contact Mass DOT to involve them in a study. Mr. Ferguson has submitted a request to the state to look at the deteriorated bridge with the hope that some repair funds from their small bridges program could be made available. He added that there will be another 10 days of paving on River St. The board reiterated that info be sent to residents about scheduled detours when possible. Mr. Brown would like Sen. O'Connor to be involved, and noted that his admin. was present at Mr. Rull's request.

Traffic Issues in the Town

Megan Glynn, 6 Wilder Road, expressed her concern about the street's speed limit. She would like it lowered from 30mph to 25mph. Chief Ross stated that dead end streets like this one should be under 30mph, but he hasn't made a final decision yet on the exact speed. Mr. McBride noted that warrant articles are being considered to adjust speed limits for roads across the entire Town. Mr. Brown added that safety is a serious issue which needs additional signage to enforce the posted speed limits. Last year the town of Scituate went to a 30mph speed limit everywhere unless otherwise posted. This type of consistency might be a good starting point. Ms. Demong asked Chief Ross for his opinion on this option. Chief Ross noted that Grove, River and Main Streets should have their speed limits lowered and smaller neighborhoods should be lowered further. Mr. Brown asked about studies and correlation to results, adding that not just lowering, but education and enforcement are also required. Ms. Allen will review the state's muni modernization bill for updated rules on changing speed limits, but changes might need approval at Town Meeting. Ms. Demong would like to have some Articles ready for Town Meeting in the spring.

Bike Ride Habitat Approval – Saturday, 9/15/18

Mr. McBride summarized the race routes and other information, noting that this race does not have a big impact on the Town. It has gone through the same small part of town for many years.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the request from South Shore Habitat for Humanity to run a race on 9/15/18 with the condition that the race coordinators provide contact information to the Police and Fire Departments as requested. Unanimously voted

Capital Budget Committee Appointment – Tim Greene

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to appoint Tim Greene to the Capital Budget Committee for a term ending 6/30/21. Unanimously voted

**Accept Resignations from Bylaw Review Committee-Brian Greenberg,
Capital Budget Committee – Peter Smellie, Brian Greenberg**

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to accept with regret the resignations of Peter Smellie and Brian Greenberg from the Capital Budget Committee and Brian Greenberg from the Bylaw Review Committee, due to their appointments to the Advisory Board. Unanimously voted

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Future Meeting Agenda Items

Mr. McBride – Add appointment of CHT member Andy Reardon to the Carleton Property Committee to next week's agenda.

Appoint BOS member to Carleton Property Committee

Motion; made by Alison Demong, seconded by Jason Brown, to appoint Gregg McBride as the BOS representative to the Carleton Property Committee. Unanimously voted

Adjournment

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 9:40pm. Unanimously voted



Ellen Allen, Chair