

(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Ordinance Committee was held on Thursday, November 14, 2024 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Chair.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilman Richard D. Campopiano
Councilwoman Kristen E. Haroian
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli
Councilman Daniel Wall, Vice-Chair
Council Vice-President Lammis J. Vargas, Chair
Council President Jessica M. Marino, Ex-Officio

Absent: Councilman Robert J. Ferri
Councilman John P. Donegan

Also Present: John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Justin Mateus, Acting Public Works Director
Major Todd Patalano, Police Department
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

III. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

- **Approval of minutes of the October 17, 2024 regular meeting**

On motion by Councilman Wall, seconded by Councilwoman Haroian, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the October 17, 2024 regular meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Haroian, it was voted to take the agenda out of order and hear Major Patalano since he has another commitment this evening. Motion passed unanimously.

Major Patalano appeared to speak in full support of this Ordinance. He believes everyone present in the audience is present to support this Ordinance. There is a petition signed by almost everyone in the neighborhood except for a few households. This is a project that has been ongoing for several years and the Police Department was involved back in August in regard to Blueberry Lane and

Honeysuckle Rd., which is an “L” shaped cut-through from Wilbur Ave. to Phenix Ave. The Police Department did a traffic study on the area of Blueberry Lane and Honeysuckle Rd. Honeysuckle Rd. is a one-way and comes onto Phenix Ave. They did a traffic study for three days beginning on August 28th and ended on September 1st and had over 1,000 vehicles cut through that roadway. What was more alarming was there was fifty vehicles that were coming down Phenix Ave. and turning down Honeysuckle Rd. going the wrong way on a one-way. They put out Patrol Officers there sporadically and were handing out citations as well to people traveling on the one-way during the wrong way. There are people walking that area with strollers and with kids playing. There are stop signs and people are going through the stop signs going the wrong way on a one-way. Something has to be done. That road serves no purpose in being open as far as the Police Department is concerned. The Police Department has also spoken to the Fire Department about this. Usually, they would not recommend closing a road, but this case is a no brainer based on all the factors he has just described and main factor also is Police response and Fire response or Rescue response, they do not respond coming in from Honeysuckle. It is a one-way and they would not go down a one-way and also there would be no response coming from further West. The Station from Oaklawn Ave. or Station 3 or the one on Scituate Ave. would all come in from Blueberry Lane. The Police response would come in from Blueberry Lane. There is no purpose having this road a one-way and even having it open. It is more feasible and the Police Department feels based upon themselves, the Fire Department and also speaking with Public Works, that it could be closed. He is also present this evening to support shutting it down and closing it off, pass the Ordinance, put an asphalt berm there, put a bed there, a guardrail with some vegetation and he thinks it would be much safer for the neighborhood and avoid any accidents that could occur or any pedestrian accident occurring.

Mr. Mateus stated that he does not have much to add to what the Major stated. He did a very good job explaining the reasoning for this. What it would look like after everything was said and done, it would just be a berm separating the two roads with some hardscape either rocks or boulders or a guardrail and then some vegetation.

Council President Marino asked how long until, assuming this Ordinance passes at the monthly meeting, the road is actually closed. Mr. Mateus stated that he does not see it taking more than a few weeks to get that work completed dependent on the weather and the planting would be dependent on the planting season.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

7-24-03 ***ORDINANCE In Amendment of Title 9, Chapter 4 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled “Offenses Against Public Peace and Decency”.*** Sponsored by Mayor ***Hopkins.*** (Cont. from 8/15/2024).

Solicitor stated that Director Moretti is requesting that this be continued to next month’s meeting.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Haroian, it was voted to continue this Ordinance to next month’s meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

09-24-02 **ORDINANCE In Amendment of Title 10, Chapter 32, Section 030 of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled ‘Multi-Way Stop Intersections – Enumerated’ (adding 4-way stop at Packard St. and Flint Ave.).** Sponsored by Councilman Donegan. (Cont. from 10/17/2024)

Council President Marino stated that she believes Councilman Donegan sent an email so before we have a motion to approve this as is, there should be a motion to amend to coincide with this.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows:

- Section 1, line 25 to read “Flint Ave. at its intersection with Packard St.”. Motion passed unanimously.

Council President Marino asked Solicitor to address this since this is more involved than that. Chapter is different as well, it should be Ch. 30 Sect. 20, which is a different Chapter and Section of the Code and it should be “Stop Intersections Enumerated” as opposed to the Section quoted. She is not sure if that is considered a substantial change. Solicitor stated that a citation to a Section would not constitute a substantial change.

Council President Marino stated that motion to amend should include that the title be corrected to read “Chapter 30 Section 20 Stop Intersections Enumerated”. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Councilman Wall, seconded by Council President Marino, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Jonathan Monterey, 43 Blueberry Lane appeared to speak in favor of proposed Ordinance 10-24-02 and stated that he has worked on this issue with multiple Administrations for approximately nine years to try and make this neighborhood safer. This neighborhood urgently needs this to be addressed. This is a serious safety issue due to cut through traffic. There have been many close calls, which he has on video. He conducted a neighborhood petition and had 56 homes petitioned in favor. He presented this petition for the record.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilman Wall, it was voted to add the petition presented by Mr. Monterey into the record. Motion passed unanimously.

Pete Angilly, 31 Lantern Lane, appeared to speak in favor of proposed Ordinance 10-24-02 and stated that there are kids in the neighborhood and he sees cars speeding down the road. It is a tragedy waiting to happen. He asked that anything that can be done would be appreciated.

Mitchell Edwards, 38 Blueberry Lane, appeared to speak in favor of proposed Ordinance 10-24-02 and stated that his daughter is present this evening and that is the reason everyone is here. He asked that the Council please pass this Ordinance.

Eric Tennett, 16 Lantern Lane, appeared to speak in favor of proposed Ordinance 10-24-02 and stated that he has been in this neighborhood since 1996 and tragedy has happened, but narrowly avoided, it is real. Cars fly by in this area.

III. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

10-24-02 ***ORDINANCE for the Closure of the Westerly End of Honeysuckle Drive at its Intersection with Phenix Avenue Pursuant to Title 12.04 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled “Streets and Sidewalks Generally”.*** Sponsored by Mayor Hopkins and Councilman Campopiano.

On motion by Councilman Wall, seconded by Councilwoman Haroian, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilman Campopiano commended Major Patalano for his hard work in getting this done and thanked Mr. Monterey for getting the neighbors together. He will be in favor of this.

Council President Marino stated that she has also, with Councilman Campopiano, gone out to the neighborhood and is very familiar with that area and that cut through. This neighborhood is fortunate that there is an option such as this where the road can be closed. They will still be facing people going through stop signs, cars trying to get through being surprised that it is closed. There are going to be other constituents throughout the City that are forced with other traffic situations or safety issues and she looks forward to working with the Police Department in those areas, but a road closure is not a one-size first all. Every situation is unique and needs to be assessed by the appropriate departments.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance and motion passed unanimously.

10-24-03 ***ORDINANCE In Amendment of Title 10, Chapter 12, Section 210 of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled “Through trucking – Prohibited on certain streets”.*** Sponsored by Councilwoman Renzulli.

On motion by Councilwoman Haroian, seconded by Councilman Campopiano, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilwoman Renzulli stated that neighbors have complained to her that there are sixteen and eighteen wheelers cutting through on Baldwin Orchard so through the Traffic Engineer, he says that there is no apparent traffic safety issue associated with approving what she has proposed which is basically signage stating “no thru trucking”.

Councilman Wall thanked Councilwoman Renzulli for her advocacy in this matter. This area is in his Ward and he has been to the area. There should not be trucks driving up and down that road. He sees no harm in this Ordinance and supports it.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance and motion passed unanimously.

Chair recognized Solicitor, who would like to address an item that was already acted on.

Solicitor brought to the attention of the Committee the action it took on Ordinance 9-24-02 and stated that he was always under the impression that when doing traffic sign Ordinances, a traffic study was always done ahead of them. This particular one being sponsored by Councilman Donegan, in speaking with Mr. Mateus, seems to be a fairly substantial alteration of the traffic flow there and the clerk gave him a series of emails that were exchanged in late October and it appears that the Traffic Engineer has some concerns with this and really wanted to complete a traffic study. Solicitor made a request that a motion be made to rescind that main motion that approved that Ordinance. Then, if that passes, he would ask that this Ordinance be continued to the next meeting so a traffic study can be completed. This amended Ordinance should also be readvertised.

Chair asked that if the motion is rescinded and it passes, could it go before the full City Council meeting subject to the traffic study. Solicitor stated that the only concern would be if the traffic study is not finished by then. You could certainly do that with the understanding that we are going to have to have a traffic study for this to be completed before it is adopted.

Council President Marino stated that based on the advice of the Solicitor, she made a motion to rescind without prejudice the previous motion to approve Ordinance 9-24-02 as amended. Councilman Wall seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to continue this Ordinance as amended to next month's Ordinance Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees