

**MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
December 12, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER

A community input meeting regarding traffic calming and public safety on New Market Boulevard was called to order at 5:27 p.m., Monday, Dec. 12, 2016. The meeting was led by Mayor Pro Tem Lynne Mason accompanied by members of Council, Transportation Committee and Town staff. The meeting was held at the Boone United Methodist Church Community Center on New Market Boulevard.

Council Members present: Mayor Pro Tem Lynne Mason, Charlotte Mizelle, Jeannine Underdown Collins and Jennifer Teague.

Transportation Committee Members present: Chair Craig Scheffler, Mike O'Connor, Kathy Henson, Craig Hughes, David Graham, Dean Ledbetter and Jennifer Greene.

Town Staff present: Town Manager John Ward, Public Works Deputy Director Eric Gustaveson, Facilities Superintendent Todd Moody, Police Chief Dana Crawford and Planning & Inspections Interim Director Jane Shook.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Pro Tem Lynne Mason called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. She stated that this special meeting was called to receive community input to discuss traffic concerns along New Market Boulevard. She said that the resurfacing of New Market Boulevard is to be scheduled soon and this meeting will assist in addressing safety concerns regarding excessive speeding, pedestrians and bicycle travel along New Market Boulevard's entirety.

Public Works Deputy Director Eric Gustaveson shared with attendees a history of New Market Boulevard. (See history attached)

Transportation Committee Chair Craig Scheffler explained as summation to the history that the "complete street" concept is an idea that the North Carolina Public Transportation fully embraces making roadways safe for all modes of transportation. (vehicle, bicycle, bus, pedestrian, etc.)

Mr. Gustaveson shared the following data from traffic counts on New Market Boulevard:

North of New Market Center Intersection:

NB	Weekly 11,700	Avg. Daily 1682	Avg. Speed-30mph	24% over 35mph limit
SB	Weekly 12,570	Avg. Daily 1796	Avg. Speed-39mph	77% over 35mph limit

State Employees Credit Union

NB	Weekly 11,416	Avg. Daily 1631	Avg. Speed-32mph	50% over 35mph limit
SB	Weekly 11,897	Avg. Daily 1700	Avg. Speed-39mph	75% over 35mph limit

Above Rear Entrance to Hardin Park School

EB	Weekly 5,800	Avg. Daily 840	Avg. Speed-31mph	42% over 35mph limit
WB	Weekly 6,779	Avg. Daily 968	Avg. Speed-34mph	43% over 35mph limit

Market Hills Drive

NB	Weekly 182		Avg. Speed-23mph	81% over 35mph limit
SB	Weekly 190		Avg. Speed-26mph	92% over 35mph limit

Mr. Gustaveson shared that the capital improvement plan indicates that New Market Boulevard is up for resurfacing and now is a good time to evaluate the best option to make New Market Boulevard a safe place to traffic for all modes of transportation.

Current Options:

1. Complete Street
2. Climbing Lanes and Sharrows

Those who spoke:

Vern Collins – 471 New Market Boulevard:

Mr. Collins is staff at BUMC and he walks his children over to the school. Something needs to be done to prohibit motorists from travelling through the striped section of road at the traffic signal on the backside of the school.

Julia Tyson Snyder – 450 New Market Boulevard, Ste. 4:

Ms. Snyder has a dental practice at the above address and came with other colleagues of the area stating that she was IN FAVOR of leaving the turn lane in place because the Hardin Park traffic backs up which makes it difficult for clients to get to in and out of dental appointments in an efficient manner.

Julie Waldrup – 450 New Market Boulevard, Ste. 4:

Ms. Waldrup works at the dental practice and echoed what Ms. Snyder said. She stated that the turning lane is crucial for the efficiency of getting patients in and out of the dentist office.

Jordan Rowan – 300 New Market Boulevard:

Mr. Rowan works at the Modern Ford Dealership and wants to see a plan for the complete street and what that means to the businesses.

Mary Smalling – 361 Jefferson Rd.:

Ms. Smalling is the principal at Hardin Park School and her main concern is getting the students to school safely. She suggested a greenway/walking path that runs between the businesses and the school to get pedestrians off the road route.

Alan Brantley – 216 Market Heights Dr.:

Mr. Brantley asked Police Chief Dana Crawford, in regards to safety and speeds, if changing the configuration of the current roadway to the complete street concept will help or hinder enforcement.

Chief Crawford stated that installing a median in the center of the street replacing the turn lane will hinder enforcement on speeders but the presence of the median will have a slowing effect on traffic.

Charles Stanley – 279 Poplar Summit Dr.:

Mr. Stanley is a Sunday school teacher at the BUMC and remembers that this issue was voted down by Council two years prior and requested clarification of what has changed to reopen the idea of removing the turn lane. The church houses a pre-school and removing the turn lane will be detrimental to traveling efficiency. He suggested placement of a signaled crosswalk similar to the one on Hardin Street.

Council Member Charlotte Mizelle asked staff what the current right-of-way is on New Market – the answer was a 50-foot right-of-way.

Andrew Mason – 692 Market Hills Dr.:

Mr. Mason stated concerns for the safety of children walking to school due to the excessive speeding along New Market Boulevard. He feels that the 35mph speed limit is too high for the safety of children and runners. He said that more crosswalks, limits need to be reduced and additional enforcement is needed.

Ralph Leonard – 516 New Market Boulevard:

Mr. Leonard stated that safety is a primary concern and an appropriate speed limit needs to be studied as well as enforcement. Until actual plans are drawn up to so that residents and business owners can see options on paper, it is hard to determine how it will impact those affected. He is opposed to removing the center lane. He stated that he doesn't see many bikes traveling in the area.

Jennifer Greene - Transportation Committee Member and Health Department:

Ms. Greene stated the resurfacing of New Market Boulevard doesn't happen very often and as the time nears to resurface it is important to consider how it will work best and safest for everyone. (Businesses, Residents, School Children, Bicyclists, etc.)

Denise Stanley - Resident from above Stadium Dr.

Making New Market Boulevard a slower route to get to Town, motorists will stop using it. Enforcement is the key to making the area safer for all.

Ms. Mason stated that the reason for gathering community input was to acquire a consensus of a need to address this issue in a way that benefits all users.

Ms. Mizelle asked about the signaled crosswalk that has buttons to push as the one on Hardin Street. Town Manager John Ward explained that mid-walk crosses are discouraged due to a false sense of safety.

Ms. Mason explained to attendees that there was no survey sent out for this meeting. The survey mentioned was from the 2012 attempt to redo the street to accommodate multi-users. In the future, the Town will not only reach out to property owners, but also business owners.

Jennifer Teague suggested that a traffic study be done when school is not in session to compare data.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Marsha Story, Program Coordinator

Rennie Brantz, Mayor