

To: Scott Morelli, City Manager
From: Tex Haeuser, Planning Director 
Cc: Rosemarie De Angelis, Chair, Bike-Ped Committee
Ed Googins, Police Chief
James Wilson, Fire Chief
Doug Howard, Public Works Director
Date: February 8, 2018
Re: Cottage Road Safety Improvements

Recommendation of the Bicycle-Pedestrian/Cottage Road Safety Committee

At its December 14, 2017 meeting, the Bicycle-Pedestrian/Cottage Road Safety Committee made the following recommendation:

Doing everything suggested would have cost around \$2million, group has reduced plan to \$500,000 (50% local share using MDOT MPI funds) which includes the RRFBs, work at Pillsbury and painting parking zones. A motion was made to ask council for \$500,000: 8 voted yes, one opposed.

This recommendation will be explained in more detail below.

Charge from the City Council

The adoption of new mixed-use zoning for a portion of the Cottage Road corridor in Meetinghouse Hill was accompanied by concerns that already difficult and unsafe traffic and pedestrian conditions might be exacerbated by new commercial and residential development. Therefore, the City Council included in their order adopting the new zone the following:

ORDERED, that if Ordinance #7-17/18 is adopted on October 2, 2017 and becomes effective in 20 days under the terms of the City Charter, the City Manager, with the assistance of such staff as he deems appropriate, and the Bike/Pedestrian Committee shall meet and confer in order to establish a plan for monitoring traffic in the vicinity of those properties on Cottage Road that have been rezoned to the Meetinghouse Hill Community Commercial (MHCC) zoning district; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Bike/Pedestrian Committee shall bring forward to the City Council its recommendations, if any, to address any traffic concerns identified as part of such monitoring no later than ~~December 31, 2019~~ March 30, 2018 [sic].

Scope

The scope of the project is the Cottage Road corridor from Mitchell Street to the Cape line.

Committee Members

The process used to meet the City Council's charge included a committee made up of Bike-Ped Committee members and interested Meetinghouse Hill residents and business people.

Participants included:

Todd Bernard, Police Dept.
Jennifer Claster, Bike/Ped
Richard Colson
George Corey, resident
Stacey Cramp
Mike Davis
Rosemarie De Angelis, Chair Bike/Ped
Angie Eccles, resident
Ross Elliot, resident

Carl Eppich, Bike/Ped Committee
Matt Faulkner
Ed Googins, Police Chief
Charles Haeuser, Planning Director
Sue Henderson, Councilor, Bike/Ped Comm.
Doug Howard, Public Works
Ken Hutchins, resident
Laura Mauldin, resident

Alan Mills, Bike/Ped Comm.
Tim Pinette, resident
Steve Sawyer, Sebago Technics
John Sutton, police department
James Tasse, Bike/Ped Committee
Brenda Westin, resident
Erik Weisenburger, Resident
Jeff Woodbury, Bike/Ped.

This Cottage Road Safety Improvements Committee met six times between October 10, 2017 and December 14, 2017. In addition, the group held a public forum on November 15, 2017 that was attended by 51 people.

The chairwoman of the Bike-Ped Committee, Rosemarie De Angelis, chaired the Committee. Susan Henderson provided City Council leadership.

Staff members included Tex Haeuser, Planning Director, Doug Howard, Public Works Director, Ed Googins, Police Chief, and James Wilson, Fire Chief. Steve Sawyer P.E. served as the project's consulting engineer.

Process

The technical process used to evaluate the Cottage Road situation and make recommendations included:

- Problem identification
- Data gathering
- Generating alternative solutions
- Pilot testing of an alternative (bump-outs)
- Cost evaluation and review of funding options
- Selection of the preferred alternative

The public engagement process employed included:

- Creation of a committee made up of serving Bike-Committee members and area people solicited through a mailing and other means
- Maintenance of a project [webpage](#) on the City's website
- Maintenance of a comments and response [table](#) available through the webpage
- A web-based [survey](#) to learn the public's reaction to the pilot testing

- A public forum held at Small School

The Bump-Outs Pilot

The Committee was fortunate to include Dr. Jim Tasse in that Jim was able to organize, through the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, the installation of plastic tube bollards in several locations along the corridor to simulate curb extensions, otherwise known as bump-outs.

As advised by the consulting engineer, the two options the City has to slow traffic speeds in the corridor, if frequent enforcement is not feasible, is to install either vertical or horizontal constraints. Vertical constraints would be speed bumps or speed tables. Based on the roadway's relatively high traffic volumes and the many trucks carrying goods, the Committee did not feel that speed tables would be a good option. Hence the investigation of bump-outs through the pilot program.

A highly simplified summary of the comments received as part of the pilot would be to say that drivers did not like the bump-outs—some vehemently so—while pedestrians felt like it was finally safe to cross the street. Committee members felt that to a certain extent there was a negative reaction to change in general and that bump-outs could be accepted over time, especially given that during the pilot the bollards were placed further out from the curb than would be the case with a permanent curb extension.



Installation of Bollards to Simulate Bump-Out Curb Extensions

Speed Data

As part of the pilot demonstration project, some speed data was captured during the period when the simulated bump-outs were in place. Weather conditions prevented getting data prior to the pilot. Anecdotal evidence, including from drivers who provided comments opposed to the bump-outs, suggested that speeds had in fact been reduced.

Survey period – 12-4-2017 @ 1330 to 12-10-2017 @ 0330 (the life of the battery)

Average Speed - 25.44 MPH

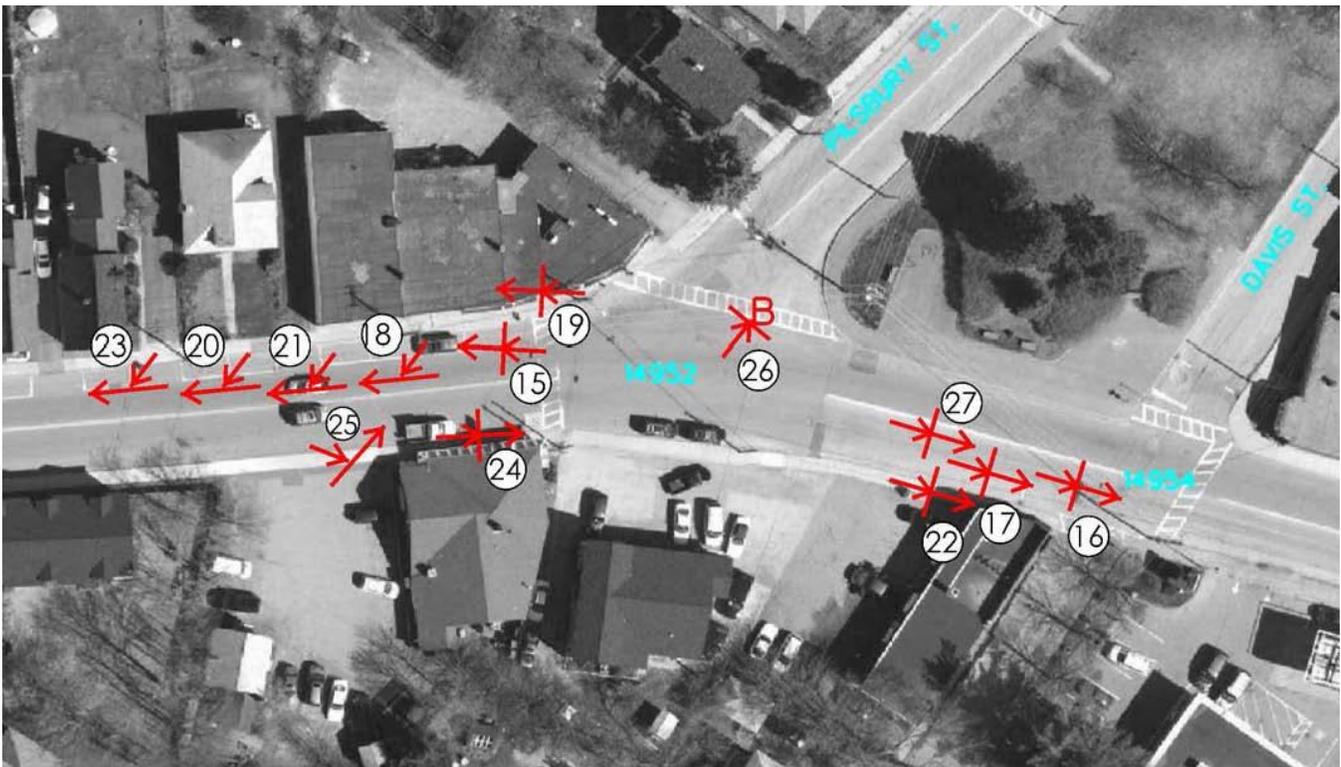
85th Percentile - 31 MPH

Ten Mile Pace - 22-31 MPH

Crash Data

The Committee reviewed crash [data](#) for the corridor compiled by Sebago Technics. Based on its critical rate factor, Cottage at Sawyer meets the classification of a high crash location, and the segment of Cottage from Fairlawn to Pillsbury is a high crash section.

The Committee also found the [crash](#) diagrams to be quite telling. The pattern in the enlargement below, for example, was a factor in the Committee's recommendation to focus first on Cottage/Pillsbury if not all of the recommendations for the corridor can be implemented at the same time.



Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis

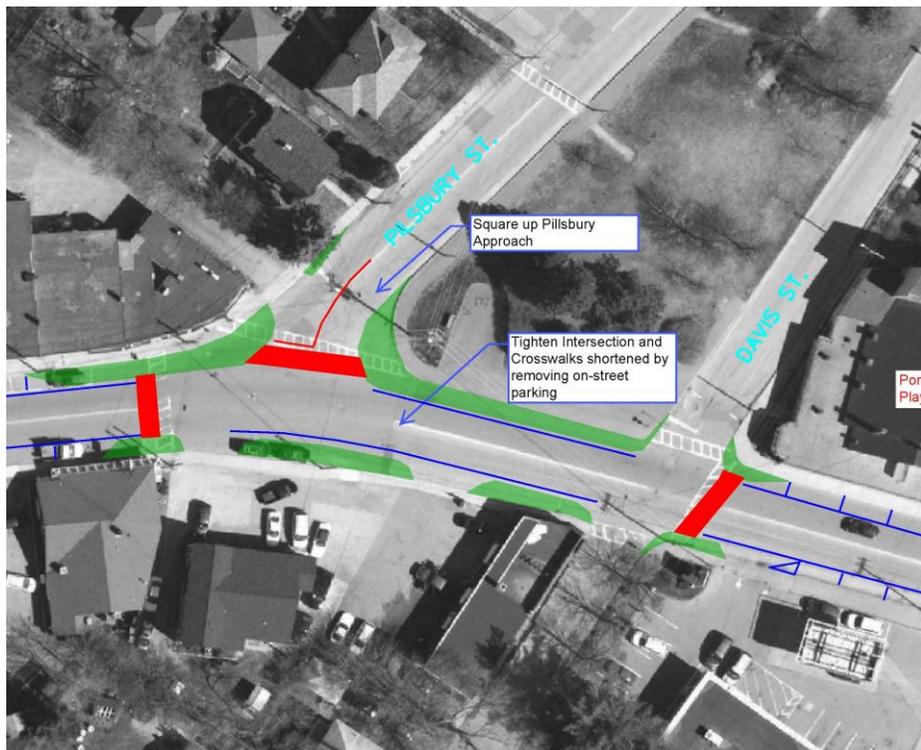
At the request of the Planning Department, Sebago Technics did a signal warrant analysis to see if the necessary traffic conditions were present for a traffic signal at Cottage and Pillsbury. The analysis [results](#) indicated that a signal is not warranted at this time.

Recommendations

The overall improvements selected by the Committee to recommend to the City Council are seen in the attached [graphic](#) entitled *Cottage Road Proposed Improvements 12_2017* and in the budget below:

Medians and Bump Outs (including standard drainage)	\$ 925,000
RRFB's and New Flashing Beacon on Mast Arm	\$ 35,000
Ornamental Lighting	\$ 311,000
Mill and Fill Roadway	\$ 327,000
Stormwater Management Facilities	\$ 100,000
Engineering (Design and Construction)	\$ 175,000
Total Project Cost	\$1,873,000

However, the Committee appreciated that this may be too expensive for the City to do all at once, so for this year the group is requesting that only the realignment of Pillsbury at Cottage be done, as seen in the image below:



Proposed Realignment of Pillsbury at Cottage

The budget for the realignment of Pillsbury at Cottage is as follows:

Bump Outs, Drainage, Bollards, Furniture	\$352,100
Enhanced Traffic Control – RRFB's and Mast Arm	\$ 47,000
Ornamental Lighting	\$109,600
Mill and Fill Roadway	\$ 59,700
Stormwater Mgmt.	\$ 50,000
Traffic Control	\$ 50,000
Signage and Striping	\$ 10,000
Mobilization	\$ 70,000
Contingency	\$ 70,000
Engineering	<u>\$ 75,000</u>
Total	\$893,400 say \$900,000

It is important to note that there are extra features included in this budget that could be removed if desired, such as the street furniture and the stormwater management (biofilter facilities). Additional lighting is needed for safety but possibly could be provided using existing utility poles if there was a decision to remove the ornamental lighting line item.

The Committee would like the City to apply for a State Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) grant to help pay for the construction of the project this year. The MPI program pays 50% of a project with the State contribution capped at \$500,000.

Regarding this possibility, Kyle Hall at MDOT indicated in an email that:

Pillsbury Cottage Road, maybe. I would drop the furniture, ornamental lighting, bollards, RRFB's from the request to improve the chance of success. The project should only request improvements to the core of the roadway, drainage, mill and fill etc. You could submit the whole project as is, but the Department would not participate in many of the items under the MPI process.

This means that if the City were to do the entire \$900,000 project, the breakdown in funding sources would be along the lines of:

\$350,000	State MPI grant
<u>\$550,000</u>	City fund balance in 2018
\$900,000	Total

Unfortunately, the City portion of the cost would have to come out of fund balance because this is not a TIF or CDBG eligible project. The City's fund balance this year is relatively small and is the object of fierce competition from other City capital projects.

Another option—which is not the Committee's recommendation—would be to make a request to PACTS to reprogram the grant they made to the City last fall for the Priority Corridors & Centers Ped-Bike Safety and Access Project. This would mean giving up bike lanes and esplanades on Waterman Drive (through a reduction in lanes) and several sidewalk

improvements in areas of Ocean Street and Preble Street. It also would mean having to wait until 2020 for construction to occur. On the plus side, it would provide 75% of the cost of the eligible project components. So, assuming, to be conservative, the same eligibility rules as for the MPI program, the source of funds would break down like this:

\$525,000	Reprogrammed PACTS grant
<u>\$375,000</u>	City fund balance in 2020
\$900,000	Total

In the meantime—this year—the City could make the following improvements:

\$36,000	Three Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)
<u>\$14,000</u>	Mast arm for the Cottage/Pillsbury beacon
\$50,000	Total

Appreciation

The Committee members for this project deserve a great deal of credit for coming to early morning meetings every two weeks, organizing the public forum, setting up the pilot demonstration, and in general working hard to bring forward the suggested safety improvements for Cottage Road.

Thank you!