

Agenda Summary
October 23, 2024

Agenda Item No. TBD

Mountain Road Shuttle Follow-up

Summary: At your 10/9/24 meeting the Selectboard discussed GMT's concerns regarding exiting out of School Street onto Main Street. The Selectboard directed staff to work with GMT and our traffic consultant to see if there were ways to improve the left turning movement onto Main Street. Staff did a ride along with GMT to better understand their concerns and consulted with our traffic consultants which developed the enclosed report which recommends: "Based on our preliminary assessment of intersection operations, informed by the data and observations obtained in the Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation Study, it is recommended that the Town explore the potential use of Park Street for the Mountain Road Shuttle. Modifications would be required to on-street parking on Park Street to enhance the turning radius for the bus by relocating parking from the right-side of the roadway to the left-side." As an alternative to moving the parking from the right side to the left side of Park Street, they provide as an alternative to "Seasonally restrict parking in the first two parking spaces closest to Main Street to allow the bus to swing to the right to make the turn." GMT indicates in the enclosed email, "...we are comfortable using Park St. this season provided the last 2 right hand parking spaces can be eliminated for the bus to shift further right before making the left onto Main St and painting yield markings on the NB lane of Main St. 8' prior to the crosswalk is still an option."

Town Plan Impact: Conforms with the following transportation policy in the Stowe Town Plan (2018): *'The Town will continue to financially support local public transportation though its operational budget and continually work towards improving service and increasing ridership.'* Adopted policies in the Town Plan are statements of the town's intent, or position, with regard to specific issues or topics.

Fiscal Impact: The cost of line stripping and/or temporary barricades to block out two parking spaces.

Recommendation: Move to install yield paint markers on the North bound lane of Main Street approaching the Park Street intersection, seasonally restrict the last two right hand parking spaces on Park Street this winter on a trial basis, and further evaluate moving the parking spaces to the other side of the street and other alternatives if these initial improvements do not prove to be sufficient.

Will Fricke

From: Chris Jolly
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2024 3:43 PM
To: Harry Shepard; Will Fricke
Cc: Charles Safford; Sarah McShane
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] GMT Seasonal Service

FYI



Chris Jolly, P.E.
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From: Michael Smith <msmith@ridegmt.com>
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2024 11:14 AM
To: Chris Jolly <cjolly@stowevt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] GMT Seasonal Service

Good afternoon Chris,

I just wanted to thank you and your team for taking the time last week to ride the downtown portion or the Stowe GMT shuttle route and have a discussion and brainstorm around ways to make that intersection safer for not only GMT but the public as well. Also while recognizing a long term solution is years away if at all due to logistics and reality of what we have to work with I also appreciate you all working so quickly to come up with even a temporary solution for this year that is a better and safer option than what we had in the past.

After discussion internally at GMT, we are comfortable using Park St. this season provided the last 2 right hand parking spots can be eliminated for the bus to shift further right before making the left onto Main St and painting yield markings on the NB lane of Main St. 8' prior to the crosswalk is still an option.

Thank you,

Please let me know if you have any questions.



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Main Street

Park Street



To:	Harry Shepard	From:	Adam Catherine
	Town of Stowe		Greg Goyette
Project/File:	179450603	Date:	October 18, 2024

Reference: Mountain Road Shuttle Operations in Stowe Village

The Town of Stowe recently met with representatives from Green Mountain Transit (GMT) to discuss potential modifications to the circulation of the Mountain Road Shuttle, a seasonal bus service that provides connection to the Stowe Mountain Resort. GMT has expressed concern about the difficulty of the left-turn from School Street to southbound Main Street (VT 100). The Mountain Road Shuttle currently operates on a loop that begins at Commodores Inn. The bus then enters the Village via Thomas Lane/Depot Street and returns to SB Main Street via School Street. However, congestion and activity within the Village, combined with several issues at the School Street intersection, make it difficult for the bus to turn left from School Street to SB Main Street. As such, the Town of Stowe has requested a preliminary investigation of potential route options for the Mountain Road Shuttle within the Village. This memo will be followed by a future analysis of potential enhancements to the Park Street and School Street intersections.

School Street Conditions

The 2024 ***Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation Study*** identified the School Street/Main Street intersection as one of the Town's intersections that should be improved in the short-term. This intersection is a substantial generator of congestion within the Village area due to the complicated vehicle and pedestrian movements that exist, including:

- Angled parking in front of Black Cap Coffee that leads to vehicles backing into the intersection, as well as parked vehicles that can block sight lines for vehicles on School Street (Figure 1).
- The offset driveway with the Recreation Path parking lot which can result in turning vehicles queuing back into the intersection.
- The skewed Sunset Street intersection which creates distance between the School Street stop bar and the SB Main Street approach lane.
- High pedestrian volumes across both crosswalks.
- Topography of Main Street and School Street that, when combined with cars parked on Main Street, can obstruct sight lines.

Field observations conducted during that study reveal that the congestion on Main Street can make it difficult for vehicles on School Street to turn, often leading to long queues on School Street. Furthermore, GMT reports issues with vehicles stopping within the turning radius of the bus. Therefore, it is necessary to consider enhancements to the School Street intersection or potential modifications to the bus routing.

Reference: Mountain Road Shuttle Operations in Stowe Village



Figure 1: A vehicle backs up at the intersection of School Street and Main Street as pedestrians cross behind

The *Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation Study* recommended modifications to the School Street/Main Street intersection that included removal of the Sunset Street channelized area and angled parking and conversion of that area to a parklet (Figure 2). While this would help to address issues created by the angled parking in front of Black Cap Coffee and improve sight lines, it would not fully address all the concerns of GMT with regards to bus operations. If, through further coordination with GMT, School Street is still the preferred routing alignment, other measures in addition to the parklet should be considered such as upgrading the intersection to an all-way stop, mini roundabout, or traffic signal. These additional measures will be further evaluated in an upcoming study.

Reference: Mountain Road Shuttle Operations in Stowe Village



Figure 2: Potential Modifications to the VT 100/School Street Intersection (Source: Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation Study)

Park Street

Another option for the routing of the Mountain Road Shuttle is to utilize Park Street instead of School Street. While the intersection of Park Street and Main Street still experiences delay due to congestion on Main Street within the Village and pedestrian crossings, many of the other issues experienced at the School Street intersection do not occur at the Park Street intersection. Most critical of which are the improved sightlines and fewer conflicts with parked vehicles and adjacent driveways. However, one potential complication to the utilization of Park Street for the bus is the position of the one-way through and parking lanes on Park Street. Currently the travel lane on Park Street is on the left side of the roadway which would require a tighter turning radius for the bus than would be preferred. Two options could address this issue:

- Seasonally restrict parking in the first two parking spaces closest to Main Street to allow the bus to swing to the right to make the turn. This would require seasonal grinding and restriping of the pavement to change the intersection approach striping. Another approach could be to place movable “no parking” signage within the parking space to discourage parking yet still provide the bus enough room to make the left-turn.

Reference: Mountain Road Shuttle Operations in Stowe Village

- Permanently relocate parking from the right side of the roadway to the left side.

A permanent relocation of parking from the right side to the left side of the roadway would be preferred from a traffic operations standpoint because it would not require seasonal striping changes, would not reduce the number of on-street parking spaces, and would better align the northbound lane of Park Street from the Pond Street intersection. An example of providing parking on the left-side of a one-way street can be found in Winooski on West Center Street travelling northbound (Figure 3).



Figure 3 - Example of on-street parking on the left-side of a one-way street (West Center Street) in Winooski, VT.

In addition to adjusting parking on Park Street, the Town could consider installing yield bar striping in advance of the crosswalk to discourage vehicles from encroaching on the intersection. The striping would also help to reinforce yielding to pedestrians in the crosswalk. An example of this type of striping can be found in Burlington at the intersection of Park Street and Monroe Street (Figure 4).

Reference: Mountain Road Shuttle Operations in Stowe Village



Figure 4: An example of yield bar striping at an unsignalized intersection and crosswalk in Burlington, VT

Recommendations

Based on our preliminary assessment of intersection operations, informed by the data and observations obtained in the ***Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation Study***, it is recommended that the Town explore the potential use of Park Street for the Mountain Road Shuttle. Modifications would be required to on-street parking on Park Street to enhance the turning radius for the bus by relocating parking from the right-side of the roadway to the left-side.

Regards,

STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Goyette', is written over a thin horizontal line.

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