

# University Hill Public Safety Association

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June 15, 2016

Syracuse University Department of  
Public Safety Office  
130 College Place

11:00 am

### MINUTES

Present: President Sardino, Messrs. Daugherty, Goodale, LeRoy, Petterelli, Sweeny, and Walsh

Guests: Mr. James McClellan, S.U. Public Safety  
Mr. Christopher Dunham, SUNY Upstate Medical University Emergency Management

Staff: David A. Mankiewicz

#### **I. WELCOME AND MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2016**

President Sardino called the meeting to order and he welcomed Mr. James McClellan from S.U. Public Safety. President Sardino noted that Mr. McClellan would be joining the University Hill Public Safety Association.

President Sardino asked for consideration of the minutes of April 20, 2016. Mr. Walsh moved and Mr. Sweeny seconded a motion to waive the reading of the minutes. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Daugherty moved and Mr. Petterelli seconded a motion to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **II. TABLE TOP EXERCISE 2016**

President Sardino introduced Mr. Chris Dunham from the Emergency Management Office at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Mr. Sardino noted that last year, Mr. Dunham organized a tabletop drill. The board found the tabletop useful and wants to hold another one this year. Mr. Dunham noted that one of the key issues to test on the tabletop is to review the integration and communication issues that were identified last year. Mr. LeRoy suggested that one of the scenarios should relate to crowd control issues around an event such as the after-party at the NCAA Championship game. Other issues such as from weather related issues, multiple events going on in the community, even a shots fired scenario, could be added to that exercise.

Mr. Dunham asked that if members had other elements that they want added to the scenario they should contact him at: [DunhamCh@upstate.edu](mailto:DunhamCh@upstate.edu)

### **III. COMMITTEE TO REVIEW CAMERA SECURITY MAP**

President Sardino noted that all the institutions had contributed to the camera security map and the information had been integrated together by Chris Goodale at SUNY Upstate Medical University. The origin of this project was a request from the University Hill Board for the University Hill Public Safety Association to report back to the board if there were gaps in the camera monitoring of University Hill, and whether or not there should be action taken to solve those gaps. He asked that members volunteer to be on a committee to assist in looking over the map and drafting that recommendation. He stated that S.U. Public Safety will identify some of its tech-savvy young people to be members of the committee. Mr. Goodale will serve as a member of the committee and Mr. Mankiewicz will help organize the committee. It was suggested that the Veterans Administration be involved. Federal government regulations may limit what the VAMC can and cannot contribute towards identification and use of the cameras. It might be desirable to get a memorandum of understanding in place with them for this function. Mr. Mankiewicz will reach out to Ben Robinson and ask if he can participate on the committee. Besides Mr. Goodale, Tom LeRoy will participate and Mr. Mankiewicz was assigned to ask Crouse and the V.A. to participate.

### **IV. HIGHWAY PROJECTS**

#### **A. I-690, Reconstruction of Teall Ave. to Beech St.**

Mr. Mankiewicz reported that there will be a public meeting on the I-690 project Wednesday, June 28, at 6:00 p.m. at Henniger High School. This is going to be about the reconstruction of the Teall Avenue intersection of I-690 and I-690 down to Beech Street. This is a \$74 million highway construction project that will be taking place during 2017. Mr. Mankiewicz noted that the NYS Department of Transportation is hoping to use Teall Avenue as a route to get more vehicles on and off University Hill. Drivers destined for University Hill on I-690 will be encouraged to exit or enter at Teall Avenue which will relieve pressure on the Harrison/Adams interchange.

#### **B. NYSDOT I-81 Presentation**

Mr. Mankiewicz showed images from a presentation done by the New York State Department of Transportation earlier in the month. The presentation outlined common features of any option selected to replace the I-81 viaduct.

First, NYSDOT is proposing the construction of a new University Hill/Southside interchange that would allow I-81 traffic to enter University Hill from Renwick Avenue and Van Buren Street. This would allow northbound I-81 traffic to get to University Hill without going all the way to Harrison and Adams. There would also be a westbound ramp that would tie into Martin Luther King Avenue on the Southside.

NYSDOT is also proposing a traffic calming scheme for Almond Street. NYSDOT's current presentation shows Almond Street as being two lanes in each direction whether there is a viaduct above, or whether the traffic is brought down to grade. There may be an additional turning lane for each of the intersecting east-west streets. NYSDOT wants to redesign Almond Street to be a complete street, so in addition to the traffic lanes, there are bike lanes in both directions and pedestrian sidewalks or promenades on both sides, and finally what they designated as the "café zone" which is a public space that they would anticipate being there in front of new buildings that may be built along Almond Street. In the case of bringing the boulevard down to grade, those would be on both sides of the street. If the viaduct stays in

place, they would be only on the east side of the street. The idea is to make Almond Street much more bike and pedestrian friendly and to allow easier crossings particularly by Upstate University residents, student and employees who work in Upstate's Campus West (the former Presidential Plaza) and the main campus of the hospital. SUNY Upstate has taken over at least two buildings in the former Presidential Plaza space and is planning to renovate a third as a mixed-use building.

NYSDOT's common features also includes widening I-81 to four lanes in each direction north of Interstate 690. Currently there are three. NYSDOT wants to eliminate the short acceleration lanes to 81 North from the Pearl Street entrance ramp and from Interstate 690. In the current condition, those lanes merge very quickly and then merge again into I-81 and this is one of the accident concern areas. NYSDOT believes that traffic volumes are indicating that they will need four lanes into downtown from the north and four lanes out. This will be controversial because it's likely to result in additional takings of land and buildings that are immediately adjacent to the current highway.

The fourth feature NYSDOT recommends is the construction of the so-called "missing links" which are the roads that would be part of the intersection that would allow traffic to go from I-690 eastbound to I-81 North, and from I-81 South to 690 West without getting on a city street. This will be an issue as there are several buildings that are in the path where those highway ramps would have to be constructed.

Captain Sweeny noted that there is a need for the public to change their mentality about using Interstate 81 and the highway system as the only way to get into University Hill. It will be important to get the public comfortable with using some of the alternative routes such as Teall Avenue, Erie Boulevard and University Avenue to access University Hill from Interstate 690. He suggested that the UHPSA look into how signage might be constructed to help the public to understand the multiple routes that can be used to get to the highway system particularly during construction. People are using the same routes and with the amount of construction, there will have to start practicing alternate ways of getting to University Hill. In addition, people should start making greater use of Interstate 481.

Mr. Daugherty noted that there will be a need to get an email blast to University Hill employees particularly during the period of construction to start redirecting them away from Harrison and Adams and to educate them on what the alternate routes are. Mr. LeRoy responded that University Hill employees are going to have to start making greater use of staggered work shift times with the start of construction over a year and a half away. He noted some well-placed signs to indicate the routes to the highway system right from the exits of the garages will help people out. President Sardino noted that this may be an opportunity for the UHPSA to get its name out there and to publicize the change and getting information to the public on alternative routes.

## **V. SECURITY CONCERNS / INCIDENTS**

Mr. LeRoy noted that there have been issues with larcenies from fleet vehicles, particularly those that are parked in the Dome west lots. He noted that a lot of the camera views are not very good at night and you can only see shadows particularly when the views are taken from any height. Mr. Daugherty noted that at the Geneva Tower Parking Lot (which is downtown) they have also had problems with people breaking into cars and unfortunately the video quality is not that good.

Members also reported on a recent surge in phishing emails that are targeted to employees and demanding financial information. Two of the institutions reported this is a growing problem.

Mr. Sweeny reported that an attorney for Jim DeFerio, who is one of the street preachers, has obtained an injunction to allow Mr. DeFerio to stand anywhere where he is protesting. In the past, the City Police have obligated him to stand across the street, however the courts have ruled that Mr. DeFerio's free speech rights outweigh the importance of keeping the public safe. The police were having him stand across the sidewalk from any meeting that he wanted to address and they would close the sidewalk to everyone, not just to him. However the courts have ruled that he can stand on the same side of the street and the police department cannot tell him that he cannot be there. The courts did not say anything about the use of amplification to address crowds.

Mr. Sardino noted that there was an increase in larcenies in vehicles and also a theft of bicycles. He noted that Syracuse University is looking into the creation of a ZIP bike program, just like they have the car program.

#### **VI. CONSTRUCTION REPORT**

Mr. LeRoy reported that at the end of the summer, SUNY-ESF is likely to start construction on its new research building. It is also considering an expansion to its student housing. Mr. Sardino noted that the promenade is now being built on the Syracuse University campus which has led to the closure of University Place and that they are now doing testing in and around the Archbold Gym. Mr. Sardino noted that it will not affect the traffic this year, but as they begin to build the improvements to the Carrier Dome there could be more significant issues once they bring in the steel to support the roof. The new Center for Veterans Services is going to be built on Waverly and South Crouse. That construction will likely happen in the spring of 2017, and that there is repair work being done to a steam line on Comstock Avenue.

#### **VII. OTHER BUSINESS AND ADJOURN**

Mr. LeRoy moved, and Mr. Walsh seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m.