

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
February 22, 2011**

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee was held on Tuesday, February 22, 2011 in the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road (BCTV). Present were: David C. Bailey (Chief of Police), Scott Wiggin (Fire Chief), James Stanford (Director of Public Works), Paul Roy (Councilor), Bill Dermody (Alternate Town Councilor), Jerry Gagne (Resident), Madonna Lovett Repeta (Resident), Paul Hanna (Alternate Resident), Anthony Grande (Alternate Resident) and Anne Wiggin (School Traffic Coordinator).

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 am. Chief Bailey stated we do have a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION made by Madonna Lovett Repeta to accept the minutes of the November 23, 2010 meeting. Second Chief Wiggin. Motion passed. Paul Roy abstained and deferred his vote to Councilor Dermody.**

**Unfinished Business None**

None

**Correspondence/Communications**

None

**New Business**

**Item #1. Discussion of the safety improvements for NH Rte 101 from Wallace Rd to the Amherst town line (10 Year Transportation Improvement Plan Project # 13692).**

Please note that Rick Sawyer has a power point presentation of Rte 101 and refers to the various areas throughout this meeting.

Rick Sawyer, Planning Director for the Town of Bedford states that the State has asked the town to come up with a list of priorities for Safety Improvements for NH Rte 101 from Wallace Rd to the Amherst town line. Also, potentially the state might look at Meetinghouse Rd. which is outside of the study area that has been included in the ten year plan. The representative from Southern NH Planning, myself Jeff Foote the Town Engineer and Jim Stanford Public Works Director met to get this priority list together and to also try to include Meetinghouse Rd. There is not a lot of money ten million dollars total from Bedford all the way to Wilton which is a lot of miles. There are a lot of intersections and probably worse ones than others in certain communities that we will be fighting for or against. There was a specific study done in 2002 for Bedford and the other communities. This is the study the state is using in their overall plan.

Most of the items that come up on the list are also in the Bedford study as recommendations which a list has been provided to the board members and is also on file. A few of them were not in the Bedford list like Granite Place which we are recommending a left turn lane because the business area and traffic continue to grow and it is becoming more of a safety issue. Rick Sawyer states we can go through the list one by one.

Chief Bailey replied yes and also you need to understand that the ten year plan is state by statute and the ten years is from today because it keeps getting moved out. According to this there is three million dollars in 2013 and seven in 2020 which can always change for the better or the worse. Also for every intersection that we are talking about this is not a lot of money.

Rick Sawyer states that this list is not in priority. Twin Brook Lane and 101 I understand that you have been dealing with this and have been getting complaints. Left turns in is the biggest issue also is a good intersection for right turn parking. This is our highest ranked issue.

Chief Bailey states that Twin Brook Lane intersection did have one fatality a number of years ago.

Rick Sawyer states mostly speed is the issue whereas the site distance seems to be OK. Again we are only travelling west to east. This is also the Animal Hospital intersection again we are recommending a left turn in this is number ten on the list a little low on the priority list. Continuing to the east we get to the intersection of Joppa Hill Rd the study actually calls for a signalized intersection here we have this as our number three priority, site distance with safety improvements but be able to do this with seven million dollar project I do not believe something like a traffic signal would be able to condone the amount of money the state has which I think it could be done very inexpensively.

Chief Bailey states this intersection of Joppa Hill has been set up for signalization and I believe everything is in place except for the lights.

Jim Stanford states one thing about this intersection when the corridor study was done we believe it had quite a bit more traffic with Hardy Rd being signalized now we are seeing a lot of the traffic heading down North Amherst to Hardy and getting on there making the Joppa Hill intersection traffic dropped.

Rick Sawyer states Freedom Way and Gage Girls Rd is number four on the list and that this is a tuff intersection because it is an off set intersection the safety improvements probably will not do anything to realign these two roads to line up with each other but they could put in left turn pockets again the site distance coming out of Gage Girls Rd is a real problem looking to the West.

Chief Bailey replied especially this time of year with the snow banks.

Rick Sawyer states the Dunkin Donuts/Mobil station intersection already has a left turn pocket and a right lane into the intersection and this is the kind of improvements that we are trying to get for some of the other intersections. Beaver Lane just a recommendation for a left turn

pocket. Elk Dr on the north and a site driveway through a private business (Pizza Mia Site) which is number six on the list any of the town roads we are trying to get left turn pockets where there is a site driveway and a right turn to help with the flow of traffic. Grey Rock Road and Hunter Road recommend left turn in both directions site distance is not a problem. Now we are coming to the Weathervane traveling east and my personal recommendation would be to close one of their site driveways (westerly drive) for site distance reasons and in the study they are suggesting left turn pocket and in reality one of these should close and we should negotiate something with the owner. Granite State Cabinetry there is no center turn lane there is a good site distance but again sitting in that roadway trying to turn left you just cannot feel safe in the middle of the road given the speed on that roadway.

Madonna Lovett Repeta states and now there is a health club being built there.

Rick Sawyer replied and pointed to the map where the health club is located and again a right turn pocket would help to get you out of the traffic flow. Hardy Rd and Jenkins we are going to ignore it since it has been signalized now.

Madonna Lovett Repeta states is there any talk of putting a cross walk I have seen people walking to and from the grocery store and trying to get across the road.

Rick Sawyer states he is not aware of a cross walk to be put in.

Chief Bailey states where are they going?

Madonna Lovett Repeta states she sees people going up and down Hardy Rd with groceries.

Rick Sawyer states generally the state's practice is that and correct me if I am wrong if there is no sidewalk they typically will not put a cross walk because they want to lead them to a safe location. It has been noted that the town does lack crosswalks and sidewalks. Bedford Fields and Lawrence Martial Arts there is a center turn lane so it is not as bad as some of the other locations it is just to make sure of the left turns and some of the paintings on the roadway need to be updated as they have faded. Covenant Way side distance is a problem looking to the west and we are recommending a left turn lane. Kahliko Lane in one study was to align with Godecke site driveway and getting rid of the cross over situation and left turn lane would be good. Also we recommend a center turn lane for both directions to share. Hill Brook Motel not one that showed up in the study but it would be a good idea to provide a left turn lane or a center turn lane low priority. Hitching Post Lane there is already a left turn arrow painted on the road just need to make sure it remains there. Then the Wallace Road intersection there is no recommendation at the moment. So we can debate which ones should be higher than others based on the safety committee's history and comments from the residents etc.

Paul Hannan states not lining up Kahliko Lane does that mean a new set of lights where you have twostreets facing each other for right and left turns?

Rick Sawyer states not necessarily maybe long term when the road becomes a four way intersection because the volume of traffic would not warrant it at this point it is not recommended.

Chief Wiggin states we have talked over the years of Rte 101 and Wallace and now no proposals being done there but are there going to be any protected turn lanes on Wallace.

Rick Sawyer states additional lanes on Wallace?

Chief Wiggin states yes.

Rick Sawyer we can add that to the list.

Chief Bailey states he has had written correspondence with Mr. Lambert from the state and we have discussed making the left lane left and the right turn straight through. Right now I am not too crazy about it and in the morning with the back up it would push too many cars going east and jam the cars up on 101. Going north on Wallace they are not protected left turns.

Bill Dermody states why does the state not want to do this, because configuration is just up the road at Hardy/Jenkins.

Chief Bailey states one of the main reasons is that right now in the morning during rush hour east bound is backed up and there is no room to put them out there and it would jam up the intersection.

Bill Dermody states wouldn't it just freeze up the left hand turn lane if you make the change and the left hand turn lane would be just a left turn lane and where people who want to get across or make a right turn would have an opportunity to get out.

Chief Bailey states I agree however the state does not so we can try to pin them down more.

Bill Dermody I just cannot fathom their logic when they are defending their configuration just up the road.

Chief Bailey states maybe we can have the state look at it again.

Chief Wiggin states the configuration was there obviously before the high school was built and I think Tony had some input on what could relieve some of the problem in the proposal dedicating signalize turning adding another cycle through the Wallace Rd crossing traffic which would have an impact on Rte 101. It was visited before the Nashua Rd light and this has been on the table several times with different concepts and proposals and nothing has materialized.

Jim Stanford agrees with Chief Bailey it is related to the Rte 101 traffic.

Bill Dermody states I just don't understand why the change would not be beneficial. Because if it is the left hand lane that you are concerned about and I do agree that the left hand lane also

being a straight through lane those people pull out even though they cannot get out further east on 101 now it is all plugged up you cannot get across 101 and you can't get through Wallace to head down to Merrimack on Wallace Rd and you cannot get on 101.

Chief Wiggin states I do see some relief now that Wallace Rd is closed.

Chief Bailey states by making the right lane the right hand turn lane and the straight through lane no one would be at a left.

Rick Sawyer states is there a consensus on where you would want this to be on the priority list?

Chief Bailey states this is really not a money issue maybe a little one.

Chief Wiggin states maybe another signal asking for a dedicated left turn is that what we are talking about.

Paul Roy states just remarking it.

Chief Wiggin states giving it a designated turn left turn going north and south on Wallace.

Chief Bailey states he would like to see a protected left hand turn but just changing the lanes without it protected would speed it up a little bit.

Madonna Lovett Repeta is it wide enough now.

Chief Bailey we would be just accommodating it and there are two lanes there now on each side. This is an economical fix.

Jerry Gagne states the Meetinghouse Rd I agree should be the number one on the list do we have an estimated cost for the signalization and widening through that intersection.

Rick Sawyer states I believe there have been a couple of different proposals. One is an interim fix and then ultimate fix in the three million dollar range.

Jim Stanford states the state came in a number of years ago they gave a few proposals. One was eight hundred thousand and the other one was one and a half million and I believe the ultimate fix was three million. Again this pre dates the high school.

Jerry Gagne the three million to get rid of the hour glass between Constitution Blvd and ?

Jim Stanford states I do not recall that being part of it but I do remember adding a lane in so it could be possible but again those numbers are out dated at this point.

Paul Roy originally when we were looking at signalizing Nashua Rd the state was pushing us it was three and a half million. Are there not improvements from Rte 114 all the way through?

Rick Sawyer states a number of years ago they broke up the 101 program into the separated pieces and the safety pieces but it has been the ten year plan since this corridor study has been done and luckily it has not been cut. I know 101 the part we concern ourselves with the most that was actually cut from the ten year plan four years ago and Bill Dermody fought real hard at the state level and got it back in two years ago but it really only covers from Wallace Rd to Rte 114. It does not address the four lanes going to Amherst and that is not in the ten year plan.

Bill Dermody states I would like to see this section from Wallace to Rte 114 moved up on the list because I don't think the 101 corridor study projected a thirty to fifty percent increase in traffic within the amount of time since the corridor study was made. If someone can tell us that traffic is not going to increase one more vehicle from now and twenty years from now maybe we can not try to insist that this project be done sooner than what it is. But the traffic any time of the day just sits. The Meetinghouse Rd intersection should be a consideration because one of the biggest issues is that you cannot get across Rte 101 during commuter hours. The problem is getting worse and we need to campaign to improve the Meetinghouse intersection. Since the state improved that intersection in the mid eighties we have not seen them since. Thirty years later we are still waiting for them to fix this intersection.

Chief Bailey states I don't know why we don't have more accidents at this intersection it is just a mess. Both sides are stacked up and I think we all believe this is our number one priority. Chief Bailey read a letter from Cathe Denz-Polonsky 21 Wentworth Dr stated her concerns for a light at 101 and Gage Girls Rd. Chief Bailey states that this does need some kind of work.

Jerry Gagne states the dominance of Meetinghouse Rd and the amount of funding that is available but the concerns for example Gage Girls Rd that has the left hand turn site distance problem and also with Stowell Rd site distance problem because of visibility they are probably the priorities whereas the others seem to have a by pass lane a widened shoulder and I fully agree you do not want to be in the position of trying to make left hand turn without being in a turning lane outside the lane of traffic.

Rick Sawyer states to move those two up they would have to be in front of Twin Brook.

Jerry Gagne states at least with Twin Brook there is a by pass lane there for the traffic to maneuver around.

Chief Bailey states Twin Brook is a problem but you also have to look at the impact the number of cars in and out of these places. Twin Brook is a cul-de-sac with thirteen to fifteen houses.

Madonna Lovett Repeta states the number of cars would certainly be Joppa Hill and Stowell Rd versus Twin Brook even Gage Girls and Freedom.

Chief Bailey states it is quite an improvement and the site distance has certainly improved and people are taking Hardy Rd to the light.

Rick Sawyer states he would like some direction on the recommendation from Chief Wiggin on Wallace Rd where it might fall into the list of priorities by putting Wallace Rd improvements.

Chief Bailey states I think we can do this independently. It is a matter of convincing the state for the dedicated lights and the protected left hand turn but changing the lanes is not a money issue.

Chief Wiggin states if this is not a money issue why we have not done this yet.

Chief Bailey states because the state will not allow us to. If we have a protected left we would have to add a lane. None of the 101 intersections lined up on either side because in the old days they did not want you to go straight across. May in the spring we can do a traffic count on how many are going straight than right because I think more people are going straight then right but I don't know for a fact.

Jerry Gagne states do we know if there is an advanced left green at Wallace.

Chief Bailey states there is none and also the state is very cautious on giving up any 101 light time.

Rick Sawyer states this is why Meetinghouse is so expensive and that is really why we need to build the additional lanes on 101 just to give up the additional time for the cross traffic.

Chief Bailey states something else we should look into is that everyone going east bound people are using Bedford Village Way as a cut through and traffic is starting to back up there and we have talked about closing that off and the business owner there did not seem to have a problem but I was reluctant to go forward and closing one more road at this time with (Wallace Rd being closed) but once the bridge reopened we can look into this again. There is no stacking lane there however they are stacking up and they are going over the line it's a wonder we have had no rear end collisions. It is no much of a big deal to go down to the lights and take a protected left hand turn sometimes I feel it is not any faster.

Bill Dermody states another area I see that needs attention is east bound traffic on 101 making a left hand into Bell Hill making it around that grassy area.

Chief Bailey states not sure if we caught anyone yet but we can stop them.

Chief Bailey states what does the board want to do regarding this list?

Rick Sawyer states leave it as is.

Paul Roy states it looks good.

Chief Bailey states should we go with what Jerry Gagne stated regarding the two roads.

Rick Sawyer states first Twin Brook, Joppa Hill/Stowell, Gage Girls/Freedom pretty much what we have been talking about as a group and we can add something for Wallace Rd probably somewhere in the middle maybe before or after Covenant Way just to keep it on the list for the state to know about.

Madonna Lovett Repeta states with the new Health Club being open twenty four hours a day will that influence the placement of number twelve, Granite State Cabinet?

Chief Bailey states I don't think that will be much of an impact.

Rick Sawyer states the traffic numbers that was presented to the Planning Board was not that significant.

Madonna Lovett Repeta states that was before the new facility was built.

Chief Bailey/Rick Sawyer states it was before that.

Rick Sawyer states we do have some visibility there making it not as bad as some others. I would love to see a left turn there no question about it.

Jerry Gagne there is also the developmental property across the street and if you need to put the turning pocket in there maybe some improvements that can be done.

Rick Sawyer states there are two separate letters that are on file one from NH DOT and one from Southern NH Planning and he read a memorandum letter.

Bill Dermody states we need to say something that Meetinghouse Rd doesn't have the priority that it does but we need to be concerned of the other unidentified acquiresments.

Chief Bailey states I just don't think they have the money to do it.

Rick Sawyer state that this list will be presented to the Planning Board.

Jerry Gagne states the east bound traffic on 101 when the airport inter connect will Meetinghouse Rd was it considered to be a short cut to get to the airport not going down to 114.

Rick Sawyer states it was a major concern of his but after some study with the airport designers they were convinced that it would have no impact on Meetinghouse or 101. We will also move forward to add South River Rd to the request to the state.

Chief Bailey states do we have any other business to discuss?

Chief Bailey I will call for a motion to adjourn all in favor.

**Comments/Concerns**

None

**Meeting adjourned at 8:15 am**

Submitted by Charlene Robinson

