

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES
May 24, 2016**

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee (HSC) was held on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 in the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road (BCTV). Present were: John J. Bryfonski (Chief of Police/Chair), Scott Wiggin (Fire Chief/Vice-Chair), Jim Aguiar (Councilor), Jerry Gagne (Alternate Resident), Bill Jean (Resident), Madonna Lovett Repeta (Resident), Ken Peterson (Alternate Resident), Jeff Foote (Town Engineer/Assistant Director of Public Works), and Anne Wiggin (School Bus Coordinator).

I. Call to Order 7:15

II. Quorum Count

III. Approval of Minutes from March 22, 2016

MOTION by Bill Jean to accept the minutes of the March 22 2016 meeting, second Jim Aguiar. Vote taken – Motion Passed –

IV. Correspondence/Communications

1. Email and Letter from Ms. Betsy Danes, Pilgrim Drive and Ms. Emma Danes (age14), Pilgrim Drive reference speeding traffic on Pilgrim (see Section VI, Item 1).

V. Sub Committee Reports

1. Status of engineering studies of intersection(s) at Nashua/County and Liberty Hill/County.
2. Status of temporary 4-way stop(s) at Nashua/County and Liberty Hill/County

Chief Bryfonski: This committee has been studying these intersections regarding the traffic and the parking conditions at the High School and Middle School over the past year. A sub-committee was formed and there was a recommendation by the committee which was adopted by the Town Manager (TM) to have an engineering study conducted at both intersections to identify potential solutions to improve traffic and safety at both intersections. Preliminary data was obtained by the engineering firm, VHB, which identified possible solutions, which included 4-Way Stop (s); Signalization and Round-About(s). Additionally, VHB suggested the Town test potential solutions; the most easily modeling being 4-Way Stops, which were installed a week ago and will remain through this Friday pending a meeting to review whether the temporary 4-Way stops will continue.

Town Engineer Jeff Foote: We will continue to review and VHB will give us an update in a few weeks.

Chief Bryfonski: Both Town Engineer and DPW have been very helpful in reviewing this as there has been a lot of data. The engineering study is not complete and a preliminary assessment of the intersection at the high school indicated the temporary stop has been working better than expected. As expected at McKelvie, there has been a backup at Liberty Hill/County due to traffic congestion caused by a large number of vehicle(s) attempting to enter/exit the McKelvie School campus to drop off/pick up students (twice the national average according to VHB). The crash data for Liberty Hill/County over the past five years is high/above average and we anticipate that a 4-way stop will improve safety and reduce the number of crashes at that intersection.

Ken Peterson: I agree the 4-way stop(s) at the high school is working very well. The McKelvie intersection I've experienced at least a ¼ of a mile backup. It appears that when people are dropping their kids off at McKelvie there is some frustration trying to get back out onto Liberty Hill.

Chief Bryfonski: On a few occasions, particularly in the morning I was stopped in traffic almost to Appledor (south of Liberty Hill) from the school. It took about 65-80 seconds to transit through the intersection, which is what the simulation data predicted. The congestion is the result of the traffic pattern on McKelvie, which the school is aware of. We are working with school officials and have offered some suggestions/solutions to move the traffic on and off of the campus more efficiently.

Jerry Gagne: Will the study effect the construction of the sidewalk on Nashua Road?

Jeff Foote: No. We are waiting for school to get out, then construction will begin between June and August.

VI New Business

1. Pilgrim Drive – speeding traffic and related safety concerns.

Betsy Danes: Resident of 38 Pilgrim Drive for 2 ½ years moved here from New York a quiet town with sidewalks where children could ride their bikes and walk around with no worry. After moving to the Pilgrim Dr area I feel the kids are not able to ride their bikes or walk on the streets without us being with them. I have a daughter who is a freshman in high school and I am concerned for her safety. I have been in touch with Anne Wiggin, School Bus Coordinator, to see about moving the bus stop so that my daughter would not have to walk around the dangerous curve. We have witnessed cars drive past the bus's flashing lights. In the past 2 ½ years my mail box has been knocked down 5 times plus I know other neighbors have had their mail boxes knocked down by speeders and distracted drivers. I do realize this is one small street but our kids should be safe.

Emma Danes: Our street has been used as a cut through and will increase when the widening of 101 begins. Over the past few years new families with young children have moved into the neighborhood making this a child focus area with more children riding their bikes and walking to the bus stop, speeders do not slow down. A presentation done by Ms. Danes is on file for

review. Referring to the map of their street, the red circles as pointed out are the turns that are dangerous which they try to avoid. The blue boxes are the areas where vehicles tend to speed up. While the speed radar sign was in place it was somewhat helpful but others just ignored it. Last year speed was measured and most of them were over the speed limit. Reference was made regarding various streets in town that the speed limit has been reduced and there are stop signs at every couple of intersections. Some streets have “No Thru Trucks” signs, some streets have “Children at Play” stand up signs, “Slow/Curve” signs and even “Bus Stop Ahead”. Various recommendations from Ms. Danes such as speed bumps, rumble strips or to lower the speed limit to 20mph or 3-way stop signs at both intersections of Puritan/Pilgrim Drive.

Ed Lagraize 49 Pilgrim Drive: Pointing out to the map I live right on the curve and have been there for 17 years. It has always been a fear that someone is going to get run over by the curve. Most of the cars passing through do not live in the area they are using this as a cut through.

Diane Lagraize 49 Pilgrim Drive: We have lived in 11 states and this is the highest speed limit through a sub-division, cars are going over 40 mph this is an unreasonable speed limit for an area like this.

Maria Tomolonis 53 Pilgrim Drive: I waved down to a driver one day to slow down she stopped and said that she was only going 35 MPH; the speed limit on our road is 30 mph. It appears that people don't even look as to what the speed limit is. I would like to have the speed limit lowered.

Derek Jurus 25 Pilgrim Drive: I agree with the Danes that something needs to be done in this neighborhood.

Chief Bryfonski: Speed monitoring was done last year by Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC—see attached). Chief Bryfonski indicated the Police Department conducted directed patrols May 4, 5, 6, 9, and 13 mostly in the morning; the maximum speed was 31 to 33 mph and noted that speed monitoring equipment acquires more accurate speed data as driver(s) tend to slow down when they observe a cruiser.

Ken Peterson: Commented that Ms. Danes' great presentation and hopes to find answers for her which would help the rest of the world. This is becoming a problem for every street in Bedford.

Jeff Foote: Regarding the 101 project was there an introduction of a median across Pilgrim to cut down on the amount of cut through traffic.

Chief Wiggin: It was a left turn in.

Jeff Foote: This was an action item as a group to eliminate the left turn in which would have the amount of cut through only from Meetinghouse to 101.

Chief Wiggin: The residents had concerns of being able to get to their properties also fire/emergency response vehicles coming from the Safety complex to be able to get into the neighbor.

Jeff Foote: As noted the rumble strips cause a problem, not sure if we can reduce to 20 mph.

Ken Peterson: Per RSA cannot reduce the speed below 25 mph.

Jeff Foote: Some rumble strips are a good idea however they are loud and are a disruption. Out of all of these items which one would be the one you would pick?

Betsy Danes: The consensus among our group is the stop signs; it would force the people coming in on the straight a ways to stop.

Chief Bryfonski: Pilgrim Dr and this area is a cut through street with the vast majority of the speeders transiting through from Meetinghouse to 101 and back and forth. When this area was first planned out, there might have been some concern for cut through and speed, which might have been why the curves were put in. I do agree that a reduction of the speed limit and cautionary signage will have a minimal effect.

Ken Peterson: I think the stops signs are a good option, however, it needs to be recommended to the town council.

Jerry Gagne: Reference to Jeff Foote's concern of 101, I do have a copy of the 101 plans from Colonial Dr it is an exit right only, coming onto Colonial Drive. There is a turning bay in the median, you cannot go west bound from Colonial Dr to route 101. The problem with stop signs once people stop, then they pick up speed to make up for lost time. As to speed bumps, the town of Hancock uses speed tables that are removable for the winter. Being that they remove them during the winter it loses their effect and a problem to maintain the road.

Jeff Foote: 3-4 way stop signs become a yield sign if no one else is approaching such as a rolling stop sign and causes an increase of speed for those loosing time.

Bill Jean: What would be the potential to install temporary stop signs for monitoring purposes?

Ken Peterson: I agree with Mr. Foote it would become a rolling stop sign especially a 3-way.

Chief Bryfonski: We can install temporary 3-way stop signs. While this is being done at the High School to monitor flow control and crash control at McKelvie, it is usually not recommended to install temporary traffic pattern changes then remove them unless there are specific requirements.

Chief Wiggin: Is it feasible to have coming off Meetinghouse Rd and coming off 101 neighborhood speed 30 mph to refresh people's memory.

Chief Bryfonski: We do have a 30 MPH speed limit sign as you turn onto Pilgrim from Meetinghouse.

Ken Peterson: There was a 3-way stop sign at the corner of Brick Mill and Ledgewood for this same reason. Within 6 months the average speed going through the stop signs was 20 mph. A tractor trailer went through going 30 mph.

Jeff Foote: Do you get truck traffic.

Betsy Danes: No

Chief Bryfonski: It is not posted “no thru truck traffic” and for the most part we have not seen any truck traffic. Rumble strips, speed bumps, speed dips are all not recommended because of our winter conditions and DPW concerns. The road being curvy does tend to slow people down somewhat. Speed enforcement and the radar trailer have a limited effect as some people will slow down. Stop signs have a rolling effect which slows the people down upon approach.

Jerry Gagne: Is there a stop sign at Colonial Dr where Puritan comes into Colonial.

Chief Bryfonski: No, it's straight through. Colonial has a stop.

Jerry Gagne: What if we move that stop sign to Pilgrim and eliminate the stop sign on Colonial, which would cause significant delays on Pilgrim Dr by moving the stop sign from one side to the other then adding additional stop signs in between? It would change people's mind set to stop using it as a cut through because they would be delayed.

Betsy Danes: There is only about 100 ft. onto our street from the Colonial entrance from 101 to Pilgrim.

Jeff Foote: Where Pilgrim goes through and Colonial T's into isn't that slop of Colonial significant at that point? Winter conditions could cause serious issues.

Chief Bryfonski: We have heard from the residents, the data, the speed not excessive but a concern to the residents in the area. It seems that the stop signs would have the only measurable effect but it would be a matter of study. Before we do anything DPW and the PD should review the area to determine the potential for stop signs.

Motion made by Madonna Lovett Repeta to ask DPW to go out to the neighborhood and see where if it is viable and or where the viable options are to place some stop signs – Seconded by Jim Aguiar.

Chief Bryfonski: Modification DPW & PD. The motion before us to request that the committee recommend DPW & PD review Pilgrim Dr for the possibility of a stop sign or stop signs at any location along the road to present a traffic calming and speed slowing effect and to report back to this committee.

Jim Aguiar: What would the DPW or PD need to do to give feedback to the committee as to whether or not to change the speed limit in the neighborhood down to 25 mph would be useful or is this something we could levy without or suggest to the council without further study.

Chief Bryfonski: There is no need for additional study, the question then comes to the committee to recommend or not, the speed reduction to 25 mph. The residents in the area stated there is an increase of families with young children.

Jim Aguiar: It is a pure residential neighborhood other than a cut through. So if we treat this as a pure neighborhood residential area and the residents go through a hearing, lowering the speed limit and putting up a couple of stop signs at Puritan and Pilgrim is about all we can do.

Chief Bryfonski: DPW & PD will report back on the stop sign issue, the speed limit would be another issue.

Jeff Foote: Are you suggesting we include the 25 mph to the original motion.

Jim Aguiar: No. If we do not need study data to drop that limit whenever we are ready to make a motion to take action.

Chief Bryfonski: My recommendation is that we do not need additional study as we do have the data from SNHPC from last year.

Chief Bryfonski: The motion that is on the floor from the committee to request DPW & PD study the locations for possible stop signs. Motion passed – all in favor.

VII. Unfinished Business

VIII. Comments or Concerns

1. Madonna Lovett Repeta: Please be aware of your clothing make yourself visible, people are walking in camouflage. People are walking and texting please be aware of your surroundings, “Be Safe”.
2. The annual Police Department Bicycle Rodeo is Sunday May 29th from 10-12 at Bedford High which is a great opportunity for parents and young children to learn the rules of the road and followed by the Memorial Day Parade.
3. There has been a lot of discussion on speed, traffic enforcement, accident rate and how the PD utilizes data and how we identify the areas where enforcement is required. The Police Department is pressed for resources so we utilize data to determine where and when our highway patrols need to occur, along with the time and day of the week. We look at crash, speed and the traffic volume, which together results in our quarterly review of Highway Safety Metrics at the PD. Just recently the Patrol Division released a Hot Spot Bulletin which identified the top 10 intersection accident areas in the town of Bedford. Most of the crashes occurred during commuting hours. Contingent upon availability, traffic enforcement patrols are deployed in those areas. We do deploy directed patrols when we get requests from

citizens. The PD is out there monitoring traffic and with the warmer days please be cognizant of your speed and obey all traffic controls.

Meeting adjourned 8:25 am

Respectfully submitted

Charlene T. Robinson