



**TOWN OF BEDFORD
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

JULY 26, 2022

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee (HSC) was held on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, in the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road (BCTV). Present were John J. Bryfonski (Chief of Police/Chair), Scott Hunter (Fire Chief/Vice Chair), Lori Radke (Town Council), Bill Jean (Resident), Ken Peterson (Resident), Jerry Gagne (Alternate Resident). Absent were Jeff Foote (Director Department of Public Works) and Phil Greazzo (Alternate Town Council).

I. Call to Order: 7:15 A.M.

II. Quorum Count:

III. Approval of Minutes – April 26, 2022

Motion by Bill Jean to accept the April 26, 2022, meeting minutes, **seconded** by Ken Peterson
Vote taken – Motion Passed. Abstentions: Ted Kitsis.

IV. Correspondence/Communications: None to report.

V. Sub Committee Reports: None to report.

VI. Unfinished Business: No unfinished business to report.

VII. New Business

1. Speed concerns on Liberty Hill Rd and request for 30MPH sign in the vicinity of 50 Liberty Hill Rd

Mr. Richard Constant, a resident on Liberty Hill Road requested the Highway Safety Committee consider a recommendation to reduce the speed limit on Liberty Hill Road at Edinburgh from 35 MPH to 30 MPH to keep the speed constant at 30 MPH from Liberty Hill @ Caron Rd all the way to the 4-way stop at Meetinghouse Road.

Note that Liberty Hill Road is posted for 35 MPH along its entire length EXCEPT for the section from Caron Road to Edinburg Road, which is posted for 30 MPH.

The request is to maintain the 30 MPH limit from Edinburgh Rd to the 4-way stop at Meetinghouse Road a total distance of approximately 3/10 mile.

There is an elevation change (going downhill) from Edinburgh toward the 4-way stop at Meetinghouse, presumably adding some speed to vehicles traveling in that direction.

The Bedford Police Department captured speed data from July 12 through July 20 on Liberty Hill Road at Edinburgh where the speed limit transitions from 30 up to 35 MPH.

Total Number of Vehicles 7/12 – 7/20: 7,293

Total Number Southbound: 3,701 50.7%

Total Number Northbound: 3,592 49.3%

Avg Daily Weekday: 750

Avg Daily 7/12-7/20: 342 [Note: SAT SUN significantly diminished 88 & 26]

Total Number 36+: 3177/44% [Note measured at Edinburgh]

Total Number 41+ MPH: 735/10%

Total Number Less than 35 MPH: 44%

Southbound @ Edinburgh (35 MPH to 30): 36+ MPH: 1826 for 49%

Southbound @ Edinburgh (35 MPH to 30): 35 or lower: 51%

Southbound @ Edinburgh (35 MPH to 30): 41+ or higher 13%

Southbound @ Edinburgh (35 MPH to 30): 40 or below 87%

Northbound @ Edinburgh (30 MPH to 35): 36+ MPH: 1351 38%

Northbound @ Edinburgh (30 MPH to 35): 35 or lower: 62%

Northbound @ Edinburgh (30 MPH to 35): 41+ or higher 7%

Northbound @ Edinburgh (30 MPH to 35): 40 or below: 93%

No remarkable accident history for the area.

Richard Constant of 50 Liberty Hill Rd. When the radar trailer was placed on Liberty Hill Rd., vehicles did tend to slow down, once removed the cars sped up again. The few that speed are traveling significantly above the speed limit and putting people in jeopardy. When coming up the hill from McKelvie (Intermediate School at County Rd.) where its posted 35 mph people tend to speed up. Going over the hill there is a school bus stop and if the bus is there its a very short distance to stop for the bus. There is a 35 MPH sign at the intersection of Liberty Hill and Meetinghouse I would like to change to 30 MPH to be in line with what is at the bottom of the hill going towards McKelvie. After passing Edinburg there is a 35 mph drop to 30 as well. I believe this would help with the speed and also help the Police Department enforce the speed in the area. I feel this situation needs to be addressed as it has been going on for a long time.

Steven Shawver, 49 Liberty Hill Rd. I have lived here for about 30 years and over time speeding has become worse. With the radar trailer (deployed) vehicle speed tends to slow down. They stop at the stop sign on Liberty Hill Rd then they gun it coming up the hill. This is also a pass through to get to Merrimack so there is a fair amount of traffic. If there is anything we can do to slow down the speed this would be a good move for the town as this is an accident waiting to happen.

Mr. Constant. When the radar trailer was up last year and again earlier this summer it was at a reduced time of traffic because school was out.

Mr. Peterson. Unfortunately, speed is an issue all over. I recommend reducing the speed as requested and hopefully it will give the Police Department the opportunity to enforce this.

Motion by Bill Jean to reduce the speed limit on Liberty Hill Road from 35 to 30 between Edinburgh Rd. to Meetinghouse Road north and southbound so that it is consistent from Caron Rd to Meetinghouse Rd and sign appropriately. Seconded by Chief Hunter. All in favor – Motion passed.

Chief Bryfonski: The Highway Safety Committee (HSC) makes the recommendation to the Town Council. The Town Council will then take this under review.

Mr. Peterson: Ms. Wiggin should we look into moving that bus stop?

Mr. Wiggin: This reflects the houses on Liberty Hill Rd and will change every year. The bus stop placements are where they need to be.

Mr. Constant: The single bus stop is at the driveway where the parents have the children. It would be more dangerous to have the children walk.

2. Request for 4-way Stop on Birkdale @ Cambridge and Cautionary Children Playing Signage in the neighborhood.

On June 30, 2022, Mr. Philip Evans and Ms. Deborah Evans, 75 Birkdale submitted a sign request in which they stated vehicles in the Birkdale area travel much too fast, particularly on Birkdale, which is mainly a straight road. The Evans' would like to see the introduction of measures to slow traffic in the area, and specifically requested a 4-way stop for the intersection of Cambridge @ Birkdale and cautionary CHILDREN AT PLAY signage in the neighborhood.

Note: There are stop signs on Cambridge at Birkdale; however, Birkdale has no stop signs (see image).

Note: There is cautionary signage (see image) SLOW CHILDREN; however, its quite faded.

Bedford Police Field Training Officer Shannon L. Gardner was given the assignment to review the sign request (see memorandum dated July 25, 2022) in which FTO Gardner stated; she reviewed the application for cautionary signs and inspected Birkdale on Thursday, July 14, 2022.

FTO Gardner observed two speed limit signs indicating 30 MPH as the posted speed limit at Birkdale/Essex for westbound traffic on Birkdale just before the guardrails line each side of the road. The second 30 MPH speed limit sign is on Joppa Hill Road for southbound traffic from Goffstown to reflect the Bedford speed limit is 30MPH unless otherwise posted.

FTO Gardner also found the children at play sign at Birkdale/York facing westbound traffic needs to be replaced. The sign is old and faded and almost impossible to read. FTO Gardner noted it was the only sign of its kind on the street.

FTO Gardner also found the stop sign at the southeast corner of Birkdale/Cambridge is leaning far too much towards south bound traffic.

FTO Gardner also spoke with Ms. Evans who told FTO Gardner she (Evans) is concerned about people speeding down the hill eastbound on Birkdale towards the intersection of Birkdale/Cambridge.

Ms. Evans told FTO Gardner there is a school bus stop at the intersection of Birkdale/Cambridge that picks up a significant number of children.

Ms. Evans also expressed concern of having no children at play signs on the street and stated the bulk of children who reside on Birkdale live between Birkdale/Cambridge and Birkdale/Essex.

Ms. Evans expressed her desire to make the intersection of Birkdale/Cambridge a four way stop intersection in order to slow speeding cars down the hill prior to the bus stop.

FTO Gardner indicated the Department's speed measuring equipment was posted on Liberty Hill Road conducting a speed study that did not conclude until July 18, 2022.

As a result, one of the Department's newer speed trailers was placed on Birkdale to collect data. However, when the data was pulled on July 22, 2022, the equipment failed to record the data.

The Department's speed monitoring equipment was recently installed on Birkdale, with the data pending.

FTO Gardner concurred with Evans' statement that making the intersection of Birkdale/Cambridge a four-way stop would increase safety for children on the street, the school bus stop, and would assist in slowing cars down. By adding the stop signs the Town of Bedford could correct the leaning stop sign which is already posted. FTO Gardner also recommended two (2) new children at play signs be posted at Birkdale/Cambridge (eastbound) and at Birkdale/Essex (westbound). Speed data collection on Birkdale began on July 24, 2022.

Ms. Deborah Evans of 75 Birkdale Rd. Birkdale is a very straight road with a blind hill further down Birkdale. There are a lot of pedestrians, children and dog walkers on Birkdale and people speed. I believe a four (4) way stop sign at the junction of Cambridge and Birkdale would slow traffic down even if they do not come to a complete stop. This is also the bus stop area and a 4-way stop would be helpful with the children walking. I hope the committee would consider a four way stop sign along with any additional signage.

Carla Silveria of 46 Cambridge Rd. I live on a downhill S curve. People come down the curve and it is blind and they run right off the road into the trees, surprisingly no one has been killed. There are two (2) particular drivers that speed regularly. We will make an effort to get the license plate number to report to the Police Department. We hope that the signage will slow people down.

Jamison Laguardia of 77 Cambridge Rd. Just down the road there is a bus stop. This is a straight away/wide open, and people go as fast as they feel comfortable. Just pass 99

Cambridge Rd there is a blind corner. I would like to see the speed limit reduced from 35 mph to 25 or 30 mph.

Bruce Romangnoli of 93 Cambridge Rd. I have lived here since 1985. The speed has become excessive. There are many people walking, jogging and walking their dogs. In the hopes of safety and peace of mind, I hope this committee finds in our favor for 25 mph or 30 because it is not posted anywhere on Cambridge. There are a lot of new residents and don't know what the speed it.

Mr. Gagne: Is this strictly local traffic or thru traffic?

Chief Bryfonski: Probably 65 to 75% is local traffic with 25% cut thru.

Motion by Ken Peterson to make the intersection at Cambridge and Birkdale a four (4) way stop by placing stop signs on Birkdale, there are already two (2) stops signs on Cambridge. Seconded by Bill Jean with and amendment to correct the listing stop sign on Cambridge. All in favor motion passed.

Motion by Chief Hunter to make a recommendation to DPW to place additional 30 mph speed limit signs in the neighborhood where appropriate. The Police Department can go out there find locations and make those locations known to DPW. Then it will be up to DPW to contact the neighbors and abutter to determine whether or not they object as to have the signs placed. Seconded by Bill Jean – All in favor – motion passed.

Amendment to the Motion by Councilor Radke to remove the faded “Children at Play Sign”. Seconded by Chief Hunter. All in favor – Motion passed.

Chief Bryfonski: Recommending to this committee to allow the Police Department to gather some additional speed data which is in process now and come back to take a look at that data then the committee can decide whether or not the data supports reducing the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph.

Community Announcements:

1. Traffic Safety Data First Six Months of 2022:

During June, the Department investigated 30 reportable motor vehicle accidents (MVAs); a slight increase from the 26 reportable collisions in May reflecting a slight overall 5% reduction in reportable MVAs through the second quarter of 2022 compared to 2021 (168 v. 160/-8).

Of the 30 collisions investigated last month, two (2) involved personal injury for an overall slight 4% decrease in MVAs with personal injury in 2022 compared to 2021 (23 v. 22/-1).

There have been no (0) fatal motor vehicle accidents through the second quarter of 2022, which compares to the singular fatal crash through the second quarter last year.

Patrol Operations Division officer(s) issued 265 summonses in June compared to 264 issued in May and 304 tickets written in April, representing a 3.5% decrease in the number of citations issued through the second quarter of this year compared to last year (1,722 v. 1,662/-60).

Bedford officers conducted 602 motor vehicle warning stops in June up from the 593 warning stops in May and 577 in April representing an overall 9% increase in warning stops in 2022 compared to last year (3,288 v. 3,582/+294).

The Department arrested three (3) operators for driving while intoxicated by alcohol or impaired by drugs (DWI) last month, for a total of 44 DWI arrests through the second quarter of 2022 reflecting a 19% increase compared to the second quarter of 2021 (37 v. 44/+7). Added to this data was a recent motorcycle crash that involved serious bodily injury in which alcohol was a factor.

The Department has also seen an increase in the number of crashes that involve impairment by substances other than alcohol, including marijuana, heroin/fentanyl and prescription drugs.

2. Pedestrians, Joggers, Runners, Walkers are out and be mindful; give them space.
3. Bicyclists are also out there and you are required to give them a safe corridor when passing.
NH RSA 265:143-a Drivers to Exercise Due Care When Approaching Bicycle. – Every driver of a vehicle, when approaching a bicyclist, shall insure the safety and protection of the bicyclist and shall exercise due care by leaving a reasonable and prudent distance between the vehicle and the bicycle. The distance shall be presumed to be reasonable and prudent if it is at least 3 feet when the vehicle is traveling at 30 miles per hour or less, with one additional foot of clearance required for every 10 miles per hour above 30 miles per hour. Violation: \$100

B. National Night Out Community Policing Event: BPD v. BFD softball and other attractions TUES AUG 2nd Selvosky Field 6PM.

C. Bedford Police/Fire Public Safety Open House: September 22; Cruiser rides, Taser and K9 demonstrations, ice cream and fun 55 Constitution 4P.

Meeting adjourned 8:15 am
Respectfully submitted
Charlene T. Robinson