



TOWN OF BEDFORD

HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 24, 2021

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee (HSC) was held on Tuesday, August 24, 2021 in the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road (BCTV). Present were John J. Bryfonski (Chief of Police/Chair), Scott Hunter (Fire Chief/Vice Chair), Jeff Foote (Director of Public Works), Lori Radke (Town Council), Bill Jean (Resident) Jerry Gagne (Alternate Resident), Madonna Lovett Repeta (Resident), Ken Peterson (Alternate Resident). Absent were Kelleigh Murphy (Alternate Councilor) and Anne Wiggin (School Bus Coordinator).

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

II. Quorum Count:

III. Approval of Minutes from June 22, 2021

Motion by Bill Jean to accept the June 22, 2021 meeting minutes, **seconded** by Ken Peterson. **Vote taken – Motion Passed. Abstentions** Jeff Foote, Madonna Lovett Repeta and Chief Scott Hunter.

IV. Correspondence/Communications

A. No Correspondence to report.

V. Sub Committee Reports

A. None-

VI. New Business:

A. SIGN REQUEST 25 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD:

On August 2, 2021, Ms. Denise Nobert, Business Manager, Department of Public Works (DPW) for the Town of Bedford advised our Highway Safety Committee Secretary, Ms. Robinson, that DPW received a request for a deer crossing sign near 25 Meetinghouse Road from Mr. Steven Boissoneau.

According to DPW Business Manager Nobert, on or about July 23, 2021 Mr. Boissoneau of 25 Meetinghouse Road called DPW to request a "Deer Crossing" signs be installed in the vicinity of his house at 25 Meetinghouse. Mr. Boissoneau advised DPW that deer cross the road in front of his house multiple times a day, every day.

The Bedford Police Department does not submit state accident investigation reports relative to car - deer collisions (since 2018) since the damage rarely meets the threshold requiring a full investigation. Additionally, the Police Department's decrepit records management system is incapable of providing specific data on car vs. deer collisions even though the Police Department still responds to those incidents.

Therefore, the Police Department does not have specific numbers of collisions between vehicles and deer on Meetinghouse Road; however, Chief Bryfonski indicated while there may have been a few deer collisions with vehicles along the full length of Meetinghouse, Chief Bryfonski had have no recollection there were more collisions involving deer on Meetinghouse than other Town roads. If anything, there have been a greater frequency of collisions involving deer on other roads, specifically New Boston Road, where many deer collisions occur despite deer crossing signs that are posted on New Boston Road.

There have been a total of 65 accidents investigated along the entire length of Meetinghouse Road during the past five (5) years, which equates to about 13 collisions per year on average.

Gerry Gagne: Deer collisions are endemic throughout the entire town due to the deer population and noted he observed several deer crossing the road while traveling to this meeting.

Ken Peterson: Signs such as this usually do nothing.

Motion by Ken Peterson to not approve the deer crossing sign. **Seconded** by Jeff Foote, all in favor motion passed not to approve the deer crossing sign.

B. SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION JOPPA HILL ROAD.

On August 9, 2021, Mr. David Gilbert, Chairperson, Bedford Town Council, requested the Highway Safety Committee consider a proposal to reduce the speed limit on Joppa Hill Road from 35 miles per hour (MPH) to 25 MPH in the vicinity of the Joppa Hill Educational Farm (JHEF) in conjunction with the crosswalk that is being installed at that location.

Mr. Dave Gilbert, Chairman of the JHEF: There are a lot of events throughout the year at the JHEF and vehicles are always speeding down the hill. Mr. Gilbert indicated he was concerned with people crossing Joppa Hill Road to/from the JHEF and requests the speed limit on Joppa Hill Road be dropped down to 25 MPH if appropriate.

Director. Foote: DPW has improved the area, installed a cross walk, improved the parking area across the street and cut brush back coming down over the hill. A safety concern of mine is that vehicles are parked on the building side of JHEF and not the opposite side. Chief Bryfonski, what is the average speed throughout this segment? I just don't want to create more of a problem with people not following the law.

Chief Bryfonski: The Police Department conducts frequent directed patrols for speed enforcement in that corridor and have other means to slow the vehicles down. Chief Bryfonski noted there are no reductions in speed when approaching other crosswalks in town. If this reduction on Joppa Hill Road was approved, it would be inconsistent with the other crosswalks in Town.

Director Foote: Agreed

Chief Bryfonski: Solar powered cautionary signage and road markings that DPW can install would alert people approaching a across walk. Solar powered cautionary signage

has been helpful in other areas of town, rather than a speed limit reduction sign that people tend to ignore.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: With the canopy of trees coming south on Joppa Hill just below Perry is there enough light to do a solar powered sign?

Chief Bryfonski: Yes, I believe there is on both sides.

Mr. Gilbert: I agree with Ms. Lovett Repeta about the tree coverage. Coming down the right side there is room for the solar power signage.

Councilor Radke: Are there going to be crosswalk signs?

Director Foote: They are there now.

Councilor Radke: Is there any way to consolidate all the signs just to avoid a lot of signage. I agree with the solar powered sign recommendation.

Director Foote: You can solarize at the crosswalk with the arrows pointing down.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: Would it be less expensive to have one sign than two?

Director Foote: I would think so.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: Being open year-round and the number of people using the crosswalk something is needed because it is a blind crosswalk and I agree with a solar powered flashing sign.

Mr. Peterson: Councilor Radke are we still in budget season?

Councilor Radke: We are just beginning the budget season.

Mr. Peterson: Maybe we can insert something for this.

Councilor Radke: This can be brought up for the 2022 budget.

Mr. Jean: I support some sort of warning signage rather than changing the speed limit sign.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: Mr. Foote, what do you recommend the wording be if we do have a solar sign south of Joppa Hill.

Director Foote: Not sure, we will need to look into it. However, I am concerned with the safety issue with people parking in front of the building. I think we need to have signage "no parking tow zone" or something similar to improve the safety at this location.

Mr. Gilbert: The caretaker who lives in the cottage does park there. We will talk to him regarding no parking, and he does use the entrance, which is used for loading and unloading. We do try to limit the number of people parking there and we do not let our volunteer's park there.

Mr. Jean: The general public does not park there?

Mr. Gilbert: No.

Mr. Jean: I suggest "No parking / Loading and Unloading Zone Only" signage.

Director Foote: I have seen both occurrences, I would agree with whatever this committee feels is appropriate.

Motion by Madonna Lovett Repeta to recommend a solar powered pedestrian crossing sign going south on Joppa Hill also a note to JHEF to post on the front of their building "no parking", "tow zone" or loading and unloading only.

Seconded by Bill Jean.

Chief Bryfonski: A motion was made by Ms. Lovett Repeta to place a solar powered cautionary crosswalk signage south on Joppa Hill Rd. preceding the crosswalk at the JHEF with further recommendation to post "no parking loading and unloading only" in front of the facility.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: "No parking signage is for the JHEF to post, not the town.

Chief Bryfonski: Noted the no parking/loading unloading zone would not be enforceable by the police department, just so the committee is aware.

Mr. Gilbert: Understood.

Mr. Gagne: Mr. Foote should the northbound approach have similar signage?

Director Foote: I think there has to.

Chief Bryfonski: I agree as well.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: Flashing solar lights or just a sign?

Director Foote: Either or.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: It is such a long stretch of visibility I don't feel we need flashing lights.

Director Foote: I would suggest any illuminate lights be at the crosswalk where people cross the road and not some preceding area that is undetermined.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: I am concerned again coming over that blind hill and they are right there.

Director Foote: The sight distance that is there is more than adequate; it is not a blind curve or impeded by a vertical curve.

Chief Bryfonski: The sight distance is for motorists approaching the crosswalk. Coming down the hill on Joppa Hill Road toward the crosswalk you will be able to see the sign in plenty of time.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: Director Foote on the signs that point down are they visible from both ways.

Director Foote: Yes.

Ms. Lovett Repeta: I amend my motion to say we consider putting in solar powered arrows at the crosswalk that are visible from both directions.

Mr. Jean seconded the amendment.

Chief Bryfonski: We have a **motion with an amendment** to have two (2) crosswalk signs at the crosswalk that are solar powered or electrically lighted.

Councilor Radke: Would the crosswalk signs be generated by people pushing a button to cross?

Director Foote: I certainly hope not, this would cause the price to go up tenfold.

Chief Bryfonski: This would be a traditional cautionary crosswalk sign with a lighted arrow with the perimeter of the arrow lighted and flashing pointing down at the crosswalk.

Chief Bryfonski: There was a **motion** by Ms. Lovett Repeta and **amended** by Ms. Lovett Repeta - **second** by Mr. Jean who **seconded the amendment** to install two (2) solar powered cautionary crosswalk signs at the JHEF crosswalk and to recommend to Town Council consider budgeting for the installation of the cautionary signage by DPW in its 2022 budget. The committee also recommends that JHEF install "no parking unloading and loading only" in front of the facility. **All in favor of the Motion - Motion passed**

VII. Old Business

A. NO OLD BUSINESS TO DISCUSS

VIII. Comments or Concerns:

A. Community Announcements:

B. Highway Safety:

1. **DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER CAMPAIGN:** Ongoing through Labor Day with extra directed patrols focusing on driving while intoxicated. And remember, drugged driving is DWI.

C. Highway Safety Committee Member Appointments:

1. Town Council action on April 28th Residents Gerry Gagne and Bill Jean reappointments.

IX. Adjournment

Motion by Madonna Lovett Repeta seconded by Bill Jean all in favor Meeting adjourned at 8:10 am.

**Respectfully submitted
Charlene Robinson, Highway Safety Committee Secretary
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