



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

**October 25, 2022**

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee (HSC) was held on Tuesday, October 25, 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), Jeff Foote (Director Department of Public Works), Bill Jean (Resident), Ken Peterson (Resident), Jerry Gagne (Alternate Resident), Ted Kitsis (Alternate Resident) and Anne Wiggin (School Transportation Coordinator). Absent were Lori Radke (Town Council) and Phil Greazzo (Alternate Town Council).

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

**II. Quorum Count: 8**

**III. Approval of Minutes – September 27, 2022**

**Motion** by Mr. Jean to accept the September 27, 2022, meeting minutes, **seconded** by Mr. Gagne Vote taken – **Motion Passed. Abstention: Mr. Peterson.**

**IV. Correspondence/Communications:**

**V. Sub Committee Reports:** None to report.

**VI. New Business –** None to report.

**VII. Unfinished Business**

**VIII. Old Business – Updates**

**Unfinished Business:**

**A. Request for a Caution Hidden Driveway Sign 421 Joppa Hill Rd.**

On September 12, 2022, Ms. Carol Fournier, 421 Joppa Hill Road (JHR) submitted an application for cautionary signage to the Highway Safety Committee (HSC); specifically, a “Caution-Hidden Drive” sign to be posted on the approach to 421 JHR.

Status: At our last meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>, the HSC tabled the request to allow DPW to remove vegetation and make an effort to mitigate the grade to improve the sight distance before taking any action on the sign request from Ms. Fournier.

Director Foote: Vegetation was mowed; an excavator removed some of the slope, which improved the sight distance.

**Motion** by Mr. Kitsis to deny the sign request based on the improvements made by DPW. **Seconded** by Mr. Jean. **Motion** passed all in favor.

**B. Request for a Stop Sign at Swan Ave/Johnson St...**

On September 15, 2022, Ms. Melanie Ordway ([mordway7@comcast.net](mailto:mordway7@comcast.net)) contacted the Highway Safety Committee (HSC) secretary, Ms. Robinson, to request a stop sign at the intersection of Swan Ave and Johnson.

An application for a sign was subsequently submitted by Ms. Ordway indicating operators do not yield before turning from Johnson onto Swan resulting in near miss collisions some of which resulted in her taking evasive action to avoid a collision and requests the HSC recommend a stop sign on Johnson at Swan.

Currently, there is no stop required on Johnson at Swan.

**Status:** On September 27<sup>th</sup> the Highway Safety Committee tabled the request for the stop sign at Swan and Johnson pending a site review.

**UPDATE:** The site review was conducted on October 13, 2022, by members of the Highway Safety Committee, DPW and Police Department. Observations made by the Police Department representative indicated traffic from Johnson had an obstructed view of southbound traffic on Swan due to a large tree, rock wall with fencing on top as well as vehicle parked on the northbound side of the road. The initial option was to speak with the residents at 27 Swan. SGT Robert G. Lavoie, Bedford Police, met with the resident at 27 Swan who was receptive to moving the vehicles and to request family members park north of the driveway or on Johnson St. The resident also told SGT Lavoie the unregistered vehicle would be moved that day. Additionally, the resident told SGT Lavoie they were in the process of removing the fencing and overgrowth from the front yard at 27 Swan, which would improve sight distance. The Police Department is providing a follow up report, which has not been submitted as yet.

**Director Foote:** The measures outlined by Chief Bryfonski are sufficient to relieve the concerns at the intersection; there is no accident history at the intersection; the volume of traffic is low, and no other issues appear to be of any concern.

**Mr. Jean:** I agree with Director Foote.

**Ms. Melanie Ordway Kapetan 16 Hall St.:** Ms. Ordway Kapetan disagreed with Director Foote's perspective noting a large tree obstructs sight distance at the intersection resulting in near collisions; ending up on

the neighbor's lawn several times. Ms. Ordway also stated she observed a high volume of traffic.

Chief Bryfonski: Requested Ms. Ordway Kapetan to describe the context of the near collisions

Ms. Kapetan: Indicated the near collisions occurred as she was driving from Swan Avenue and noted the large tree obstructs sight distance not the vegetation or parked cars.

Chief Bryfonski: Asked Ms. Kapetan where she would prefer to have a stop sign.

Ms. Kapetan: Indicated she would prefer the stop sign at Johnson and Swan.

Mr. Peterson: (To Ms. Kapetan) Would the removal of the tree help?

Ms. Kapetan: Yes.

Mr. Peterson: Is the tree on town property?

Ms. Kapetan: Not sure.

Director Foote: I would say most of (the tree) is on town property.

Mr. Peterson: Asked Ms. Kapetan which she preferred, a stop sign or the removal of the tree.

Ms. Kapetan: Either or. It is the tree that really is obstructing the view.

Director Foote: If we add another stop sign there it would be another slow and go.

Chief Bryfonski: If the tree is the major impediment for a safe intersection, we should revisit the site.

Director Foote: Noted the recommendations from Sergeant (SGT) Lavoie; the lack of any accident history at the intersection and that the removal of the parked vehicles on Swan, which constituted the major impediment to sight distance indicating once the vehicles were removed the sight distance improved dramatically.

Mr. Kitsis: When does this become an enforcement issue for vehicles failing to yield?

Chief Bryfonski: Enforcement is dependent upon a police officer present to ensure vehicles stop for the traffic control device, whether it's a stop sign or signal. We rely on public compliance to achieve enforcement given the fact the Bedford Police Department has more than 200 miles of

roads and 32 square miles to police along with calls for service, which impacts the Department's ability to enforce vehicle and traffic laws.

Mr. Peterson: According to Ms. Kapetan, if the tree was removed, she would not end up on her neighbor's lawn; people would see her, and she would see them. I recommend we take the tree down.

Ms. Kapetan: I agree, this (tree removal) would solve the problem.

Mr. Gagne: This (Swan and Johnson) is an unregulated intersection and there is no stop sign in any approach. Placing a stop sign on Johnson coming into Swan, which is the straight route/main route, if you don't regulate that approach, I'm not sure how the removal of the tree is going to help, it will improve the sight distance and people are going to go faster without a regulated stop sign on Johnson.

Director Foote: I agree with Mr. Gagne. I believe the communication between the police department and the homeowner was very effective.

Mr. Kitsis: We know where the problem is, it's the residents choosing not to slow down. I feel the stop sign is not going to solve the problem because people get used to the signs and they will just ignore it. When we were out at the intersection, we all agreed that the tree was a big impediment to the sight distance. I support removal of the tree, in lieu of putting up a stop sign that is going to be ignored by the residents of Johnson St.

Mr. Peterson: Recommends removing the problem, which is the tree that obstructs sight distance; doesn't agree that a lack of accidents is compelling noting his career in aviation which takes a proactive approach to safety.

Mr. Jean: Agreed with Mr. Kitsis, the tree is the impediment, and its removal is the optimal solution; recommends determining whether the tree is on Town property or not.

**Motion:** By Mr. Peterson -The Highway Safety Committee recommend the tree impeding sight distance at the intersection of Swan Ave. and Johnson St. be removed with the concurrence of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Town Council based on reasonableness and cost effectiveness. **Seconded** by Mr. Jean.

#### DISCUSSION ON MOTION:

Director Foote: If the tree is on or partially on private property permission from the owner to remove the tree is required.

**Motion Amended:** By Mr. Peterson - Amends the motion on the table to recommend the tree impeding sight distance at the intersection of Swan Ave. and Johnson St. be removed with the concurrence of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Town Council based on reasonableness and cost effectiveness and with the concurrence of the property owner if the tree happens to be on private property. **Seconded** by Mr. Jean.

**Vote:** Motion passed -unanimous.

#### **Old Business - Updates**

**A. Request for Cautionary Signage: “HIDDEN DRIVEWAY” OR “BLIND DRIVEWAY AHEAD” in the vicinity of 65 Meetinghouse Road.**

Chief Bryfonski: The sign has been placed and will confirm.

**B. Liberty Hill Rd: Request for 30 MPH sign in the vicinity of 50 Liberty Hill Rd.**

Chief Bryfonski: 30 MPH speed limit signage has been placed on Liberty Hill Road in both directions consistent with Town Council approval to amend the speed limit between Edinburgh and Meetinghouse.

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

1. Town Council voted to amend Town Ordinances to establish a 4-Way Stop at Birkdale and Cambridge; pending signage.

Director Foote: If stop signs have not been installed, they soon will be.

#### **VIII. Comments or Concerns:**

**A. Community Announcements:**

1. **Red Ribbon Week: October 23-31; BeBOLD sponsoring; look for community announcements where you can obtain red ribbons.**
2. **Drug Take Back: Twice annual DEA drug take back Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>; 10A-2P; drug box is always available in the lobby of the Bedford Police Station.**

Meeting adjourned 7:51

Respectfully submitted

*Charlene T. Robinson*