

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Water, Wastewater, Highway, Cemetery, Tree, & Facilities
Scott D. Charpentier, P.E., Director

**TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH**

63 MAIN STREET
NORTHBOROUGH, MA 01532
T: (508) 393-5040x6
F: (508) 393-6996

Traffic Safety Committee Meeting minutes- February 13, 2024

Committee Attendees:

William Pierce
Bryan Cole
Rachael Armstrong
Christopher Deacetis
Kate Girard

Other Attendees:

Lisa Maselli, Select Board Liaison
Brian Griffin, Chief of Police
Scott D. Charpentier, Public Works Director

Meeting started at 6:30PM.

Bill Pierce read the remote meeting introduction and conducted roll call. All were present.

1. New Items

a - b. Crosswalk alert systems for schools, specifically Lincoln Street schools (3 crosswalks) - A citizen requested pedestrian crosswalk safety improvements, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and/or speed humps along Lincoln St. adjacent to Lincoln Street Elementary. The RRFB estimated material cost is \$10-12K for each crosswalk. In addition, each location requires wheelchair compliant ramps. The current 2024 DPW budget allows for 1 RRFB to be installed.

Currently there are 3 crosswalks in the area - 2 at Melican Middle, 1 on each end, and 1 crosswalk at LSS.

Potential locations of new RRFBs -

- 3 at the Lincoln St. crosswalks (especially the mid-block crosswalks which are more dangerous. Scott Charpentier recommended that the crosswalk near the Pleasant St. side of Melican could be eliminated if there's concern about too many RRFBs in one area)
- 1 on Pleasant St. near the Lincoln St. intersection
- 1 at the intersection of Pleasant St. and Church St.
- 1 at Northgate Rd. and Chesterfield Rd.

Lisa Maselli suggested using ARPA funds to purchase the additional RRFBs. Bill Pierce mentioned they could be added to next year's fiscal budget and voted on at Town Meeting. Lisa Maselli will bring the recommendation to the Select Board for ARPA funds.

Public Comment:

Alan Lau

35 Shadylane Ave

Currently, there's no crossing guard at LSS and a pole blocks visibility of the crosswalk when students and families are crossing. Chief Griffin will provide extra radar, especially during school days, until the crossing guard position is filled.

- c. School Department request for school zone controls replacement on Lincoln Street (4 each)
 - The assistant superintendent asked about school zone controls that need to be replaced. The cost is \$1500 each, \$3000 for a set. School zone controls are funded by the School Committee. Scott Charpentier will reach out to the school department and let them know that school zone controls are funded by the schools but that RRFs are being considered and will provide safety enhancements to the area.

Summer St. HCVE recommendation - During the Lincoln St. discussion, Lisa Maselli informed the TSC that the Select Board may be interested in discussing an HCVE for Summer St. Scott Charpentier reached out to the resident that requested the HCVE to update them that the TSC didn't recommend one. Lisa Maselli will start updating the Select Board on TSC recommendations.

- d. Crosswalk with alert system on Hudson Street at Silas Drive - A citizen reached out to request a crosswalk at Hudson St. and Silas Drive. Scott Charpentier explained that the request would entail a mid-block crosswalk which is dangerous. Mid-block crosswalks are used sparingly when there is a specific destination or user group like a park or school. Since Silas Drive is a smaller cul-de-sac with only a few homes, Scott doesn't recommend a crosswalk in that location. Chris Deacetis added that vehicles on Hudson St. tend to speed, and the hill on Hudson St. impedes visibility, making a mid-block crosswalk even more dangerous.

Public Comment

Aishwarya Sankar and Nithin Ramadurai

10 Silas Drive

Ms. Sankar and Mr. Ramadurai asked about a light or sign asking for drivers to slow down as well as a potential sidewalk. Scott Charpentier recommended a speed limit sign before the intersection. Bill Pierce asked for this item to remain on the Continuing Discussion section of the agenda so the TSC can revisit in a few months.

- e. No parking zone on Stirrup Brook Lane and Jenkins Drive - Scott Charpentier explained that the adjacency of these streets to the industrial zone and warehouses on Bartlett St. creates truck traffic and truck parking. A resident requested a no parking zone on Stirrup Brook Lane and Jenkins Drive to supplement the no parking zone already on Bartlett St. A no parking zone can only be implemented by the Select Board.

Potential solutions discussed included an HCVE or a Residential Parking Only sign. Lisa Maselli mentioned that Stirrup Brook Lane and Jenkins Road probably wouldn't meet the threshold needed for an HCVE and Bryan Cole was concerned about using limited resources for an HCVE in a less traveled area.

Public Comment

Janeen Callaghan

6 Stirrup Brook Lane

Ms. Callaghan explained that a truck driver had been parked on Stirrup Brook Lane sleeping for 2 hours. The police were called and asked him to shut his engine off but couldn't ask him to move because he was legally allowed to be parked there. A Residential Only Parking sign would enable the police to ask the truck drivers to move. She was concerned about an HCVE or a No Trucks sign because it would make the neighborhood seem part of the industrial zone when they are simply adjacent to it and may harm neighbors who are trying to sell their home.

Chief Griffin agreed that a Residents Only sign would give officers the legal authority to ask truck drivers not to park there but would not enforce it for the resident's vehicles or their invited guests.

Kate Girard asked why the trucks aren't parking on Amazon's property. Chief Griffin and the Town Administrator are going to visit Amazon to introduce themselves, discuss the situation and ask why the trucks aren't parking in Amazon's parking lot.

Bill Pierce mentioned that it's his understanding that since Amazon doesn't own the parking lot (they lease the property), they may not have the authority to allow the trucks to park there to rest or wait to load/unload. Scott Charpentier agreed that it's time to re-engage with Amazon and Bill Pierce suggested including the property owner in the discussion.

2. Continuing Discussion

- a) Peer Community Survey Discussion - Scott Charpentier updated the committee. 14 responses were received of varying detail.
 - i) Speed bump installations on "cut through" roadways, Winter St. - 4 of the 14 communities use speed bumps, 1 on a trial basis. 1 community plans to test 1 next year and 9 are not using them.
 - ii) Stop sign - ½ of the communities questioned follow MUTCD standards, ½ don't and install as they see fit.
 - iii) Truck traffic – 1 community that doesn't have a warehouse, serves as a cut through for trucks traveling between two interstate highways.
- b) Memo to the Select Board in support of hiring two additional officers dedicated to traffic enforcement. - Chief Griffin is working on the memo to ask for more law enforcement officers. He expressed concern about the minimum number of officers available for each shift. More officers will better manage traffic enforcement but may not be realistic for a dedicated Traffic Enforcement Program. Bill Pierce asked TSC members their thoughts on traffic enforcement as a justification for more officers but potentially not 2 officers solely dedicated to traffic enforcement. All TSC were in agreement with the hiring of an additional 2 officers even if they aren't solely focused on traffic enforcement.

Public Comment - none

Next Steps

- Additional speed limit sign on Hudson St.
- Memo to schools re: RRFBs and school zone lights
- Crosswalk alert systems – potentially 5 in total including 1 already in the 2024 budget. The TSC will make a recommendation on locations. Scott Charpentier will solicit costs of purchasing RRFBs, installation and ensuring wheelchair compliant ramps.
- Chief Griffin and the Town Administrator will re-engage with Amazon.
- Chief Griffin will investigate enforcement of Residents Only or Residential Parking Only sign on Stirrup Brook and Jenkins Lane.

Approval of January 9, 2024 minutes - motion to approve by Rachael Armstrong, seconded by Chris Deceatis. Minutes were approved by all TSC member except Bryan Cole who abstained.

Next Meeting - March 12, 2024

Motion to adjourn made by Bryan Cole, seconded by Kate Girard. Unanimously approved.
Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Materials Used

Citizen Requests and Inquiries

Peer Survey Communities, Questions and Town Data

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EB4kgTR23es>