

TOWN OF AMHERST

TRAFFIC-SAFETY BOARD

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT – 1100 NORTH FOREST ROAD, WILLIAMSVILLE, NEW YORK 14221
TRAFFIC SAFETY COORDINATOR - TELEPHONE 631-7154 - FAX 631-7222

AMHERST TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD

June 16, 2021

The June meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on June 16, 2021. Chairman Eric Fraas called the meeting to order starting with the approval of the May ATSB minutes. Chairman Fraas starts by asking if there are any additions or changes to the minutes. Greg Dionne asks that Thomas Voight's name be corrected on page 4. Maxwell Kahn also noted that he'd like his name corrected on the same page. Kevin Cantwell asks that page 2, old business section, first line 'open' should be changed to 'opens'. Kevin Cantwell also asks that page 3, item B, line 3 'witness' should be changed to 'witnessed', and that page 5, 4 lines down the word 'breaking' should be changed to 'braking'. Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Kevin Cantwell to approve the May minutes as corrected. Approved 9-0. Chairman Fraas chaired the meeting. Other members present were Vice Chairman Dan Rider, Ken Smith, Michelle Nagel, Kristin Goss, Jennifer Michniewicz, Kevin Cantwell, Gregory Dionne and Maxwell Kahn. Departmental Liaisons included Joe Frese of the Building Department, Al Spoth of the Highway Department, Captain Kevin Brown of the Police Department, Thomas Voight of the Planning Department and Christopher Schregel, Traffic Safety Coordinator/ Engineering Liaison. Also in attendance is Michael Szukala Councilmember Liaison. Meeting held via zoom.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Schoelles Road – Request for a solid double yellow center line. Chris Schregel begins with an explanation of this item stating that this road is rural in character with the west end being more residential. This road is a two lane Town highway that has been recently paved. After this road was paved a resident reached out to the Town requesting that the road be striped with double yellow center line. Prior to paving, the road was striped as a passing zone with a single dashed yellow line as displayed on the screen. The resident believes the addition of the double yellow line may help reduce speeds. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) David Prisaznuk, Schoelles Road. He appreciates the great job with the paving and milling. He comments that Schoelles is very rural and narrow with no sidewalks. He comments that numerous families live in this area and walk and bike on Schoelles. He would like the double yellow line to be installed for the safety of the pedestrians in the area. He feels this installation of a double yellow line would slow down the traffic and help with safety. He believes that the traffic speeds and volume on Schoelles has increased throughout the years because of the development of Crosspoint. He comments that Schoelles is used as a cut through for vehicles exiting and entering the Crosspoint Development.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the discussion to the members. Chairman Fraas informs the members that a recommendation regarding this item must be completed during this meeting as the Highway Department is waiting for action from the ATSB. Chairman Fraas comments that the original striping included a fog line making the driving lanes about 11 feet in each direction. He is in favor of adding the double yellow striping and adds that it will help narrow the road further which could act as a calming measure. Chris Schregel adds that if a double yellow line is put in the fog line would actually need to be bumped out to keep the driving lanes at an acceptable width, but would result in making the shoulder slightly narrower which may hinder pedestrian safety. Greg Dionne agrees with installing a double yellow line given the number of homes and driveways located on the street. Dan Rider suggest reducing the lane width but leaving the fog lane as it is allowing the maximum amount of space for pedestrian traffic. The members are in agreement to install double yellow lines the entire distance of Schoelles and narrow the driving lanes to 10 feet to maintain the current width of the shoulder. Approved 9-0. Change must be Town Board approved.

2. Dellwood Drive / Hardt Lane. Request for all-way stop signs. Chris Schregel begins with the background for this item. He begins by saying that a resident reached out to the Town initially asking for an all-way stop at the intersection of Dellwood and Hardt Lane. Traffic counts were completed on Dellwood Drive, but the resident informed the Town that construction was going on during the counts and felt that the counts were inaccurate. Town will count again. The results of the volume count indicate that warrants are not met to install an all-way stop intersection. When the resident was informed of the results, he inquired about the possibility of implementing a parking restriction. The nearby public park does not have any off-street parking available causing on-street parking on Dellwood Drive around the intersection of Hardt Lane and Dellwood. Vehicles are currently able to park on both sides of the street around the entrance of Hardt Lane. The resident has reported difficulty seeing when exiting Hardt Lane on to Dellwood. Chris Schregel displays the current parking restriction on Dellwood showing a gap of 135 feet from the current restriction to Hardt Lane. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) Mr. & Mrs. Haynes have lived on the corner of Dellwood and Hardt Lane for over 30 years. This location has always been quiet until the past few years. She states that Dellwood is used as a cut through street. She goes on to say that in the past 2 years she has observed speeding vehicles traveling down Dellwood. She asks that the speed and volume counts be done on the weekends to have an accurate count of the current conditions. She would really like a stop sign to help improve the safety for the many people using the park.

Chris Schregel adds that a resident that is not currently in attendance has issues with employees from Mr. Tire using Dellwood for test drives sometimes at high speeds. Chairman Fraas closes the public comment and opens the discussion to the members. Chairman Fraas begins by saying that it's not possible to install stop signs at this location due to the warrants not being met. Dan Rider inquires if a 15 mph sign can be posted in the area around the park. Chris Schregel answers by saying the lowest speed limit allowed in the Town of Amherst is 30 mph. Greg Dionne asks if a speed limit sign can be installed at the corner of Longmeadow and Dellwood to inform drivers of the speed limit. Upon review, members agree that a speed limit sign should be added to stay consistent with other area signage. Kevin Cantwell would like to see more visible playground signage installed. Al Spoth suggests changing the current sign to a more fluorescent playground sign. Traffic Safety Board to receive and file both the parking restriction and stop sign request. It is recommended that the playground sign be enhanced, and the speed limit sign be installed.

3. Forestglen Drive – Request for a parking restriction. Chris Schregel begins the discussion with an explanation of this item. The resident is asking for a parking restriction adjacent to a grass center island at the entrance to Forestglen between Heim Road and a power pole. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) Shannon Hoffman, 44 Forestglen Drive. Her reason for the request is safety concerns. She describes the small island as having some flowers and decorative trees and bushes. Ms. Hoffman comments that when turning off Heim at 35 mph there is a large tree blocking your view and a sharp turn. She comments that accidents have occurred as it is hard to navigate the turn with a vehicle parked in that location. She also states that larger vehicles have a very difficult time making the turn when cars are parked in the location next to the island.
- b) Dan Bronson, 275 Heim Road. He moved in late December of 2020. During his first few months living in this house he had a lot of renovations done. He states that a number of vehicles involved with helping in the renovations had parked in the area around his home and in the location described in this request. Mr. Bronson also states that not as many vehicles are present as he is nearing completion of his renovations. He comments that it's only been a few times that he needed to use several of the parking places all at once and doesn't expect to need those spots on a regular basis. He says that he has a short narrow driveway and would rather not have elderly visitors parking on Heim as it can be very busy. He needs places for visitors to park and agrees that vehicles should not be parked adjacent to the island but sees no reason to restrict the parking for a further distance.

- c) Pat Stramaglia, 6 Forestglen. She comments that the last accident was caused by a Town snow plow. She also measured the distance from the island to the curb, the result being 22 feet. She feels this is ample space for anyone to drive through. She also thinks the sight distance is acceptable. She also says she needs to make a U-turn around the island to enter her driveway and has had no issues doing so. Mrs. Stramaglia reports that even when vehicles have been lined up at the Island she has not experienced any difficulties entering her driveway or entering the street. She feels that a parking restriction is not warranted at this time.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the discussion to the members. Chairman Fraas begins by agreeing that the accident appears to not have been caused by parked vehicles or speeds coming off Heim Road. Kevin Cantwell feels that the large tree on the corner could block the view of vehicles entering Forestglen but does not see a reason to have a parking restriction. Greg Dionne agrees that a parking restriction is not needed at this location but suggests that a "No Parking Here to Corner" be added to the existing No Outlet sign. He also adds parked vehicles can be a traffic calming measure, slowing the traffic coming off Heim. Chairman Fraas also agrees with everything that has been said. Chris Schregel will check to see if it is possible to post "No Parking Here to Corner" signage. Chairman Fraas moves to receive and file this item. Approved 9-0.

- 4. McKinley & Harding at Garfield – Request for reposting of "No Commercial Vehicles" signage. Chris Schregel begins by saying that this location has been before this board asking for no outlet signage. He explains that both McKinley and Garfield at one time went through to Wehrle Drive but were looped together as part of a construction project years ago. When the construction to loop the streets together was completed the "No Commercial Vehicles" signage was removed. The resident for this item is asking that the signs be reinstalled as trucks are still using all three streets. Photos of the truck traffic are displayed for the members to see. He explains that this neighborhood has no sidewalks and narrow roads making truck traffic especially hazardous to area residents. He has witnessed trucks trying to turn around in very small areas when they see the no outlet signage. In response to a question on whether it is permissible to have trucks use the area streets, Captain Brown states that deliveries to and from area businesses are permissible. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) James Saxer adds to what he has already said by informing the Traffic Safety Board that trucks delivering to the Brew Pub have space to exit through the pub parking lot and it is not necessary for them to use the surrounding side streets. It's explained to Mr. Saxer that even if a sign like what he is requesting is installed, trucks are still permitted to make local deliveries and use these local streets. Mr. Saxer understands that local deliveries cannot be avoided but would like something done regarding the beer delivery trucks diving through his neighborhood every week.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment and opens the discussion up to the members. Dan Rider inquires why the original signs were taken down and not replaced. Chris Schregel displays a map with the locations of the original "No Commercial Vehicle" signage and explains that they were taken down as part of the access management project. Kevin Cantwell suggests the possibility of a weight restriction sign. Chris Schregel explains that weight restriction signage should not be placed unless there is some type of physical reason, like a utility or structure that can't handle the weight. Chairman Fraas would like to see the "No commercial Vehicles" signage put up on McKinley and Main, Garfield and Transit, Harding and Main, Lyndhurst and Transit. Motion by Kevin Cantwell second by Chairman Fraas to install "No Commercial Vehicles" signage at the locations mentioned. Approved 9-0. Referred to Highway to re-install signage.

5. Amherst State Park loop road - Request for additional signage to clarify direction of travel. Chairman Fraas opens the discussion to the members. Chris Schregel displays a diagram explaining the request. This item relates to the entrance of the park as shown on the map and its one-way configuration. The resident's original concern was that bicyclists were traveling in the wrong direction. The item shifted, and now the resident is asking that all signage be reviewed. Chairman Fraas suggests eliminating the small area of road that runs through the loop to help with driver confusion. Ultimately, the Traffic Safety Board is in favor of filing the request with a possible elimination of the small section of road to be considered if a redesign is scheduled. Receive and file.
6. East Park Club Lane – Review of Traffic Control at N. Forest Road (State intersection). Chairman Fraas begins by saying the Police Department has informed the Board that a stop sign is missing at the intersection. This item will be combined with item 10 and referred to NYSDOT.
7. Glen Oak Drive at Smith Road – Review stop sign visibility at both directions. Removed Item as it was taken care of by Erie County and Town forces.
8. 468 Harding Road Rezoning – concerns from the Harding / McKinley Road Neighborhood, south of Wehrle. This item has been reviewed by the Traffic Safety Board as a site plan and recommendations have been sent to the Planning Board. Chairman Fraas explains that the traffic safety board will only discuss subjects specifically related to traffic safety on the street. Chairman Fraas turns the discussion over to Chris Schregel and Tom Voight. Chris Schregel begins by displaying the rezoning plan and explains that this area was reviewed by the Traffic Safety Board and was approved to rezone with conditions. Curb cut placement was a concern of the Traffic Safety Board, with a number of lots possibly having driveways on the curves and close to an intersection. The Traffic Safety Board also suggested a private alley service for all ten lots located in the rear property line and the possibility of consolidating driveways. Tom Voight discusses the history of this project. He begins by saying he has talked to a number of residents in this neighborhood. This project came to the Planning Board a few months ago asking to rezone the property to a traditional residential zone 3. The Planning Board recommended denial of this project. This proposal will be before the Town Board for approval or denial at an upcoming meeting. Chris Schregel discusses the reason this item is now before the Traffic Safety Board. He explains that many communications have been received by the Town from area residents regarding this proposed development. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) Judd Simon, Petitioner for this project. He explains that the zoning change they are requesting is the addition of 4 houses, from 6 houses to 10, all being single family detached garage homes. He comments that the residents' past concerns have been addressed. Also, the alley idea was explored but there is insufficient room to allow for it.
 - a) Richard Grabenstater, 469 Harding Road. His property is across the street from five of the proposed homes. He states that the residents that will be impacted the most by the addition of homes in this neighborhood approve of the project. He comments that vehicle headlights coming into their homes could be an issue with some of the homes in the proposed project as the current residents have problems with headlights shining in from vehicles on Freeman Road impacting their homes.

Chairman Fraas informs the members should this project get Town Board approval it will be referred back to the Traffic Safety Board to review the driveway locations.

- b) Wehrle Drive between Harlem Road and I-90 – Sidewalk ramps. Chris Schregel begins with an explanation of this item. He explains that Wehrle Drive is being paved by Erie County. As part of the repaving project they are required to upgrade all ADA ramps. They discovered that several of the sidewalks encourage mid-block crossings at uncontrolled/unmarked areas. The County is asking for guidance for the installation of new ADA ramps by either eliminating the sidewalks in spots or redirecting them to side streets. A diagram of the proposed new design to install ADA ramps redirected to the side streets is presented on screen. Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Jennifer Michniewicz to approve the design as show on the screen. Approved 8-1 (Dionne opposed).
- c) N. Union Road, Rt. 277 – Request to re-route traffic to I-290 to preserve neighborhood character. Chris Schregel begins by explaining this item. He comments this is a State Highway. The resident for this item would like a more residential feeling to the road. He would like traffic re-routed or use I-290 rather than Route 277 to reduce the traffic volume. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
- a) Lee Dryden, 572 North Forest. He begins by saying he has lived in this neighborhood for 35 years. He states the character of the road is almost entirely residential and is tree lined with numerous curves. He asks that the speed limit be reduced and that alternative routes are taken by trucks, oversized loads and inappropriate vehicles. He would also like the numbered state highway number (277) removed from the street description. Mr. Dryden would like North Forest/North Union changed to a 35 mph residential road. He states the current situation features fast, heavy traffic. He states that it is an unsafe situation.
- Mr. Dryden would like to add that Amherst Central Park is going to need a safe route for pedestrians to use to access the park. He would also like a roadside sidewalk.
- b) Eric Borenstein has lived on North Forest for about 30 years. He has seen the amount of traffic including large commercial vehicles increase dramatically. He adds that North Forest has become impossible to navigate at a moderate speed. The speeds of the vehicles traveling on the street are fast and dangerous. It's very difficult for him to enter and exit his own driveway. He also comments that the number of bikers, walkers and joggers have increased making this especially dangerous. He is happy with the plans the Town has for adding parks, but feels that the state highway designation is not compatible for the neighborhood it runs through. He is very worried for the people that use North Forest / North Union that are not in vehicles. He is requesting the Amherst Traffic Safety Board recommend several changes, to re-route commercial traffic, to reduce the speed limit and also to connect and add sidewalks in spots that don't have them.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the discussion to the members. Chairman Fraas begins by reminding everyone that Rt. 277 is a New York State Road which limits the Towns ability to make changes on the road. Chris Schregel notes that the Town has the ability to order in sidewalks in this location. The Town can also request the State install sidewalks were needed. Chris Schregel displays the sidewalk map on the screen to indicate the areas that need to be added. Chris Schregel agrees with the residents stating that the sidewalk is spotty and incomplete. Chairman Fraas comments that it will be challenging to add sidewalks in some sections. Data is shared from the GBNRTC website specific to a count in 2020. In 2020, there were 9075 vehicles per day and 2% of those vehicles were Trucks. The count conducted prior to 2020 was done in 2015 and shows 10,060 Vehicles and again 2% trucks. The 85th percentile speeds in 2020 recorded at 43 mph, the data showed the same speeds in 2015. The trends as far as increased volume indicate in 1991 a mild increase but the data also indicates decreases during some years. Chris Schregel states the counts indicate that speeds are not a significant problem. Chairman Fraas feels that traffic will not decrease by changing the state route designation. Jennifer Michniewicz comments that if a sidewalk is installed for the length of North Forest / North Union it might help reduce vehicle speeds. Greg Dionne suggests narrowing the lanes as a traffic calming measure. Chairman Fraas would like to refer this entire corridor to the State to review traffic safety, calming measures and Pedestrian accommodations to and include Item 5 request of a missing stop sign that needs to be replaced. This request is to include narrowing of the lanes, addition of possible bike lane, sidewalk connections and the installation of the missing stop sign.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business to report. No other new Business being heard, Chairman Fraas closes the New Business portion of the meeting and opens up the Old Business portion of the meeting. Maxwell Kahn would like to know if there has been any progress regarding traffic circle construction at the six corner intersection of Millersport/ Eggert/ Grover Cleveland/ Longmeadow. Chris Schregel comments that this was included as part of another request to the State DOT but a response has not been received. Chairman Fraas would like to discuss Klein / Covent Gardens sidewalks stating that one small area of sidewalk is missing at 771 Klein Road. He would like that section filled in with a connection to the existing sidewalk. Chris Schregel suggests that the Traffic Safety Board be the applicant to the technical sidewalk review committee requesting a sidewalk in that location. Chairman Fraas asks if any other member would be in favor of this sidewalk addition, all 9 present voted in favor to pursue. Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business - none being heard new business is closed and Old Business is open to the members.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Eggert Road Diet - Update. Chris Schregel has an update, beginning with an explanation of the correspondence that has been sent to the members. The correspondence is a combination of The Town of Amherst, the Town of Tonawanda and the City of Buffalo as they have a coordinated request to the GBNRTC asking for an Eggert Road review specific to dieting. The scope is expanded to include Eggert road from the Route 33 off ramps to Colvin. This review will be conducted by the GBNRTC in the near future.
- B. Tactical Urbanism – Various Locations. Proposals are being collected for Park Club and Brompton Road which has a tactical element within those proposals. Hold for more information at the August meeting.
- C. Chateau Terrace – Planning Department information and Park School response. Chairman Fraas would like a letter sent to the Fire District to determine if that driveway is needed for emergency access. Chairman Fraas suggests that a letter be sent to Park School informing them that the Town is reviewing the closure of the curb cut. Tom Voight comments that the curb cut is on the original site plan and it might be a fire code issue if it's removed. Joe Frese suggests installing pavers to deter vehicles from entering but allowing emergency vehicles access. Hold for response from the school and the Fire Department.
- D. Youngs / Casey intersection – Review of Stop Bar Location. Chris Schregel displays a map of the location. This item was discussed under new business in May. The distance was measured between the flashing red signal head to the existing cross stop bar. That distance is 62 feet and 66 feet. As per the MUTCD, that distance can be reduced to 40 feet. Chris Schregel is of the opinion that the distance should be closer to 40 feet for this location. It is suggested that a request be sent to the County to make the change. If the County is not willing to make the change, the Town can move the stop bar. Other discussion held regarding extending the double yellow center lane lines and extending the fog line to wrap around Youngs Road to Casey Road. Refer to County with series of recommendations.

Chairman Fraas asks if anyone has any additional old business to add. None being heard the New and Old business portion of the meeting is closed.

SITE PLANS / REZONING - None

Motion by Dan Rider to adjourn meeting at 11:30 pm, second by Chairman Fraas approved 9-0. Next meeting is scheduled for August 4, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator