

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 15, 2022

The June meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on June 15, 2022, Chairman Eric Fraas presiding. First order of business was approval of the May 4, 2022 meeting minutes, which Chairman Fraas begins by asking if any additions or corrections are needed. Kevin Cantwell would like page 3, second bullet point, "in to" added after the word "encroaching" and on page 3, third bullet point, the addition of "on the south side of Bentham Parkway East" after the word "bump-in." Greg Dionne asks that page 2, item 3, include the addition of "2525 Kensington Avenue" after the words "explanation of" and page 6, remove "motion by Chairman Fraas 2nd by Dan Rider." Motion by Kevin Cantwell, seconded by Maxwell Kahn, to approve the minutes as corrected. Approved 6-0. Members present were Vice Chairman Gregory Dionne, Dan Rider, Kevin Cantwell, Ken Smith, and Maxwell Kahn. Departmental Liaisons included Thomas Voigt of the Planning Department, Bill Prenevau of the Building Department, Captain Kevin Brown of the Police Department and Christopher Schregel, Traffic Safety Coordinator/Engineering Liaison. Also in attendance was Michael Szukala, Councilmember Liaison. Guest list on record at the Town's Engineering Department.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Youngs / Renaissance – Request for a crosswalk with flashing beacon. Chris Schregel begins with a brief explanation of this item, which is a request for a crosswalk with a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) similar to what has been installed on Casey Road. The resident explained that the neighborhood to the east is generating pedestrian traffic to and from Bassett Park. Chris Schregel states that the members received speed and traffic volume information along with accident information in their packets. Jennifer Michniewicz previously provided DOT guidance regarding the requirements for establishing an RRFB. In following those procedures, a pedestrian count was conducted during a Farmers Market event at Bassett Park. The two-hour count indicated that while the number of vehicles met the criteria, the pedestrian count fell just short of the warrant – the count also took note that sight distance was adequate, and that this location was not close to another crosswalk. Additionally, speeds came in at 30-45 mph with two driving lanes.

Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item.

a) Matt Swerdlin, 138 Promenade Lane. Mr. Swerdlin's presents several points:

- his biggest concern is that the speed limit is 45 mph, but he has witnessed vehicles driving faster than that, causing conflicts with crossing pedestrians.
- he is concerned with the retirement community that is close by, having walked this area in all kinds of weather and observing a number of individuals from the retirement community also out walking.
- he would like to be able to walk safely with his children across Youngs Road, and suggests a crosswalk be considered, even if it has to be done without the flashing beacon, and installed at an angle.
- he asks that some type of traffic control device be installed to warn drivers that pedestrian crossing is occurring.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the Board discussion by saying he lives in this area and has a concern with the pedestrian path that stops at Youngs Road. He has seen numerous individuals using the park, especially during warmer months, and has noticed a fair number of pedestrians crossing Youngs Road to access the path. Maxwell Kahn also lives in this area, and notes that although the pedestrian count did not meet the criteria, it was still close to what is needed -- with numbers so close, he recommends the Town install an RRFB. Kevin Cantwell suggests extending the sidewalk to line up with the adjacent sidewalk as he indicates on the screen. Chris Schregel agrees with that idea, and goes on to say the addition of a bump-out and extended sidewalk could be a reasonable solution. Chairman Fraas anticipates backups with left hand turns at this location should a bump-out be installed without a center turning lane. Dan Rider was driving in the area and noticed a sight distance issue. Greg Dionne agrees with Maxwell Kahn and would like to see an RRFB installed, and further suggests that the stop bar be positioned further back on Renaissance so that it lines up with the stop sign. He also suggests asking for a lower speed limit on Youngs Road. Lastly, a member pointed out that GBNRTC has recently done counts in this area and asks that the Amherst Traffic Safety Board review them when the results are released. After some further discussion, motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Kevin Cantwell, to refer this matter to the Engineering Department to develop a plan with a cost estimate, and then with that information in hand, request a CIP project specific to this location. Approved 6-0. Highway will be contacted to make improvements to the striping in advance of any other long-term changes.

2. Richfield / Scott – Request for a “Cross Traffic Does Not Stop” sub-plaque. Chris Schregel begins with an explanation of this item by saying that there have been no reported accidents at this location from 2017-2021. He further reminds the Board that in 2019 a request for the same signage was received, but because of the lack of accident history the sign was not recommended by the Amherst Traffic Safety Board at that time. Chairman Fraas opens the discussion to the members. Dan Rider comments on the overgrown grass and foliage that needs to be cut back to allow for better sight distance. Chairman Fraas states that this is a dead-end street with little traffic and no accident history. Greg Dionne would like to see a stop bar added at the stop location. As nothing has changed since this was looked at in 2019, the members are in agreement to receive and file this item. Approved 6-0.
3. Saratoga Park ADA Curb Ramp – Request for warning sign(s). Chris Schregel explains that Saratoga Park is located in Snyder just south of Amherst Middle School. The Town received a request for continuation of sidewalks within this area to extend to the intersection at Washington Highway, which the Town’s Sidewalk Committee will be reviewing. However, another matter has been brought forward regarding the ramps that are currently at this location but are not connected by a crosswalk. Chris Schregel states that adding a crosswalk at this location is not safe given the sight distance and curve. A possible solution would be to take the current ramps out, extend the sidewalk to the intersection, and add ADA ramps at the intersection location. He also suggests signing the area close to the current ramps as a quick solution, displaying appropriate signage for ‘pedestrians’ on the screen. Maxwell Kahn would like to see the current ramps removed as they could be dangerous. Greg Dionne disagrees with the removal of the ADA ramp and would like to see a crosswalk and signage added at the current location. He would like the current ramps removed only when the new section of sidewalk is added and new ADA ramps are put in at the intersection. Chairman Fraas would like pedestrian signage installed because of the nearby school and park. Motion by Greg Dionne, second by Dan Rider, to install two pedestrian signs (W11-2) in advance of the ramps in both the eastbound and westbound directions. Approved 6-0.
4. Buckeye / Sweet Home – Parking Restriction. Chris Schregel begins by saying that Buckeye Road is a residential neighborhood with an entrance/exit on Sweet Home Road. A resident contacted the Town with a concern that vehicles are parking too close to the intersection, causing problems when turning onto Buckeye from Sweet Home. Chairman Fraas opens the discussion to the members. Greg Dionne is in favor of a parking restriction of 30 feet. Motion by Chairman Fraas,

second by Dan Rider, to install a "No Parking" sign on both sides of Buckeye Road at the intersection of Sweet Home Road 30 feet from the stop sign. Approved 6-0. Refer to Highway.

5. Allenhurst / Cambridge – Request for a "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" sub-plaque. Chris Schregel begins with a short explanation of this item, saying a resident contacted the Engineering Department requesting a "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" sub-plaque at the intersection of Allenhurst and Cambridge. A stop sign map has been distributed to the members and shows that the parallel roadway Windermere Blvd. is all-way stopped at every intersection while Allenhurst is not, causing driver confusion. Accident history shows no accidents at this subject intersection from 2017-2021. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item.
- a) Sarah Ridolfi, 309 Allenhurst Road. She states that her home is located on the corner of Allenhurst and Cambridge. She comments that:
- she sees frequent near-miss accidents daily and hears horns blowing throughout the day
 - this intersection is heavily used by area residents
 - drivers are confused when entering the intersection, unaware that it's not an all-way stop like other intersections in the area
 - suggests a sub-plaque with "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" would improve driver awareness
 - would like the existing stop sign improved and made more visible, as it is currently attached to a light pole, making it less noticeable.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the discussion to the Board, which Chris Schregel begins by saying that stop signs are required to be at a specific height, a certain distance from an intersection, and a specific distance from the curb line -- as long as those posting requirements are met, stop signs are allowed to be hung on light poles. After some discussion, Chairman Fraas states that the location of the current stop sign is not correct as it is on the major leg of the intersection rather than the minor leg. The correct adjustment to this intersection would be to reverse the current stop signs, although this is generally not acceptable to area residents. Greg Dionne also suggests the installation of stop bars at all three of the intersections to improve safety. Maxwell Kahn suggests making this intersection consistent with the other area intersections by installing an all-way stop. Chairman Fraas and Greg Dionne agree that an all-way stop would be beneficial in this case. However, The Traffic Safety Board is uncomfortable making this recommendation without data, and recommends having a speed and volume count done to determine if an all-way stop is appropriate. Hold for counts at the intersection of Cambridge and Allenhurst.

Chairman Fraas asks if any other new business needs to come before the Board. Greg Dionne has an item to bring before the members. He comments that "GObike Buffalo," which advocates for pedestrian and biking safety, has recently completed a study in the city of Buffalo tracking vehicle volume on area streets and identifying the more dangerous roads. He requested that they include the Town of Amherst by doing a similar study. He displays the map he received which indicates the more dangerous streets for bike and pedestrian travel, with Klein and Eggert marked among these hazardous roads, along with a few others.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Delamere & Cranburne Intersection – Safety concerns after stop was relocated. Chris Schregel begins by displaying on-screen the original recommendation by the Traffic Safety Board that was referred to the Town Board resulting in the removal of two of the stop signs. No resident opposition was voiced during that public meeting. Following the posting of the new stop sign, a resident living in the area noticed high vehicle speeds. A speed count conducted after the sign changes did not indicate excessive speeding. Chairman Fraas opens the discussion to the Board, which he begins by reminding the Board that the intent was to evaluate this intersection 3-6 months after the changes had been made, and for that reason he is hesitant to re-evaluate this intersection prematurely. Receive and file.

B. Bentham East Parkway / 2500 Kensington – Departmental responses. Chris Schregel reminds everyone that this item was before the board last month, with a resident complaining about the valet parking occurring on Bentham East -- the item was held waiting for review from the Highway, Engineering and Planning Departments. Here is the Departmental input:

- HIGHWAY did not have any objection to a bump-in on Bentham East Parkway for drop-off as long as it was designed correctly and maintained.
- ENGINEERING conducted a sight distance study showing that the tree/bush in the front of the building by the street did in fact cause some sight distance issues.
- PLANNING was asked specifically about the usage of a valet. Tom Voigt explains the response from the Planning Department. He begins by saying that the zoning ordinance allows for valet parking through an "alternative parking analysis", which would be reviewed by zoning enforcement. There is no evidence of a parking analysis being filed. The Planning Department is asking for an "alternative parking analysis" from 2500 Kensington that demonstrates their capabilities. If they do not wish to comply with this request, the Planning Department thinks a bump-in on the Kensington Avenue right-of-way would be more beneficial to the business and more easily accessible to the front entrance. It was pointed out that this location may create a sight distance issue similar to the existing tree/bush. Changes to the property will need to go through the Planning Department and site plan review.

Chairman Fraas comments that during the building construction nothing was in the plan for a valet service, bump-in or bump-out, and if this needs to be added, the current owners would need to go through the proper procedures. This item to be referred back to the owners of 2500 Kensington to determine what solution they would like to pursue. The recommendation is to request that they submit a parking analysis demonstrating the need for a valet service, also that they pursue the bump-in on Bentham East as previously discussed at earlier meetings.

Chairman Fraas would like to discuss the sight distance study conducted on 2500 Kensington. The bushes were found to be in the County right-of-way, making the county responsible for removal. Refer to Dan Ulatowski from code enforcement to check on codes regarding the tree and shrubbery and to confirm that the landscaping is in compliance.

C. 179 S. Rockingham Way – Counts north and west of the curve collected. Chris Schregel begins by saying that this was brought to the Traffic and Safety Board during the winter months and counts could not be conducted. At that time a driver failed to negotiate the nearby curve and slipped in snowy conditions, ultimately hitting a roadside tree. Counts have now been completed with counters located at both tangent points of the curve on both ends. The southbound resulted in an 85th percentile of 34 mph entering the curve and an 85th percentile of northbound exiting the curve at 34 mph. Eastbound traffic was an 85th percentile speed of 32 mph entering and exiting of 28 mph. Speed advisory signage is currently at this location. Chairman Fraas comments that a stop sign is not warranted at the nearby intersection of Penny Lane. Motion to receive and file by Chairman Fraas, second by Greg Dionne. Approved 6-0.

Chairman Fraas asks if anyone has any additional new or old business to bring before the Board. None being heard, the Old and New Business portions of the meeting are closed.

SITE PLANS / REZONING

SUBJECT: Major Site Plan Review SP-2020-09B
ADDRESS: 2605 Amherst Manor Drive (Formerly 500 Maple Road)
PETITIONER: 111 North Maplemere

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

- Amherst Traffic Safety Board is in agreement that the southbound left turn lane should be established at the intersection of Maple Road and N. Maplemere Road given the queue analysis and the proximity to the nearby driveways.
- Will further review potential traffic calming measures at time of Site Plan submission for the N. Maplemere Road extension.

SUBJECT: Proposed Minor Site Plan SP-2011-09_B
ADDRESS: 3171 Sheridan Drive
PETITIONER: Vocon

X MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

SUBJECT: Major Site Plan Review SP-2021-05
ADDRESS: 1081 North French Road (NCD)
PETITIONER: Sawyers Landing LLC

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Provide details for the RRFB. Town able to provide a detail of a standard used on Casey Road upon request.
2. Provide a sign plan for the RRFB and its crossing.
3. Explore the potential to widen north shoulder of Dodge Road to create a buffer between the driving lane and the proposed striped bike trail between the RRFB and the access road (by others).

Motion by Kevin Cantwell to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 pm, second by Chairman Fraas. Approved 6-0. Next meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator