

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 **November 1, 2023**

The November meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on November 1, 2023, Chairman Eric Fraas presiding. He opens the first order of business, asking if any changes or corrections are needed to the September 6, 2023 meeting minutes. Greg Dionne would like his name added to the members in attendance as his name was not listed. Motion by Kevin Cantwell, second by Kristen Goss, to approve the minutes as corrected. Approved 6-0. Members in attendance are Chairman Eric Fraas, Vice Chairman Gregory Dionne, Dan Rider, Kevin Cantwell, Jennifer Michniewicz and Kristin Goss. Departmental Liaisons included Thomas Voigt of the Planning Department, Bill Prenevau of the Building Department, Captain Charles Persons of the Police Department, Chris Schregel, Traffic Safety Coordinator/Engineering Liaison and Councilman Michael Szukala, Town Board Liaison to the Amherst Traffic Safety Board. Guest list is on record at the Town's Engineering Department.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Heim Road, Montbleu, Southwedge, Schimwood area – Safety concerns related to overflow parking from the ISNF Mosque. Chairman Fraas begin by reviewing some points received by the requesting resident, who could not be in attendance:
 - neighborhood becomes a parking lot during Mosque activities
 - the mosque does not have enough off-street parking
 - current parking situation is unsafe
 - property value has been affected
 - parked vehicles on both sides of Fair Woods Drive choke it down into a single lane road.

Chris Schregel continue the introduction by saying the Traffic Safety Board previously recommended, and the Town Board approved, a parking restriction on Heim Road and a section of Montbleu from 11am – 5pm on Fridays only, which was approved with modifications. A recommendation for additional parking restrictions on a section of Fair Woods closest to Heim Road was also sent to the Town Board for approval, although not all the recommendations were approved. Chris Schregel also comments that a new parking area, displayed on-screen, was constructed on the mosque property after the initial request in 2019. He adds that more parking is currently proposed with construction soon to begin, displaying the approved site plan on screen. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) Shahid Ahmad, 589 Ambrose Court. He introduces himself as an engineer by profession and has been working on expanding the mosque parking lot for some time, pointing out that 57 parking spots have been added to the rear of the property. He explains that the mosque is not used every day of the week, specifying the time frame causing parking or traffic problems for residents is Friday from 1:30 pm-2:30 pm. He agrees that the

residents did have some valid complaints back in 2019 regarding the parked cars preventing school buses from negotiating the turn onto Montbleu, and sees the sense in the parking restrictions put in place at that time. As further remediation, he explains that the mosque has a total of 267 parking spots since adding the new parking area, and that they have added another prayer time to reduce the number of people attending each session. He feels that a second driveway would ease access congestion so that more attendees would park in the lot rather than on Heim Road, but Erie County denied their request for a second curb cut to accommodate the driveway. He says that the mosque is doing whatever they can to reduce parking on the streets but is unable to keep drivers from parking there if that is what they choose to do. To help manage the parking even further, the mosque has hired a security company to monitor the situation during Friday prayer meetings.

- b) Mario Rodrigues, 534 Delaware Avenue. He is head of security on Fridays for the mosque and understands the complaints and concerns of the resident and is committed to the safety of all involved. To help alleviate the problems his company has increased staffing and added security cameras, and to improve communication with the members of the mosque their president makes an announcement before and after prayer regarding the parking. He also states the Town Police Department has helped enforce the parking restrictions. He concludes by saying the mosque, its President, its Board members, along with all the team there have consistently demonstrated due diligence in working with the Traffic Safety Board, the Police Department, and the community discussing and addressing any concerns.
- c) Rasul Khan, 92 Laural Lane. He is the current Chairman for the Islamic Society. He also mentions that announcements are made every Friday during prayer about the parking situation, and members are also encouraged to carpool. He is asking for some guidance on approval for a second entrance/exit, emphasizing this would ease the traffic congestion.

Chairman Fraas asks Mr. Ahmad if the property at 735 Heim is mosque property, and is informed that is where the priest for the mosque resides and is in fact owned by the mosque.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the Board discussion by saying Heim Road is a County Road and they would need approval from the County for a new curb cut to accommodate a second driveway – Mr. Ahmad has already stated that this has been denied. Chairman Fraas suggests using the already established driveway at 735 Heim Road for an exit/entrance since it's already part of the mosque complex. Chairman Fraas would like to refer to Erie County and come up with a design using the driveway at 735 Heim Road. Chris Schregel suggests a site plan modification that the County can then review and untimely be reviewed by the Planning Board. Receive and file.

- 2. Maynard Drive near Main Street – Safety concerns related to overflow parking from Sacred Heart School. Chris Schregel opens the discussion by saying residents on Maynard Drive close to Main Street contacted the Town regarding overflow parking on Maynard Drive from Sacred Heart Academy School. Maynard Drive is a residential roadway with a parking restriction on the east side and parking permitted on the west side. In the past, student and staff overflow parking was permitted at the nearby Key Bank parking lot, but that agreement has been terminated with new ownership. To accommodate the displaced vehicles, Sacred Heart has added parking in the rear of the school building and on the property across Maynard owned by the school. Residents are not in support of a parking restriction, favoring instead an agreement that would encourage the vehicles currently overflowing onto Maynard

Drive to park elsewhere. The residents feel it is a safety issue when backing out of driveways and are asking for solutions. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) Terri Wincott, 36 Maynard. She lives 4 houses down from Main Street, and states that safety is the main problem. About 12 vehicles park on this section of Maynard Drive every school day, and the students park close to the residents' driveways all along the curve making it very difficult to see oncoming traffic when backing out. She goes on to say that snow plowing will be difficult, and her garbage is not being picked up because of the parking on Maynard. She is concerned that leaf pick up will also be affected by the parking situation. She has had discussions with neighbors on Crosby Boulevard and they also have issues with sight distance and seeing oncoming vehicles. She would like some type of solution.
- b) Marty Clark, 20 Maynard Drive. He has been at this address for 20 years and comments that there has never been a problem with parking until recently. He feels that the school needs 20 spots and should be able to work something out with the new property owners (Spectrum). He also adds that garbage pick-up has been affected by the parking conditions and the students have partially parked in his driveway on occasion. He would like Sacred Heart School to come up with a solution that does not involve students parking on Maynard Drive. He feels more parking should be available to the staff and students on school grounds.
- c) Jennifer Demert, 3860 Main Street. She is Head of School at the Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart. She comments that in years past the school was able to use the parking area in the Key Bank parking lot for any overflow parking. In February, the new owners of the parking property (Spectrum) informed the school officials they were terminating the parking agreement since the building is now a call center and requires use of the entire parking lot. Ms. Demert goes on to say that the school added spots in the rear of the school and purchased property close by for extra parking spots. She explains that the front circle cannot be used for parking as it is used for busing, and the school also designed a pick-up and drop-off plan for parents, although this plan is not always followed. The school accommodates all senior student drivers and all faculty and staff on campus, commenting that the students parking on Maynard Drive are junior students or younger. She says the school has invested a large amount of money in solving this problem and in her opinion has done all that that can be done to address the parking changes.
- d) Robert Beiswanger, 66 Bentham Parkway. He is the treasurer on the Board of Directors of Sacred Heart. He would like the residents to know that the school has made every attempt to request the use of additional parking from the new owners at the adjacent parking lot, but to date they have been very reluctant to allow the school to use any of parking spots in their lot. He goes on to say that the school would be willing to discuss a rental agreement if at any time they would like to permit the use of a portion of the parking lot.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the Board discussion by asking if the residents in the neighborhood have reached out to the new property owners of the adjacent lot. He feels the property owners (Benchmark/Spectrum) might be more receptive if residents in the neighborhood express their dissatisfaction with the parking disruption. He also says the Traffic Safety Board is limited as to what actions can be taken and points out that parking restrictions would solve the problem but would also limit parking for the area residents. Kristin Goss suggests the school look at some of the green space surrounding the school to add more parking spaces, to which Ms. Demert responded by saying the maximum number of spaces were added per the Towns design standards. Chairman Fraas asks the Board members if anyone would be in favor of enacting parking restrictions.

- Jennifer Michniewicz feels the school has done everything in their power to improve the parking issues. After an evaluation of sight distances, she would support parking restrictions if it's determined that parked cars block vision, but even so is not in favor of full restriction but rather a restriction to include certain hours. She feels further discussion is needed to consider all aspects before making any decisions on parking restriction times and locations.
- Chairman Fraas would like information on the sight distance going down the hill and around the curve and would like to more closely examine locations for parking restrictions on either the east or west side. He would like to make Maynard Drive a safer street but needs further information before the Traffic Safety Board moves forward.

Greg Dionne makes a motion, second by Jennifer Michniewicz, to follow both Jennifer Michniewicz and Chairman Fraas course of action for obtaining sight distance calculations. Approved 6-0, item held pending further information.

3. Sierra Drive and Lynette Lane – Speed and volume review after subdivision build out. Chris Schregel opens this item by saying this is part of the Muir Woods subdivision, and some residents of Muir Woods have asked for a traffic count because of high speeds in their neighborhood. A speed and volume count was conducted at the location displayed onscreen a few months ago, revealing a northbound 85th percentile of 31 mph, and 33 mph southbound. The residents requested another count to be done at a second location displayed onscreen, with the 85th percentiles at this new location coming in at 25 mph and 23 mph. Counts were also conducted closer to Campbell Blvd. and those results indicated an eastbound 85th percentile speed of 29 mph and westbound 38 mph. This count did indicate some speeding in the westbound direction coming off Campbell Boulevard, and the Police Captain was notified. Greg Dionne suggests eliminating the passing zone on Campbell Boulevard to slow traffic when entering the subdivision. Refer to DOT after confirming the current striping, if necessary. Receive and file.
4. North Bailey Ave. between Sheridan Drive and Maple Road – Traffic concerns, request to close commercial driveways, request to convert North Bailey Ave to one-way. Chris Schregel begins the discussion by explaining that this section of North Bailey has been brought to the Traffic Safety Boards attention by residents with numerous safety concerns resulting from the traffic generated by the Walmart and Wegmans. The resident would like North Bailey turned into a one-way or would like to consider closing the curb cuts along North Bailey. Chris Schregel explains that North Bailey is classified as a collector roadway, providing a clarification of what this designation means. A 2017 TIS provided by an engineering firm hired by Costco is relevant since the store is still in development and will further impact traffic on North Bailey -- the study showed speeds at 32 mph close to Walmart and 34 and 35 mph closer to the Costco location, with daily average vehicle counts at 12,000 vehicles. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) Patricia Richter, 4724 North Bailey Ave. She has much to say concerning the Bailey Avenue traffic:
 - opens her comments by saying the North Bailey residents were promised a lot of things during the construction of the Walmart and now another large store will be adding traffic to this already busy section of North Bailey Avenue
 - residents deal with heavy traffic and even gridlock at some times of day
 - buses and large trucks go up and down the street at all hours of the day
 - parking is not allowed on Bailey Avenue
 - Walmart traffic and truck deliveries have caused some of the traffic issues and she is worried that the development of Costco will just add to the already congested traffic problems

- would like to see some of the traffic utilize Alberta as it is a four-lane roadway and less busy.
- b) Kent Richter, 4714 North Bailey Ave. He has been the president of the homeowner's association in the past. He informs the members that the residents of North Bailey were told by both Walmart and Wegmans that the business driveways would not let out on to Bailey Avenue. They were also told that a crash gate would be used in the back entrance of Walmart for emergencies. Right now, however, that entrance is open and used for truck deliveries with many of these trucks using North Bailey to access this driveway. He sees traffic backups on a regular basis and is concerned with the added traffic that Costco will generate. He feels three grocery stores in such close proximity to each other is unnecessary. He would like to see North Bailey turned into a one-way going southbound and close off the Walmart driveway on Bailey Avenue. He ends by saying the traffic has gotten progressively worse every year.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the discussion to the Board. Chris Schregel begins by saying that the traffic impact study prepared by the Town's consulting company C&S is projecting that 10% of the Costco traffic will be using this section of North Bailey. The number of vehicles projected is 37 new vehicles during the weekday afternoon peak northbound and another 40 vehicles going southbound. The projected Saturday mid-day peak is 56 vehicles headed northbound and southbound. Kevin Cantwell feels that the traffic caused by Costco will primarily use Maple Road and the I-290, and as such doesn't think North Bailey will be adversely impacted by Costco traffic in this section. Chairman Fraas explains to the residents that Bowmart Drive will be extended to empty into the Costco site, diverting some of the new traffic away from Bailey Avenue. Gregory Dionne does not think speeds would decrease if Bailey Avenue was turned into a one-way, in fact believes the speeds would increase with more traffic, possibly resulting in more crashes. He then broaches the idea of a roundabout at the 5-way stop intersection with Emerson and would like to add a crosswalk on Bailey at Henel. Chairman Fraas explains that all the residents on Bailey Avenue would be notified of the request to change Bailey Avenue to one-way and they would be asked for input. The majority of residents would need to approve the change, and he goes on to say that the majority of the residents would most likely not be in favor of this change.

Members discuss how to best divert traffic to Alberta Drive, which would relieve some of the traffic pressure on Bailey Avenue. Chairman Fraas notes that when the Boulevard Mall is redeveloped, this traffic might start to flow over onto Alberta Drive and divert traffic from Bailey.

The members discuss the installation of a crash gate for emergency access only at the rear entrance of the Walmart property the next time Walmart requests a site plan modification. This can be recommended to Highway or the Planning Department during any future modification.

Motion from Gregory Dionne, second by Kevin Cantwell, to recommend to the Town Board the installation of a roundabout at the Emerson-Bailey-Amsterdam 5-way intersection. Approved 6-0.

Dan Rider and Kristin Goss would like further discussion regarding changing Bailey to a one-way street during the development stages of the Boulevard Mall project. Chris Schregel suggests referring the one-way option to the technical committee that is working on the Boulevard Mall project to see if it can be considered as part of the overall Boulevard district planning. Approved.

5. Ayer Road, Klein Road and Knollwood intersection – Request barrier and/or traffic control device. Chris Schregel begins the discussion with the number of crashes at this intersection, counting five (5) in the past five years, two of them being vehicle intrusions into the area the resident is requesting barrier installation -- there is evidence that at one time a guardrail was in fact at this location and may have been taken down during utility work in the area. He also mentions that a good number of vehicles are unable to negotiate the curve, causing property damage. Speaking

to volume, speed and current traffic control, Chris' data shows that Klein Road handles 10,000 vehicles per day with an 85th percentile speed of 42 mph and the intersection is stop controlled on the Ayer leg on the south side only. This intersection is an offset intersection that has been before the Traffic Safety Board in the past, and during the last review the Board concluded that it would be best if this intersection was realigned to eliminate conflicts caused by the mis-aligned configurations. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:

- a) Noah Rifkin, 125 Briar Hill Road. He has lived at this location since 1996 and is the head of the Homeowners Association for Wood Stream Farms, and mentions the following points:
- the traffic problems here have been an issue for many years, and he has seen countless crashes over time - some reported, some not
 - winter conditions cause many vehicles to run off the road at this location causing property damage
 - high speeds on Ayer Road cause dangerous conditions at this intersection
 - the overall volume of vehicles, trucks and delivery vehicles have increased significantly in recent years
 - the neighborhood has grown with newer developments, many of those housing senior citizens
 - residents are requesting a barrier to protect their property.
- b) Dick Leed, 5 Briar Hill Road. Mr. Leed begins by saying he has lived in the area for 50 years and he agrees with everything already said, adding that there are numerous accidents at this location that are not reported. He would like a barrier installed at this location and would like consideration given to the installation of barriers at some other locations also.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the Board discussion by stating that he himself lives in this area and is very familiar with this intersection. He would recommend that the Town work with Canterbury Woods to negotiate the acquisition of that corner of their property to realign Ayer Road with Knollwood. Chairman Fraas goes on to say that while fixing this offset intersection would address the root of the problem, he is not opposed to the addition of the guardrail while a re-alignment is considered. Dan Rider would like to see a smart signal at this location. Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Greg Dionne, to recommend to the Highway Superintendent the reinstallation of the guardrail that existed at this intersection. Approved 6-0.

Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Kevin Cantwell, to refer to the Town Board to work with Canterbury Woods, if they are amenable, to acquire a section of the corner to allow realignment of the intersection of Knollwood and Ayer Road and Klein Road. Approved 6-0

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business. None being heard, the New Business portion of the meeting is closed. Chairman Fraas opens Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Brantwood / Kings – Request for an all-way stop. Chris Schregel introduces this item as an old item brought to the ATSB a few months ago requesting an all-way stop at the intersection of Brantwood and Kings Highway. Currently this is a single stop intersection located in Snyder close to Amherst Middle and Amherst High school. This item was held asking that a review of the area stop signs and crosswalks be conducted. Chris Schregel explains the details of the stop sign and crosswalk diagram as it is displayed on the screen. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
- a) James Mansour, 246 Brantwood. His main concerns are the speeds of vehicles and volume of traffic. He goes on to say that Brantwood is the only north/south street in this neighborhood that does not have an all-way stop. He notes that a few streets in

the neighborhood are not all-way stops but they are not thoroughfares and do not have school traffic. He feels that drivers choose to use Brantwood because of the absence of a stop sign. He also states that Kings Highway should have a crosswalk at the intersection of Brantwood since it's so close to the schools. He comments that this area has heavy traffic due to school traffic and cut through traffic. He is asking the Amherst Traffic Safety Board to send this matter to the Town Board for consideration of an all-way stop.

- b) Gary Dargush, 250 Brantwood Road. He has lived at this address since 1987. He says that numerous children live in this area and walk to school using this intersection. He feels this intersection is dangerous. He also comments that the original traffic study was done when school was not in session and feels the results of a traffic study conducted when school is in session would present a result more characteristic of this intersection.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment and opens the Board discussion by mentioning that a full crosswalk on all legs would not be possible due to the geometry of the intersection, also remarking that the addition of all-way stop signs at this location could be challenging. Further discussion among the members does not support installing an all-way stop unless warrants are met, and to see if warrants are met Highway and Engineering are asked to conduct pedestrian counts and vehicle speed/volume counts during a prime time when school is in session, avoiding upcoming holiday down times. Item held until accurate current information becomes available.

- B. Dodge and Hopkins intersection – Request to check Miovision's Automated Traffic Signal Performance Measures. Chris Schregel begins the discussion saying he provided the members with automated traffic signal performance measure outputs, specifically split failures, tuning movement counts, and volume. From the reports, school arrival and dismissal times show split failures, but overall, the reports indicate the timing does not need to be modified. Left turn analysis is requested by the Board. Item held.
- C. New Road – Held until County plans are provided for review.
- D. Prestonwood & Casey – Request for a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) crossing. Chris Schregel begins by saying this item was before the Traffic Safety Board a few months ago with a request to supplement the mid-block crosswalk with an RRFB or some other traffic control. The Engineering Department performed a pedestrian count, and as only one person was counted, this did not meet the warrants to install a RRFB. Receive and file.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other old business. None being heard, New and Old business are closed.

SITE PLANS / REZONING

SUBJECT: Proposed Mixed – Use Project
ADDRESS: 1720, 1740 & 1760 Maple Road
PETITIONER: PB Investors LLC

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

*Note: Unable to provide comments prior to the 10/19/23 deadline given the ATSB meeting schedule. Regardless, ATSB reviewed and has the following comment:

1. Planning Board Resolution SP-2023-06 indicates approval is conditioned in a manner where the petitioner must address concerns raised in the Traffic Safety Board's letter dated September 7, 2023 to the satisfaction of that board (condition #8). As such, make pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of Ayer Road and Maple Road. Coordinate with the Engineering and Highway Departments as needed.

SUBJECT: Proposed Self Storage Facility
ADDRESS: 2495 Wehrle Drive
PETITIONER: 416HOMEZ Inc.

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

SUBJECT: Proposed Commerce Center-Retail Building and Fuel Stations, office Bulding, Warehouse Facility
ADDRESS: 4200, 4224 (Portion) & 4228-4230 Ridge Lea Road
4224 (Portion), 4252-4258 Ridge Lea Road and 280
(Portion) & 306 Meyer Road, 4224 (Portion) Ridge Lea Road and 256, 270 & 280
(Portion) Meyer Road

PETITIONER: Benderson Development Company

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

- 1) "Parking rooms" as designed will lead to unwanted congestion and confusion for drivers leaving the parking areas to access the internal loop road. There is no channelization or "throat" to allow for vehicle queuing to leave parking rooms in an orderly manner. While examples of this are throughout the site, the internal access immediately south of the sporting goods retail will likely be most problematic if there are multiple drivers from various directions leaving or traveling internally within that parking room.
- 2) The proposed right-in / right-out on N. Bailey Avenue must be supplemented with signage prohibiting unwanted turning movements. Specifically, a no left sign on SB N. Bailey Ave and a no left on WB right-in/right-out.

Comments remaining from the 7/24/23 ATSB comment letter:

- 3) Traffic Safety Board acknowledges that both the proposed two traffic signals option and the double roundabout option are feasible options, and will operate at acceptable levels of service. That said, the Traffic Safety Board is recommending that the 2-lane roundabout option be installed instead of the traffic signal for the following reasons:
 - a) More efficient operations of vehicles movements
 - b) Lower long-term maintenance
 - c) Reduces vehicle speeds and increases safety
 - d) More sustainable type of intersection control, will handle additional future traffic with less delay
 - e) Reduces vehicle emissions and fuel consumption

- 4) Intersection detail design plans must be provided. Current set of plans show a mid-block crosswalk remaining in an unacceptable location at Bailey/Romney.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.P. Schregel', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator