

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

December 6, 2023

The December meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on December 6, 2023, Chairman Eric Fraas presiding. He opens the first order of business by asking if any changes or corrections are needed to the October 4, 2023 meeting minutes. None being heard, motion by Kevin Cantwell, second by Greg Dionne to approve the minutes as written. Approved 9-0. Chairman Fraas next asks if any changes or corrections are needed to the November 1, 2023 meeting minutes. None being heard, motion by Kevin Cantwell, second by Dan Rider to approve the minutes as written. Approved 8-0-1 (Smith abstained due to his absence at this meeting). Members in attendance are Chairman Eric Fraas, Vice Chairman Greg Dionne, Dan Rider, Kevin Cantwell, Ken Smith, Jennifer Michniewicz, Mark Storch, Maxwell Kahn and Kristen Goss. Departmental liaisons included Thomas Voigt of the Planning Department; William Prenevau of the Building 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. Casey Road – Speeding concerns and request for a radar feedback sign. Chris Schregel begins by saying a resident approached the Town asking that something be done regarding the speeds on Casey Road, west of Paradise Road. Chris Schregel explained that a federal grant was obtained in 2019 to make this area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and now the project is fully completed. He then comments that numerous residents have complained about the speeds on Casey Road, and that speed counts were conducted before and after the improvements to Casey. The results showed speeds were not significantly reduced because of the modifications -- the more recent counts showed the eastbound 85th percentile speed at 35 mph and the westbound at 40 mph. Currently there are numerous signs posted on Casey Road to improve pedestrian and bike safety, and the resident is asking for the addition of a radar feedback sign to help slow traffic. Chris Schregel informs the members that the Town Board recently authorized the Engineering Department to install these signs on Westfield Road to help slow traffic as an alternative to speed humps. However, during the initial installation of the radar feedback signs the residents of Westfield stated they did not want those signs installed and the project was shelved. Chris Schregel comments that there may be an opportunity to have these signs posted in another area of the Town, possibly on Casey Road. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a. Ann Caruana, 440 Casey Road. She has lived there since 1998 and has observed numerous children walking and riding bikes on Casey Road while vehicles are speeding down the street at the same time. She adds that the road is very busy with two schools and the school administration building all located on Casey. She has seen radar feedback signs at other locations throughout the Town and would like to see one installed on Casey.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the Board discussion by saying that numerous properties on this section of Casey Road are rear-facing lots making it a fine spot to install a radar feedback sign, indeed favoring the placement of a one here. Jennifer Michniewicz would like to create a criterion for installing this type of sign for future use in determining placement of similar radar feedback signs. Chris Schregel informs the members that Phase 2 of the Casey Road improvements is under construction east of Paradise, and it may be possible to fit this type of device in that section as part of the federal project if funding is available. Chairman Fraas makes a motion, second by Jennifer Michniewicz, that the Amherst Traffic Safety Board recommends that the Town Board reallocate the approved but abandoned Westfield Road radar feedback sign funding to this section of Casey Road for similar placement as advised by the Engineering Department. Approved 9-0.

2. N. Ivyhurst Road at Dellwood/Sattler Park – Speed and volume count review. Chris Schregel reminds the Board that this area was before them in June, but at that time was put on hold pending consideration for some type of traffic calming. Traffic counts taken then revealed 85th percentile speeds of 35 mph and 36 mph with the volume in both the southbound and northbound directions at around 350 vehicles. When the resident contacted the Town concerned with the speeds it was decided to do another speed and volume count, so two new counts were done, revealing that the speeds dropped significantly. In the first new count the northbound volume dropped down to 61 vehicles, but southbound rose to 710 vehicles. The second count had similar results.

Chairman Fraas opens the Board discussion by saying that speeds have dropped and conditions are more favorable after action from the Traffic Safety Board. He suggests this item be received and filed. Approved 9-0.

3. 195 Brompton Road – Request for a hidden driveway sign. Chris Schregel opens the discussion by saying a resident reached out to the Amherst Traffic Safety Board asking for a hidden driveway sign on Brompton Road, claiming that she is unable to see northbound vehicles when pulling out of her driveway. Chris Schregel informs the members that the sign she is asking for is not allowed, but there is a sign combination that is permitted saying "Hill Blocks View" with a sub-panel saying "Driveway".

Chairman Fraas leads off the Board discussion by commenting that an engineering firm was recently hired by the town to conduct a traffic and safety study along Brompton Road with follow-up recommendations, but this type of concern was not identified in their safety report. He is of the mind that adding another sign would not be suitable, to which Jennifer Michniewicz agrees. Board discussion points out that many of the driveways along Brompton or adjacent streets fall into this category. Receive and filed.

4. Wehrle Dr. / Garrison Rd. – Intersection review (Miovision) – Chris Schregel begins by displaying an aerial picture of Wehrle Drive and Garrison Road on screen with a review of each of the three roads, explaining that Wehrle Drive is a County highway carrying the largest volume of traffic at this intersection; Garrison Road is a Village of Williamsville road; and Lehn Springs is a local road carrying the least amount of traffic. The complaint originates from a Village of Williamsville trustee and concerns traffic dysfunction issues related to the signalization, the signal in question being a Town of Amherst light with the Town responsible for its operation and maintenance. More specifically, he explains that the complaint was related to the difficulty entering Wehrle Drive from the Columbia and Monroe side streets because westbound traffic on Wehrle is queuing back eastward and blocking them in.

Chris Schregel then explains that Miovision looked at the signal operations at this intersection using Automated Traffic Signal Performance Measures (ATSPM), displaying several graphs showing results of the signal operation – full report on file at the Engineering Department.

Findings:

- 1) Increase the AM time of day plan from 10 seconds to 40 seconds
 - a. GBNRTC currently reviewing
- 2) Northbound thru detection zone has already been modified
- 3) Eastbound is working correctly
- 4) Southbound could be slightly modified

Chairman Fraas asks the members for comments or feedback, stating that he is in favor of the solutions outlined during the presentation. He would also like to send GBNRTC a request to review a resident's request from the August meeting for changing the signal timing of this intersection during the night hours. Chairman Fraas asks if all members are in favor of the recommendations and potential solutions outlined in the presentation. Approved 9-0.

5. 2024 ATSB Meeting Schedule. Chairman Fraas comments that the April 3rd meeting is scheduled during spring break for the schools and he will be on vacation. Other members might not be able to attend that meeting due to similar commitments. He would like to revisit the schedule again in January after the membership of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board is confirmed. Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Greg Dionne, to approve the 2024 Amherst Traffic Safety Board meeting dates as proposed. Approved 9-0.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Tonawanda Creek Road – Request to lower the speed limit. Chris Schregel opens this item by saying that the speeds on Tonawanda Creek have been a common resident concern. A recent count conducted in early November revealed an 85th percentile speed of 47 mph, within the acceptable speed range for a road posted at 45 mph per the MUTCD. Traffic volume is around 6,150 vehicles on an average day, with the highest speeds recorded in the 7 am hour. The resident feels the speeds are too fast on this road and is asking to lower the speeds. After a short discussion the members agree to receive and file this item. Approved 9-0.
- B. Brantwood / Kings Intersection – Request for an all-way stop. Chris Schregel begins by saying this item has been held for several months awaiting the results of traffic counts and collation of other data. A map of the existing stop signs indicated a multitude of all-way stops throughout the neighborhood, and that most of the area T-intersections are stop controlled at the bottom leg of the T, the exception being the intersection at Keswick and Brantwood. As a result of past requests, the Highway Dept. has added crosswalks in the vicinity of the schools in the area, also shown on the map. The results of the most recent traffic counts did not indicate a speeding problem, nor were the warrants met for an all-way stop, with the study results displayed on-screen. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) Gary Dargush, 250 Brantwood Road. He lives three houses from the corner and has been residing at this location since 1987. He makes the following points:
 - numerous children live in the general area of this intersection
 - he sees excessive vehicle speeds every day

- feels a stop sign would be very helpful in terms of safety
 - the Amherst School System has a capital improvement project related to renovating the parent pick-up and drop off areas at Amherst Middle School and believes this might impact this intersection
 - he has been in contact with middle school personnel related to the all-way stop request and hopes to get support from them
 - he does not agree with the warrants identified in MUTCD to install an all-way stop
 - he is asking that the Amherst Traffic Safety Board look at how close this intersection is to the schools and consider an all-way stop intersection.
- b) Peter Krysztof, 264 Brantwood Road. He has lived at the corner of this intersection since 2019 and has two young children. He offers the following commentary:
- children from both the middle school and high school congregate at the end of his neighbor's driveway
 - the counts that have been collected are not an accurate representation of the traffic and speeds in the neighborhood
 - an accident occurred in May of this year and was not listed on the reported accident count, emphasizing that the accident could have injured a pedestrian had it occurred earlier that day
 - he would like the members to consider this accident when determining if an all-way stop should be installed.
- c) Ann Farmelo, 259 Brantwood Road. She has lived at this address for 30 years and her children grew up at this address. She adds the following to the discussion:
- her house is where the recent accident occurred, causing damage to her property
 - she works at the High School and has witnessed some of the high school students speeding on Brantwood when leaving the school property
 - she sees speeding morning traffic using Brantwood to reach Main Street
 - middle school children congregate at this intersection all different times of day
 - asks that the Amherst Traffic Safety Board install an all-way stop at this intersection.
- d) Jim Mansour, 246 Brantwood Road. This is his third time before the Amherst Traffic Safety Board regarding the issues on Brantwood, and has this to say:
- dozens of children live in this neighborhood
 - this neighborhood is a desirable area for young families due to its closeness and walkability to the schools
 - sees numerous middle schoolers walking down his street every day on their way to school
 - there is no crosswalk on Brantwood to assist children walking to school
 - asks the Board to put the data aside and use independent judgement to recommend the right thing
 - he and his neighbors feel that a stop sign would make this intersection safer
 - claims the number of vehicles needed to meet the warrants is unreasonable
 - re-emphasizes that he is asking the Board to put the data aside and make his neighborhood safer for the children
 - he has names and addresses of numerous neighbors that support an all way stop at this intersection.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the discussion to the members. Greg Dionne begins by saying in his opinion an all-way stop at this intersection would not make it any safer. He mentions that other T-intersections in the neighborhood are not all-way stops, and his main consideration is that if the Board was to change one they'd

have to change them all for consistency's sake, which might balloon into a wider issue since every other neighborhood in Amherst would want to follow with those changes. He would rather ask for police enforcement in this neighborhood as a better response to the residents' concerns. Jennifer Michniewicz is not in support of an all-way stop intersection at this location. Chairman Fraas informs the residents that a school zone extends 200' from the school property line and this intersection is not within that limit. He continues by stating that the data that has been collected shows that there is no justification to install an all-way stop. The members are asked to vote for the installation of stop signs at the intersection of Brantwood and Kings Highway.

Roll-call is as follows:

Smith – No
Rider – No
Michniewicz – No
Fraas – No
Dionne – No
Cantwell – No
Storch – No
Goss – Yes
Kahn – No

Vote to recommend installation of an all-way stop at Brantwood and Kings fails 8-1.

C. New Road – held until County plans provided.

D. Maynard Drive, near Main Street – Held pending a sight distance study.

Chairmen Fraas asks if there is any other old business. Greg Dionne has a comment regarding the Bailey Avenue item from the November meeting when he recommended that a full all-leg crosswalk be installed at Bailey and Henel. During the meeting he was told by the residents this work had already been completed. He subsequently reviewed the intersection again and discovered that the resident was mistaken, and the east/west section of the intersection did not have crosswalks. Greg Dionne makes a motion, second by Jennifer Michniewicz, to recommend that Highway install the missing crosswalks at this intersection when weather permits. Approved 9-0.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other old or new business. None being heard, the Old and New Business portions of the meeting are closed.

SITE PLANS / REZONING

SUBJECT: Proposed Restaurant
ADDRESS: 5105 & 5117 Sheridan Drive
PETITIONER: 5117 Sheridan LLC

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X NOT REVIEWABLE

1. Study the traffic impacts of a full-access driveway on Mill Street to determine if this is a feasible option.
2. The internal vehicular area between the proposed coffee shop, Mighty Taco, and proposed Sheridan Drive access has many points of conflict and limited queuing space that results in on-site circulation issues and safety concerns. Further, may create delay or inability for safe ingress off Sheridan if congestion occurs. Explore the following:

- a. shifting driveway
 - b. requesting additional points of access onto Sheridan Drive with NYSDOT, and/or
 - c. moving the coffee shop to 543/553 Mill Street parcels.
 3. Straighten crosswalk leading to Mill Street so it is not on a skew.
 4. Should a right-in / right-out remain, stripe a double yellow centerline between the center curbing and the crosswalk along the 24' wide drive to further define opposing vehicle movements.
 5. TIS indicates 12% of exiting trips will turn left out of Sheridan Drive curb cut and continue west on Sheridan Drive. Given the queuing analysis results provided in the Passero supplemental dated 11/28/23, this will be difficult given the 50th percentile queue length for westbound Thru/Rights is 388 feet and over 200 feet past the driveway location. Resulting in motorists using the Sheridan Drive left turn lane as a merge lane, causing additional conflicts and driver frustration.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed The Boulevard South – Restaurant/Retail Building
ADDRESS: 1501-1551 Niagara Falls Boulevard
PETITIONER: Benderson Development

X MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X DENIED

1. Unacceptable Pedestrian Access Route (PAR) proposed along the west side of the building. While proposal provides pedestrian access to the building, it does not easily provide safe means of travel for pedestrians moving north/south along Transit Road.
 2. Install a public sidewalk along the east side of Transit Road that:
 - a. Connects to the existing sidewalk to the south
 - b. Connects to the northern driveway on Niagara Falls Blvd. (NFB)
 - c. Is located between parking and curblines of NFB with minimal landscape disturbance or utility relocations. May require shifting of parking and/or building, to be determined by the petitioner's engineer.
 - d. Provide an easement for public use if located within the property boundary
 3. Provide safe means of pedestrian travel through or around the drive-thru lane between building and parking to the east.
 4. Remove the by-pass "cut" or connection along the drive-thru lane, or provide explanation of need.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Amherst Development Park – Building Additions
ADDRESS: 6000-6020 North Bailey Avenue
PETITIONER: Benderson Development

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Provide a sidewalk along the south side of Romney Road along the entire frontage of subject parcels. Provide pedestrian connection(s) from the buildings to this sidewalk.
 2. Area along N. Bailey Road that is identified as an area already "licensed by the Town of Amherst" is likely to be impacted by a future widening of N. Bailey Road should a project of that magnitude occur. As such, the licensed agreement must have language that allows the Town to disturb this parking or any other improvement within the Town's right-of-way, and that the Town is not responsible for the site changes or loss of parking that results on the subject parcel.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Mixed-Use Building
ADDRESS: 5226 & 5228 Main Street
PETITIONER: 5226 Main Street LLC

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Parking area immediately north of the building has limited space for turn-arounds or "escapability" if parking is completely occupied within this area.
2. Back-to-back parking spaces north of the building are offset. Town has a preference is for these to line-up to ease thru movements and ability for drivers to pull-thru and park.
3. While the Traffic Safety Board supports the inter-parking lot connections, emergency and full access, the TIS submitted does not account for the trips to/from the Tops Market Plaza.

SUBJECT: Proposed Boulevard consumer Square – Romney Road
ADDRESS: 1565, 1575 – 1659 Niagara Falls Boulevard
PETITIONER: Benderson Development Company

X MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X NOT REVIEWABLE

1. Show signal equipment on sheets RP-1 and RP-2.
 2. Location of signal equipment must be "5-lane ready" should N. Bailey Road be widened in the future. Poles and equipment must be located in an appropriate location under a 5-lane configuration.
 3. Town's preference of ADA Ramps is similar to a NYSDOT where corners should be designed with Type 7 ramps and only use Type 3 or 8 ramps when utility or ROW constraints require them.
 4. All crosswalks must be Type LS.
 5. Confirm there is sufficient left and right lane turn storage on all approaches. The Romney eastbound approach has a particularly short left turn bay.
 6. Plans show widening of all approach lanes with an elimination of the white edge of pavement striping (fog line). Plans do not show extents where this taper back to the narrow lanes with the white edge striping.
 7. Roadside barriers are not clear on the plan. Provide an analysis if barriers are required adjacent between the roadway and ditches, particularly now that lanes have widened per comment #6. Complete for entire project limits. Wood barrier is not desirable.
 8. Connect the sidewalk along the frontage of Best Buy to the sidewalk and crosswalks at the new signalized intersection.
 9. Truck turning tracks shows unwanted interference into opposing lanes. Make the proper modifications so truck turns stay within the receiving lanes.
 10. Signals systems must have Miovision Core DCM with Miovision 360 fisheye camera and housing. ATSPMs and communication terms to be determined, but will initially be the responsibility of the developer.
 11. Signals systems must have 2070 Controllers, 2070E/2070ATC with 2070-IE CPU, 1C Linux, and Omni 3.03 or newer updated software.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Restaurant Building
ADDRESS: 7470 Transit Road
PETITIONER: Benderson Development Company

X MAJOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

- 1) Flush mount curbing along front of the proposed building has one long detectable warning surface. This could be confusing to those who are visually impaired that rely on truncated domes to indicate handicap spaces and safe crossings – neither the case here. Suggest changing to upright curbing with a curb drop at handicap spaces with proper ADA accommodations.
- 2) Provide a public sidewalk along Tennyson Road with:
 - a. the western terminus ending at the west property line, and
 - b. the eastern terminus ending at the Transit Road sidewalk / ramp
- 3) Provide a suitable pedestrian access route from the front door to the rear parking. Location to be determined by petitioner, either on the north side or south side of proposed building.
- 4) Provide a pedestrian connection from the building to the public sidewalk on either Transit Road or the sidewalk requested in comment #2.
- 5) Provide a bike rack.

SUBJECT: Proposed Sturbridge Apartments – Vehicular Connection
ADDRESS: 770-790 Maple Road
PETITIONER: Sturbridge Apartments LLC

X MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator