

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

March 6, 2024

The March meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 6, 2024, Chairman Eric Fraas presiding. Chairman Fraas asks if any changes or corrections are needed to the February 7, 2024 meeting minutes. None being heard, motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Maxwell Kahn, to approve the February 7, 2024 meeting minutes as drafted. Approved 6-0. Members in attendance are Chairman Eric Fraas, Vice Chairman Greg Dionne, Dan Rider, Jennifer Michniewicz, Maxwell Kahn and Helaine Sanders (late arrival). Departmental liaisons included Scott Marshall of the Planning Department, William Prenevau of the Building Department, Al Spoth of the Highway 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. North Forest and West Klein – Request for Pedestrian Walk/Don't walk devices across the east leg. Traffic Safety Coordinator Schregel introduces this item by stating that an e-mail was sent to the Supervisor's office from Linda Boxer concerning pedestrian safety at the intersection of North Forest and West Klein, where many members of the nearby synagogue congregation walk through this intersection to attend events and services. Specifically, Ms. Boxer is asking for a Walk / Don't Walk device, repainting pavement striping, and Police Department enforcement of the "Yield to Pedestrian" signage. Chris Schregel displays the intersection on-screen, explaining that this is a signalized T-intersection owned by the Town of Amherst, and as such the Town is responsible for signal timing and pavement striping. The intersection currently is equipped with a traffic camera that detects all movements and approaches; and has a left turn arrow going in the southbound direction with designated left turn and right turn lanes. Prior to this meeting a pedestrian count indicated only 4 pedestrians on a Saturday between 9-11 am, prime synagogue meeting time. Further counts collected by the smart signal equipment show an average of 6 pedestrians crossing daily in a six-day period. Over the past 3 years there have been 14 reported vehicular accidents at this intersection, none involving pedestrians or cyclists. A turning movement count revealed that 8000 vehicles per day pass through the intersection leg in question. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a. Linda Boxer, 6 Village Gate. Ms. Boxer makes the following points:
 - the current crosswalk needs to be restriped as it is very faded
 - this intersection is scary to cross because pedestrians don't know if turning vehicles will stop for pedestrians
 - this intersection handles a high volume of vehicles moving at a fast pace
 - a pedestrian count conducted during the High Holy Days would be much higher
 - many children are walking with parents and several children have had close calls with vehicles
 - this intersection is used by numerous individuals in the area and she would like to see some type of pedestrian improvements done before someone is injured.

- b. Janet Gunner, 167 Ruskin Road. She and her husband have been residents of Amherst for over 40 years, and she has come to this meeting to show her support for a pedestrian Walk /Don't Walk device at this intersection to help improve pedestrian safety. She is a member of the nearby synagogue and informs the Board that on Saturdays and High Holy Days a number of attendees walk to services crossing at this intersection and she is very concerned for their safety. She adds that she has a son with an intellectual disability with walking as part of his daily routine, and he will be using this intersection to go to the library or grocery store in the near future. She comments that this intersection is not safe for anyone to cross as it is now and would like to see a pedestrian Walk /Don't Walk device installed to address the key safety factors that make it so dangerous.
- c. Mike Stekof, 60 Guilford Lane. He begins by saying that he always walks to religious services during the High Holy Days, and remarks that he and his fellow congregants choose to take a longer but safer route just to avoid this intersection. He wanted to share this for better understanding of how unsafe this intersection has become.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and begins the Board discussion by referring to the previous Traffic Safety Board minutes related to this intersection. He explains that in June of 2023 this intersection was brought to the Board's attention when a request was made to install a green turning arrow on the right turn lane that would correspond with the left turning arrow. Continuing, he says that in order for the turn arrow to be installed pedestrian heads would also need to be installed. A motion was made by the Traffic Safety Board at that time to ask the Highway Department to consider reconfiguring the signal and installing the pedestrian heads. Chris Schregel remarks that this project is an active request and explains that funding for various locations to improve pedestrian safety is still being decided. He, along with Councilmember Szukala, will contact the Highway Superintendent asking if this location would be a suitable location to make use of some of those resources. If approved, this project would need to go through a design stage, followed by construction. As a short-term improvement while waiting for approval, Greg Dionne and Maxwell Kahn request that the Highway Department repaint the crosswalk in a LS format as soon as possible. All members are in favor of pressing the original request for signal reconfiguration and pedestrian crossing safety measures from June, 2023. Approved 6-0.

- 2. Lamarck Drive – Request for additional speed signs, radar feedback signs and speed humps between Kensington Avenue and Wehrle Drive. Chris Schregel begins by saying this request came from a resident on Lamarck Drive who is asking the Board to consider some changes on Lamarck between Kensington and Wehrle Drive. Specifically, he is asking for additional speed limit signs along with the two that are currently on Lamarck, radar feedback signs and speed humps. Speed and traffic volume counts in the northbound direction show 785 vehicles per day with an 85th percentile speed of 37 mph against the posted speed limit of 30 mph; southbound the 85th percentile is also 37 mph with a slightly higher volume of 807 vehicles -- peak speeds are most prevalent during rush hour times. The Traffic Safety Board has previously recommended a parking restriction on Lamarck from Stanwick to Kensington on the west side and as such, it is currently posted as "No Parking Anytime". Only one accident has been reported in the past 3 years and it was unrelated to speeding. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) Edward Kisailus, 276 Lamarck. He begins by saying he has lived on Lamarck Drive since 1986 and has noticed over the past few years young families have been populating this neighborhood. Children often play in the street and driveways along with numerous pedestrians, cyclists and people just enjoying the outdoors. Mr. Kisailus feels that the speeds on Lamarck have increased in recent years, and to counter this trend he is recommending two 30 mph signs in the middle of the block, a flashing radar feedback sign, and speed humps. He also comments that it is very difficult to back out of his driveway. He would also like to add that improvements made to Lamarck and Kensington a few years ago have really helped with the safety of that intersection.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the discussion to the Board. He leads off by saying that speed humps are under consideration by the Town of Amherst and that a pilot project was initiated to investigate the installation of a set, but overwhelming opposition from area residents halted that project. He adds that the Highway Department, the Police Department and the many Fire Departments have concerns over possible adverse effects speed humps would have on their Departments' vehicles and response times.

Further Board discussion centered on painting a parking lane on one side of the street to calm traffic by narrowing the driving lanes, resulting in a request from Chairman Fraas to the Engineering Department to draft a concept plan that restricts parking on the west side of Lamarck, adds a parking lane on the east side, and includes off-center yellow lines to delineate the driving lanes. Chris Schregel remarks that a project of this nature would first require Highway Department approval to proceed with any planning. Also, before proceeding, Chairman Fraas, following the suggestion of other members, asks that a mailing be sent to area residents asking for feedback and input. Chairman Fraas also offers that an increased police presence might deter the current speeding issues. The possibility of radar speed sign installation is next addressed, but the Board decides to hold off on that recommendation until after all other suggestions have been reviewed. Item held, waiting to hear back from the Engineering and Highway Departments.

3. Woodbury Drive southern curve – Update curve warning signs. Chris Schregel opens the discussion by explaining that this item was brought to the Traffic Safety Board by a Highway Department employee, displaying a map on-screen. The Highway employee informed the Traffic Safety Board that the current curve advisory sign on Woodbury Drive is the old style of sign and should be updated to a right-angle arrow (W1-1) with a speed advisory sign of 15 mph (W13-1). He is asking for the Traffic Safety Board's approval to make the needed changes to the signage. Motion by Chairman Fraas, second by Maxwell Kahn, to refer to the Highway Department to replace the sign on Woodbury to the correct advisory signs. Approved 6-0.
4. Campus Drive & Campus Drive East (south) – Request for a southbound stop sign. Chris Schregel begins by explaining that Campus Drive runs off Main Street just west of Harlem Road, and accesses apartments through its southern portion, and then residential homes to the north. The area covered in this request is adjacent to Daemen University and is primarily student housing. Campus Drive East, as shown on-screen, is a north bound one-way road until you get to the area highlighted on the screen, where the resident is asking for a stop sign on Campus Drive at the intersection of Campus Drive East. Currently, vehicles can pass through that intersection or travel to the right and go through to Campus East. No signage is currently at this intersection. After viewing some aerial photos of the intersection, the members would like to see the current parking restriction made clearer with some additional signage. A recommendation is made to the Highway Department to wrap the "No Parking" signage around to include the entire intersection bulb area. Chairman Fraas asks if any member is in favor of a stop sign or yield sign at this location, commenting that adding a stop sign would be confusing and could be dangerous to drivers. He feels that adding signage to an intersection that has no crash history would do more harm than good. Jennifer Michniewicz would like to see the intersection remain unsigned. Received and filed.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business. Chairman Fraas would like to bring to the Board's attention that some of the new LED lights are significantly brighter than the old lights and some of the bulbs seem to need repositioning. Chris Schregel asks the members that if anyone spots a specific light that needs adjusting, to contact him directly by email.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business. None being heard, the Chairperson closes New Business and opens Old Business. Helaine Sanders would like to discuss New Business Item #2 from February, the Sierra Drive and Lynette Lane roundabout. She is concerned with the split island being too close to a private driveway and would like to see it pushed back slightly. Chris Schregel explains that there is very little flexibility when installing a split island, and then says that the resident living at the affected location has no objection to the installation of the split island. Chairman Fraas would like to see the split island installed as shown. A video of Modern Garbage trucks navigating the roundabout improperly was provided to the Town and displayed – the Highway Dept. is asked to bring this to the attention of Modern. Chris Schregel further updates the members on this item by saying that he has forwarded a memo to the Highway Superintendent with the recommendations made by the Traffic Safety Board related to the roundabout at Sierra Drive and Lynette Lane. It is currently under consideration by the Highway Department.

Greg Dionne would like to bring up the intersection of Eggert, Rosedale and Sweet Home. He would like a recommendation to get a permit from the County to put in crosswalks as soon as possible and pedestrian heads as soon as funding is available.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other old business. None being heard, he closes old business.

SITE PLANS / REZONING

SUBJECT: Proposed Hospital Parking Addition
ADDRESS: 1540 Maple Road
PETITIONER: Kaleida Health

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

SUBJECT: Proposed Town Home Development
ADDRESS: 41 Georgian Lane
PETITIONER: Georgian TownHomes LLC

X REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF SITE PLAN APPROVAL
X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

SUBJECT: Proposed Transit commons – walkway, Vehicle Use Area & Landscape Revisions
ADDRESS: 9620-9640, 9648-9650 & 9660-9662 Transit Road
PETITIONER: Benderson Development

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Designated grocery curb-side pick-up spaces are not shown on plans where they are currently established. If re-establishment is desired, include location on the plan and provide a crosswalk to these spaces to improve safety of frequently crossing employees.

2. Wide pavement section on the west end of the Transit Road access driveway within the project limits is being choked down with hatching. Provide curbing, landscaping, and relocation of storm drainage as necessary instead of hatching the asphalt surface. If trucks require this area to be a hatched, provide turning movement counts that support the driveway width.

SUBJECT: Proposed Raymour & Flanigan Plaza - Restaurant
ADDRESS: 1459 Niagara Falls Blvd.
PETITIONER: Mission BBQ Amherst, NY LLC

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Striping is removed on the Demo plan at the curb cut immediately north of the site. Crosswalk striping must be re-installed as part of this project connecting to the new sidewalk along the Niagara Falls Blvd. frontage.

SUBJECT: Proposed Restaurant (Mighty Taco) – Driveway Connection
ADDRESS: 3140 Niagara Falls Boulevard
PETITIONER: Earl Malone

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Install a sidewalk connection with an internal crosswalk between the existing building and the public sidewalk along Niagara Falls Boulevard.

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

X MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Work must include the re-configuration of the Miovision equipment and platform configurations to update channels and detection along with configuration of counting zones for the pedestrian crossings.
 2. Revise notes for the Pedestrian Push Button Signs (R10-3i) to include the correct street crossings. As noted, it is incorrectly showing roadways other than Maple and Ayer.
 3. Provide as-built plans after work is completed and accepted by the Town of Amherst Highway Department.
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SUBJECT: Proposed Building Reconfiguration
ADDRESS: 2350 Sweet Home Road
PETITIONER: Essex Homes of WNY Inc.

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Modify the N. Ellicott Creek Road driveway to be full-access with the removal of the gate. Seek necessary approvals and make on-site adjustments to accommodate a change from emergency access to a full-access driveway.
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SUBJECT: Proposed Sawyer Landing Mixed-Use Development
ADDRESS: 50 Dodge Road
PETITIONER: Sawyers landings LLC

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Provide a Type LS crosswalk across Dodge Road as part of the RRFB crossing.
 2. When details are provided for the boardwalk, make certain that the railing is specified for safe bi-cycle travel (high rail)
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SUBJECT: Proposed Restaurant
ADDRESS: 5105& 5117 Sheridan
PETITIONER: 5117 Sheridan LLC

X MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW IS
X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Improve signage at the Sheridan Drive ingress to assure drivers do not use as an exit. Do so by double posting a DO NOT ENTER sign so that a sign is on both sides of the driveway
 2. Consider ground-mounted ENTER ONLY signs at the western Sheridan Drive entrance.
 3. Remove and relocate the Mill Street curb cut at a time when 553-543 Mill Street is developed to a location as far south as possible on Mill Street, making it full-access, and connecting to the 5105 Sheridan Drive parking lot.
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Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator