

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 5, 2025

The March meeting of the Amherst Traffic Safety Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 5, 2025, Chairman Eric Fraas presiding. Chairman Fraas began the meeting by reviewing the minutes from the January 15, 2025 meeting, asking if there are any changes or corrections. Kevin Cantwell has a correction to Item #2, third line from the bottom, adding the word "through" making it "passing through". Cynthia Selden would like to correct the spelling of her name on page 2 to "Selden". Motion by Kevin Cantwell, second by Dan Rider, to approve the minutes as corrected. Approved 7-0. Members in attendance are Chairman Eric Fraas, Vice-Chair Cynthia Selden, Dan Rider, Kevin Cantwell, Maxwell Kahn, Nicholas Alterio, and Cara Biddlecom. Departmental liaisons included William Prenevau of the Building Department; Scott Marshall of the Planning Department; Captain Christopher Meyer of the Police Department; Al Spoth of the Highway 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. Hopkins/Red Oak/ Bassett - Request for a crosswalk across Hopkins Road. Chris Schregel introduced this item by saying an e-mail was received from a resident requesting pedestrian protection at the intersection of Red Oak, Bassett and Hopkins. Chris Schregel reviewed the criteria for establishing a mid-block crosswalk, which includes factors such as lane configuration, sidewalk availability, distance to the nearest intersection, pedestrian traffic, vehicle traffic volumes, traffic backups and delays, speed limits, road geometry, and street lighting. With Hopkins considered as the major road, the data gathered for this intersection showed that this area does not meet the criteria for a mid-block crosswalk. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period:
 - a) Linda Boxer, 6 Village Gate Court. Her commentary brings forth the following points:
 - Adding a crosswalk on Hopkins Road would be a proactive pedestrian safety measure
 - She crosses Hopkins Road to access the public library, Dash's Market, the Clearfield Recreation Center, and to walk to her synagogue on North Forest Road
 - Other area residents cross Hopkins in the other direction to walk to the Center for Jewish Life or the congregation of Kehillat Ohr Tzion
 - In general, area residents walk this area for recreation and as spring arrives the number of walkers in this area will increase
 - It is very dangerous to cross in this section of Hopkins without a painted crosswalk
 - She would like a traffic signal but is asking for a painted crosswalk to add a measure of protection for area residents as a first step.
 - b) Mike Steklof, 60 Guilford Lane. He begins by saying that he lives very close to the Hopkins/Maple intersection and is on foot in this area often, walking on Fridays and Saturdays to religious services and running most nights for exercise. He agrees with Ms. Boxer that it is very dangerous to cross the street considering the traffic, speeds and dangerous driving behaviors.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period for this item and opens the Board discussion. Kevin Cantwell begins by asking for a pedestrian count on Fridays and Saturdays. Chairman Fraas expresses safety concerns due to the traffic volume and speeds on Hopkins, commenting that historical data shows vehicles often fail to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. He also would like to see the results of a pedestrian count to determine if the location might even qualify for the installation of a rapid flashing beacon – he informs the residents that the Traffic Safety Board has discussed this area multiple times regarding the pedestrian traffic, the main issue being gaps in the sidewalks on Hopkins. The Town has sought to install new sidewalks that connect with existing ones but the County, having jurisdiction since Hopkins is a county road, has denied the Town's requests. Chairman Fraas would like to refer to Engineering to conduct a pedestrian count, the results of which will offer guidance as to what action might be taken to improve this area. Hold pending a pedestrian count when the weather improves.

2. Hopkins Road and North French Road intersection – Congestion safety concerns and request for a roundabout. Chris Schregel begins by noting that the resident has raised several concerns, including congestion, traffic volume, safety issues, lack of sidewalks, sight distance problems, no crosswalks, and wanting additional pavement markings. The Town of Amherst owns and operates the traffic signal at this location, which is outfitted with smart signal technology that includes a camera to collect continuous traffic data. Review of the data reveals:

- Approximately 1800 vehicles go through this intersection every day
- The signal is performing efficiently based on the data
- 13 crashes have been reported since 2013
- The data showed vehicles running the red light
- Speed data showed 85th percentile at 49 mph

Traffic Board discussion concludes that in the absence of sidewalks, improvements such as pedestrian signals and crosswalks are not recommended. Chairman Fraas makes a motion, second by Maxwell Kahn, to receive and file this item. Approved 7-0.

3. North French Road and Campbell Boulevard – Congestion concerns and request for a roundabout. Chris Schregel opens the conversation by mentioning that the Traffic Safety Board has been heavily involved in advocating a dedicated right turn just past Landings Drive in the westbound direction. The NYSDOT has a project planned for Campbell Boulevard which includes installing the requested right-hand turn. Chairman Fraas then asks if North French Road between Campbell and the I-990 will be widened for safety reasons, another previous Traffic Board recommendation, which is also confirmed. Given that improvements are forthcoming, Chairman Fraas makes a motion to receive and file this item, second by Maxwell Kahn. Approved 7-0.
4. I-990 Interchange and North French Road – Safety concerns and request for a roundabout. Chris Schregel starts the discussion by saying the resident has concerns over confusion with the eastbound traffic drifting into the westbound turning lanes and congestion. Both Chairman Fraas and Cynthia Selden have concerns with eastbound North French lanes before the I-990 northbound ramp, pointing out that no designation is provided to drivers that this left movement is approaching -- clarification is needed that it's a left-thru lane. Chairman Frass suggests a letter be sent to NYSDOT asking that this area be reviewed as part of the NYSDOT project to see if any safety improvements or additional signage can be added to help with the turning movements under the bridge. Item referred to NYSDOT, approved 7-0.
5. North French Road and Dodge Road – Safety/Pedestrian concerns and request for a roundabout. Chris Schregel begins by saying that this is a County intersection although the Town of Amherst owns and operates the traffic signal. He further remarks that the intersection has no pedestrian signals, no left turn arrows, no protected left turn phases and no sidewalk. The resident has concerns with safety related to geometry, offset through lanes, and pedestrian accommodations. Review of crash data shows 33 reported crashes between 2018-2023. The smart signal shows

approximately 20,000 vehicles in all directions travel through this intersection every day. Chairman Fraas is not in favor of the addition of a roundabout but would rather see protected turn movements installed at this intersection. He states, however, that past reviews indicate that this intersection does not meet the criteria needed to install protected left turn movements. Based on the data collected from this intersection, it is working as it should. Chairman Fraas makes a motion to receive and file, second by Maxwell Kahn. Approved 7-0.

6. Caesar Boulevard - Request for a proper turnaround at the end of Caesar Boulevard to accommodate school buses. Chris Schregel begins by saying the Town received communication from a resident saying that the school bus was unable to pick-up or drop-off children who reside at the dead end of Caesar Boulevard due to lack of turnaround space. To remedy this, the resident is requesting the Town expand the turnaround space at the north end of Caesar to enable the Clarence Central School district school bus to turn-around – he also points out that this would also benefit garbage trucks and delivery vehicles as well. As it is now, since the busses do not negotiate the dead-end, the children must walk to the bus stop located at Caesar and Connie Road. The Town reached out to Clarence Central Schools regarding the turnaround area, and even though the area in question is paved the district had several reasons why they were not in favor of using any type of turnaround. Chris Schregel also explains the complex actions needed to design and implement a turn-around for the buses, among them establishing parking restrictions, snow removal concerns and right-of-way issues. Chairman Fraas opens the public comment period for this item:
 - a) Dale Zwierschke, 249 Caesar. He begins by saying there is a small portion of the possible turnaround area that is paved, and if a certain large tree was removed and neighbors' vehicles were prohibited from parking in that area, there would be ample space for a school bus or large vehicle to turn around. He mentions that he has seen buses negotiate the turn-around under current conditions but the Clarence Central Schools are not in favor of the buses making this type of turn. He would like this turnaround area for the safety of the children that live at the dead-end of Caesar, eliminating the walk in the street from their homes to Connie Lane to catch the school bus.

Chairman Fraas closes the public comment period and opens the discussion to the members. Kevin Cantwell has questions related to the jurisdiction of this situation, whereupon it is clarified that while Caesar Road is a Town of Amherst road, this request will be sent to the Clarence Central School District as Caesar Road falls in their school district. Nick Alterio would like the vehicles that are parking on the Town of Amherst right-of-way for extended periods of time to be advised or ticketed. Chairman Fraas would like to know if plowing will be an issue should this space be converted to a turn-around. Before pursuing that question, however, he remarks that even if such a space were established, based upon the information received from the Clarence Central School District there is no positive indication their busses would use, or even be allowed to use, the accommodations. Chairman Fraas is not in favor of installing a turnaround, pointing out that the current bus pick-up spot is within 500' of the students' homes, meeting Clarence School District requirements. He also wonders about the amount of traffic endangering pedestrians since Caesar is a dead-end road. Cynthia Selden agrees, stating that the current policy is that school buses do not back up. Receive and file. Approved 7-0.

7. Town Plow warning lights - Review Vehicle & Traffic Law related to using green hazard lights on Town equipment. Chairman Fraas opens the discussion on this item by saying he has noticed that NYSDOT and Erie County plows have amber and green lights on them. After doing some research on this, Chairman Fraas discovered changes in the laws which allow for these types of lights in New York State. Impressed by their visibility, Chairman Fraas would like to bring this subject to the attention of the Highway Department, asking if this something that should/could be implemented on Town vehicles. He believes the new lights stand out on the NYSDOT and County plows which is good for safety reasons. Al Spoth from the Highway Department responds by saying that newly purchased vehicles do indeed have both sets of lights, but the older vehicles do not. To Kevin Cantwell's question about rigging such lights on older vehicles, Al says doing so

has proven difficult and is not cost effective. He concludes by saying the Highway Department is in favor of the new lighting and will continue to specify that all newly purchased vehicles have this feature.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other new business -- none being heard, he closes New Business and opens Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Arcade Avenue Cut-through. Chris Schregel updates the Board on this item, mentioning that upon review Arcade was determined eligible for deployment of the new 'No Thru Traffic' signage. Since this will be the first installation of this type of signage in the Town of Amherst, questions over proper placement with respect to County and NYSDOT rights-of-way have arisen. To find out their position in this matter the County and State have been contacted: the County has responded, saying they would like the signage in the Town's right-of-way; NYSDOT has not been heard from yet, but the Town expects they will have a response similar to the County's. With this guidance in hand, Chris Schregel says that in the next few weeks a memo will be sent to Highway Superintendent Steven Floss to install the signs on Arcade. The Board wonders about placement of the signs to warn drivers ahead of any errant turns, deferring to Highway for final determination on placement. Refer to Highway to install signage.

B. Chestnut Ridge Road - Request for a mid-block crosswalk – Held for Spring counts.

Chairman Fraas asks if there is any other old business. Hearing no other old business, Chairman Fraas closes Old and New Business.

SITE PLANS / REZONING

SUBJECT: Proposed 14 Building Lot Subdivision
ADDRESS: 1789 Dodge Road
PETITIONER: Joseph Rubino

X SEQR AND PRELIMINARY PLAT REVIEW IS

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Extend the stub street and terminate at south property line.
2. Provide highway lighting for the extended stub street, remove trees as necessary.
3. Provide public sidewalk along both sides of the extended stub street, remove trees as necessary.

SUBJECT: Proposed Retail Building - Drive-Thru Lane
ADDRESS: 8520 Transit Road
PETITIONER: Benderson Development

X MINOR SITE PLAN IS

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Provide vehicular circulation plan. Uncertain how vehicles access the proposed drive thru.
2. Show existing signage. Access aisle north immediately north of the building is currently signed one-way in the eastbound direction.
3. Provide a cross-access agreement with the parcel to the north if access is dependent on this site, and shown on your circulation plan that addresses condition #1.
4. Show drive-thru queueing, graphically. Number of anticipated vehicles and clearly show that it will not interfere with vehicle circulation.

SUBJECT: Proposed Auto Dealership Building Addition and Parking Modification
ADDRESS: 4130 Sheridan Drive
PETITIONER: Cappellino Cadillac

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS

X DENIED

1. Drive aisle next to site modification has been narrowed to a sub standard width of 16.32 feet. The drive aisle must be widened to a minimum of 20 feet to allow for 2-directional vehicular circulation, particularly that close to the Sheridan Drive curb cut.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Parking Expansion
ADDRESS: 6044 Main Street
PETITIONER: Wells Fargo

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Show proposed drive aisle width of new parking lot on the site plan.
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Convenient Store and Fueling Stations
ADDRESS: 4220 Sheridan Drive
PETITIONER: Hawley Development

X PROPOSED MINOR SITE PLAN IS

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Public Pedestrian Access Route must be continued through the Frankhauser curb cut along the west side of Frankhauser Road with either:
 - .a A concrete sidewalk through the driveway
 - .b A painted (and maintained) crosswalk through the driveway
-

SUBJECT: Proposed Tier III Solar Energy System
ADDRESS: 800 New Road
PETITIONER: EV Solar Petitioner

X MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW IS

X APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

SUBJECT: Proposed Dellwood Sattler Park
ADDRESS: 387 North Ivyhurst Road
PETITIONER: Town of Amherst

X MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW IS

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

1. Remove the existing, internal pathway that connects to the public sidewalk along Dellwood Road.
2. Remove the proposed sidewalk connection to the pathway described in condition #1.
3. Extend and connect the proposed 6-foot-wide sidewalk along the south side of the proposed parking lot to the Dellwood Road Public Sidewalk.
4. Board defers decision on the proposed on-street parking to the Town's Highway Superintendent.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher P. Schregel
Traffic Safety Coordinator