

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
September 26, 2023  
10 Meetinghouse Road**

A meeting of the Bedford Highway Safety Committee was held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, 10 Meetinghouse Road. Participating were John J. Bryfonski (Chief of Police/Chair), Jerry Gagne (Alternate Resident), Bill Jean (Resident), Lori Radke (Town Council), Ted Kitsis (Alternate Resident), and Anne Wiggin (School Transportation Coordinator). Absent: Scott Hunter (Fire Chief/Vice Chair), Jeff Foote (Director Department of Public Works), Phil Greazzo (TC Alternate), and Ken Peterson (Resident).

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Bryfonski opened the meeting at 7:15 AM.

**II. Quorum Count: 6**

**III. Approval of Minutes – June 27, 2023**

**MOTION by Mr. Gagne to approve the June 27, 2023 meeting minutes.  
Seconded by Mr. Jean. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 5-0-1 (Radke  
abstained).**

**IV. Correspondence/Communications – No report.**

**V. Sub Committee Reports – No report.**

**VI. Unfinished Business**

Chief Bryfonski stated that on 6/27/23, the Committee recommended a ‘Stop Ahead’ sign be erected and placed on N. Amherst Road approaching Wallace Road in a westerly direction. No DPW were present, so they would get a status update at a later meeting.

Chief Bryfonski stated that also on 6/27/23, the Committee recommended the speed limit on Barrington Drive be reduced from 30 MPH to 25 MPH. The Town Council held a public hearing and voted to amend the Town ordinance to reflect the reduction in the speed limit on Barrington Drive to 25 MPH.

Chief Bryfonski mentioned that the Town Council amended the Town ordinance to reflect ‘No Stopping, Standing, or Parking’ along the entire length of Chestnut Drive on either side of the road. This action was taken after a fire at the high school in November of 2022 during the afternoon school pick up time. They discovered that a number of vehicles were stopped and standing on Chestnut waiting to pick up students, which would have impeded the ability of fire apparatus to access the emergency access road to the high school. The HSC previously recommended the ordinance reflect ‘No Parking’. The most recent action was ‘No Stopping, Standing, or Parking’ along the entire length of Chestnut Drive.

**VII. New Business**

**1. Intersection of New Boston Rd. at Joppa Hill Road**

Chief Bryfonski stated that on 9/7/23, Councilor Bemiss requested that the HSC review the intersection of New Boston and Joppa Hill in response to citizen concerns stemming from a recent accident/accidents at that intersection. The PD installed traffic measuring equipment at 439 New Boston between August 19<sup>th</sup> and August 29<sup>th</sup>, 10 days. The posted speed limit is 45 MPH. During the 10-day timeframe there were 52,083 vehicles.

	<u>Total Volume</u>	<u>Weekday Volume</u>	<u>Weekend Volume</u>
41-45 MPH	43% (22,368)		42% (6,682)
46-50 MPH	30% (15,482)	29% (10,574)	31% (4,908)
51-55 MPH	5% (2,743)		6% (968)
56-60 MPH	.5% (275)	.5% (174)	.6% (101)
61-65 MPH	.09% (48)	.07% (24)	.15% (24)
66+ MPH	.02% (12)	.01% (10)	.03 % (7)

Peak volume occurred 7–8 AM and 4–5 PM. Over 10 years of crash data at that intersection there were 42 crashes. Of those 42 crashes, 10 involved personal injury (24%), 15 didn't involve another vehicle (36%). A review of crashes that involved another vehicle indicated a majority occurred because one vehicle failed to yield to traffic on New Boston Road by failing to stop at the stop sign. One of the more recent collisions reflected that the operator was unfamiliar with the area and assumed Joppa Hill was a through road and didn't stop for traffic on New Boston Road, which caused a collision.

**MOTION by Chief Bryfonski that the Highway Safety Committee recommend that the Town install 'Stop Ahead' warning signs and consider placing a solar powered LED stop light on Joppa Hill on either side of the intersection with New Boston Road.**

Mr. Gagne stated that the speed limit on New Boston Road was established by the State.

**Seconded by Councilor Radke.**

Chief Bryfonski stated that New Boston was a State road so they had no ability to reflect any changes on that road. As they've seen at County & Liberty Hill, and Nashua & County, the LED stop lights were very effective and didn't incur any light pollution.

Mr. Gagne wanted to confirm there wasn't any power requirement for the LED's other than the photo cell. Chief Bryfonski confirmed that was correct. As long as they could get enough sunlight to power the unit; it didn't require a lot of sunlight.

Councilor Radke thought that might be a fair solution. On that road it's to be expected to have those types of signs. She wanted to know if they needed to get approval from the State or could they just do it without their approval. Chief Bryfonski stated that because Joppa Hill was a Town road, they could install signage on a Town road.

Mr. Gagne wanted to know if the signs would be on both approaches to New Boston Road. Chief Bryfonski stated that to make it balanced, he would put the signage on both.

Chief Bryfonski stated that they could just proceed with 'Warning: Stop Ahead' signage first and then consider whether or not there was any further accident history there. Mr. Gagne agreed with his recommendation of both the warning sign and the flashing sign.

Councilor Radke wanted to make sure that the flashing sign didn't interfere or bother the neighbors. Chief Bryfonski didn't believe there was enough light produced by those signs that would cause a problem. He could amend the motion to only include the 'Warning: Stop Ahead' signage and not the LED stop lights. Unless they want to go ahead with the LED stop signs. Mr. Gagne thought they were very effective. Councilor Radke thought as long as it didn't interfere with the residents; didn't get in their windows, then she would be okay with it. Chief Bryfonski stated that the LED stop signs didn't produce a lot of light. They light up the perimeter of the stop sign. It's not a glaring production of light.

Mr. Jean wanted to be clear that the proposal was for road markings as well as the LED stop signs and if there would be signage that says 'Stop Sign Ahead' as well or was it only a road marking. Chief Bryfonski stated that he would recommend a 'Stop Ahead' sign in approach to the LED stop sign. Mr. Jean wanted to know as well as road marking or only. Chief Bryfonski stated that he would leave that up to DPW. They recommended that at Beals and Director Foote preferred just to install the 'Stop Ahead' signage and not the road marking. Road marking wears and after a couple of years you have to repaint.

**Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

## **2. Intersection of New Boston at McAllister**

Chief Bryfonski stated that on 8/17/23, Town Manager Rick Sawyer responded to an inquiry from Town Council Chair Bill Carter regarding recent crashes on New Boston Road, particularly at the intersection of New Boston and McAllister Roads.

The HSC and Police Department addressed the issues associated with New Boston Road, with specific attention to the intersection at McAllister, on a number of occasions with minimal success. The PD and HSC recommended a reduction in speed on New Boston approaching McAllister (eastbound) to DOT as well as eliminating the passing zone between Wallace Road and McAllister, but the State denied that request. New Boston Road is a State road under the supervision of NHDOT; not only did DOT not agree to reduce the speed limit on New Boston Road approaching McAllister, but made an argument to increase the limit above 40 MPH. In addition, DOT also declined to eliminate the passing zone. A signal warrant study was completed by the Southern NH Regional Planning Commission in 2014 at the request of the Committee. The study didn't recommend a signal at New Boston and McAllister. He believed if a study was done today it would reflect the same result, and no recommendation for a signal.

The total speed volume of traffic data for 8/19 – 9/8 (20 days) was 177,239 vehicles, which equates to approximately 8,861 vehicles a day. The speed limit on New Boston approaching McAllister was posted at 40 MPH.

41-45 MPH	–	45% (80,360)
46-50 MPH	–	25% (44,994)
51-55 MPH	–	6% (10,613)
56-60 MPH	–	.75% (1,328)
61-65 MPH	–	.12% (219)
66+ MPH	–	.05% (91)

Chief Bryfonski stated that as a result of recent crashes and speed concerns, he directed increased speed enforcement on New Boston between Wallace and McAllister. They had an increase in citations written; mostly for speeds of 56 – 60 MPH. Westbound speeds were greater than eastbound; 9.5% of the westbound traffic was 51 MPH or higher. The crash data over the past 10 years reflected 40 crashes; 13 (32.5%) with personal injury, and 9 (22.5%) that didn't involve another vehicle. A review of the crashes occurring at New Boston and McAllister involved vehicles failing to yield and stop at the stop sign. A contributing factor was the misalignment of that intersection that affects sight distance from McAllister looking west on New Boston Road.

Brian Desfosses, Town Engineer, stated that he used to work for DOT and actually signed the driveway permit for the Town at that intersection when they did improvements a couple of years back. Part of that driveway permit included a request to clear the vegetation looking left at the outlet of McAllister and that never happened. He reviewed the intersection. Typically, NHDOT standards for sight distance was 400 feet in both directions. Moving 400 feet to the east there was a little bit of a knoll; looking to the right it would be on the side of McAllister. That also has some vegetation that should be removed. Looking left, there was a line of arborvitae that was in front of the house that sits at the intersection. Beyond that, there were some trees that have branches that were in the way. The geometry of the intersection was odd, because you're on the inside of a curve, so you're sort of looking behind you looking both ways. He spoke to the homeowner last night and she was willing to be open to further discussions with him. The way he left things was that he was going to clear those sight distance lines within the right of way at the extent that he could with either a brush clearing company or DPW. They were going to look and see how much the arborvitae impact sight distance was. The trees were about 3½ feet behind her property line, but have grown out to a point that was 3½ feet in front of her property line. He believed there was some improvement that could happen just with DPW; essentially maintaining their own right of way. He would like to work further with her, but his focus at that intersection had been that if people could see better, they tend to make better decisions. He understood that the speed limits were a little weird in that they change four times over the course of the road. That's something they could look at and he believed there was a concern for passing lanes as well. When he looked at the accident history, none of them seemed to be as a result of the passing lane issue. He would like to work with them further and try to resolution, but thought first things first, he would like to concentrate on the sight distance. He thought that was the low hanging fruit.

Councilor Radke was concerned about a car pulling out of McAllister and a car speeding down New Boston and wanted to know if there was any accident history for that scenario. Chief Bryfonski thought that was difficult to assess without significant accident reconstruction work. Some of those drivers indicated that they looked and didn't see a vehicle coming. At 55-60 MPH, they've had 1,328 vehicles in 20 days, which was about 50-60 vehicles a day in that vicinity. Because of the knoll and sight obstruction, some

people said they didn't see a vehicle, pull out and there's a vehicle on top of them. The geometry of the intersection didn't help, because you have to look beyond 90 degrees to your left if you're looking west on New Boston Road. Speed was a factor, but some of the folks may not have stopped at the stop sign either. Councilor Radke thought there were two factors: speed and people not stopping. Chief Bryfonski thought it was a combination. It was speed along with obstructed, limited sight distance, the geometry of the intersection, and people not stopping all resulted in some of those crashes.

Mr. Kitsis stated that the stop sign was further back, so they have absolutely no sight distance to the left, which was up the hill on that curve. Human nature being what it is, you're going to drive through the stop sign, you're already rolling and you may not stop a second time. He thought the location of the stop sign and the lack of that sight distance up the hill was a huge contributing factor to those types of accidents. He didn't know what they could do with the stop sign. You would have to clear even more if they expect vehicles to have 400 feet of sight distance from the stop sign as well as the stop bar. He thought the biggest challenge was the location of the stop sign, people blowing through the stop sign, and not stopping at all, because of where it's placed. He thought the first thing was to remove the vegetation, but he wouldn't hesitate to see about the location of the stop sign in relation to the way vehicles were operating through that intersection to see if further improvements could be made or even a stop bar. You would have to put the stop bar where, if you expect vehicles to stop there, they could actually see it as well.

Chief Bryfonski would recommend that the HSC recommend that DPW conduct sight obstruction mitigation and brush clearing. He would also recommend putting 'Stop Ahead' signage approaching the intersection on both sides of McAllister, and request DPW to investigate whether or not it's possible to relocate the stop sign to a more appropriate position closer to the intersection. He didn't know if DOT would object to that. Mr. Desfosses thought DOT would be willing to work with the Town considering all of the geometric challenges that were out there.

Councilor Radke stated that she pulled it up on Google Earth and the stop bars were there and were very prominent.

**MOTION by Chief Bryfonski that the HSC recommend DPW conduct a sight obstruction mitigation and brush clearing, working with the homeowner that may be affected, at the intersection of McAllister and New Boston Road and further that the Committee recommend DPW place 'Stop Ahead' signage on the approaches on McAllister Road to the intersection of McAllister and New Boston and additionally, investigate as to whether or not it's possible to move the stop sign on McAllister to a more appropriate position on the approach to New Boston. Seconded by Councilor Radke.**

Mr. Gagne would modify it to say it would be revisited by the Committee in 60 or 90 days, and consideration be given to snow accumulation as far as sight distance was concerned. Chief Bryfonski wanted to know what the modification would be. Mr. Gagne stated that they revisit it 60 or 90 days after DPW had an opportunity to see what happens up there.

Chief Bryfonski amended his motion to include:

**Request that the Committee revisit the results of this work in 60 days based on the efforts by DPW. Seconded by Councilor Radke.**

Councilor Radke stated that on Google Earth there was a double line, no passing. She wondered if the State would consider extending the double line going west a bit longer, because you can pass it right before that house. If cars were slow and someone wanted to pass, the cars can't see them passing. If they could extend the yellow line a bit longer, so there was no passing before that intersection. It's fine on the other side, but the side coming southeastward, you can pass right up until that house. Mr. Kitsis stated that you can only pass westbound. He pointed out the way it was striped, so the skip was on the right hand side. Councilor Radke apologized and stated that it was fine then.

Chief Bryfonski stated that if you look at the volume of traffic between New Boston and Joppa and New Boston and McAllister, there's almost 3,000 cars difference. They attribute that to the residential housing between New Boston and Wallace; Pasture Lane, Barr Farm and all of those areas in there that account for that much of a difference. It's quite a difference. Mr. Kitsis stated that the Transfer Station was in that vicinity as well.

**Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

**2. 263 North Amherst Road – Blind Driveway**

On 7/29/23, Sheila Dalrymple, 263 North Amherst Road, emailed regarding her driveway located on a short stretch between Hardy and Beaver Brook; she has resided there for 50 years. She indicated that both the volume and speed of traffic on North Amherst had increased over the years to the point of being dangerous. She tried keeping the brush cut back and moved their mailbox several times after it had been struck, but still couldn't safely leave her driveway. According to Ms. Dalrymple, "the only way for someone to confidently get out of her driveway was to turn around on the grass so they were facing out, roll the windows down, and listen for the sound of oncoming traffic. Once it sounds safe, you need to gun it and hope a car, moving while over the speed limit, does not come around either blind corner less than a quarter mile away. I would like to thank the highway department for coming out as soon as I called and cutting back additional brush. I would additionally like to request some type of signage to help slow traffic and make drivers aware that I am taking my chances when I pull blindly into the roadway. Thank you for your time and attention. Sincerely, Sheila Dalrymple 263 North Amherst Road."

Chief Bryfonski stated that the PD reviewed the area, which determined that the residence was located just before Beaver Brook Road on the same side of the street. Looking at the area, the officer observed that Beaver Brook Road had a mirror installed on the telephone pole, so drivers could see any oncoming traffic when pulling out onto North Amherst. There is a curve that began just after Hardy Road, just prior to the Dalrymple residence, then continues until just after Beaver Brook Road. The sight distance looking left from 263 N Amherst, was approximately 150 feet, however, you need to pull to the very end of the driveway with the front of the vehicle protruding out in the road to be able to see sufficient distance. The officer observed several vehicles going by the area that were well over the posted speed limit. If a vehicle is traveling 50 mph through that area, and a vehicle can travel 73 feet per second at 50 mph, then anyone leaving 263 North Amherst

Road had a few seconds to pull onto the road. Based on his observations, the officer believes that leaving 263 N Amherst Road was a hazard to the homeowner, motoring public, bicyclist, and pedestrians and recommends the Town provide them the same safety measures that people enjoy on Beaver Brook Road, which would be a safety mirror installed on the nearest telephone pole, which was directly across the street and would allow them to see any oncoming traffic before they pull out.

Mr. Gagne stated that this was new for them; putting up mirrors. Chief Bryfonski stated that there was already one at Beaver Brook, which he didn't know about. It was asked if it was installed by the Town. Chief Bryfonski didn't know, but apparently since it was on a telephone pole. Mr. Gagne assumed they would have to have approval of the pole owner to install it. Chief Bryfonski stated that they would have to determine which utility owned the pole. Mr. Gagne wanted to know who would maintain the mirror. Chief Bryfonski stated that if the Town had to purchase it, it would be the Town's responsibility to maintain it. DPW already did some sight mitigation; clearing brush. There wasn't a lot of distance to see a vehicle coming until it rounded that curve. Councilor Radke clarified that they already did the clearing and wanted to know if the owner was contacted; did it help. Chief Bryfonski stated that the officer was out there after the clearing was done. It helped somewhat, but apparently she's on that curve and speed was a factor there.

Chief Bryfonski stated that based on the geometry of the situation, 'Blind Driveway Ahead' signage wouldn't be effective; people didn't pay attention to those signs. Traffic enforcement was only as effective as long as a police officer was there or the radar trailer was there. People tend to travel above the speed limit everywhere in the State as they've discussed many times. She's been there 50 years, but apparently speeds had increased with the culture of speeding; that's the concern that she has. He would agree with the police officer that there was a limited sight distance there. Mr. Gagne stated that if they add 2-3 feet of snow accumulation that exacerbates the sight distance.

Mr. Kitsis had two points. First, they didn't know what the sight distance was now that the brush had been cleared back. He didn't know what Mr. Foote's position would be in terms of what they had as far as sight distance versus what the Town could do for that homeowner. Clearly the character of North Amherst Road was very curvy and they were apt to find many driveways in a similar situation. Secondly, if they put up a mirror, that could open up a can of worms for the Town for other locations as well. He didn't think it was an MUTCD type of a traffic control device that was standard, so he didn't know if Mr. Foote would want to get the Town involved in a non-standard MUTCD device. He believed the one on Beaver Brook was probably put up there by some homeowner. That's the risk. There were driveways like that all over Town and he would walk with caution moving forward. Without knowing what the sight distance was, he was wary in making any kind of recommendation moving forward. He asked if they could find out what the sight distance was now and did it meet Town requirements. If it did, then they may not have an issue, but if it didn't, they could possibly look at additional measures.

Mr. Desfosses stated that he was of the same opinion of Mr. Kitsis. If they were to introduce a mirror there, it would now be something that becomes Town responsibility to maintain forevermore. In his time at DOT, those were not allowed within the right of way. He noticed yesterday when he was at McAllister that somebody had put one up over there as well. Those things just sort of appear when people feel that they have an issue. Driving

by the property on North Amherst yesterday, he was struck a little bit by the fact that there was some frontage there that he thought going towards the nearest intersection may also help a little bit with the situation if it were cleared. He would be happy to go out and meet with the resident and see what the current sight distance looked like and offer some additional suggestions; maybe things that were on her own property that could help the situation. Nobody wants to rebuild their driveway, but sometimes the best option may be to relocate the driveway to a better point along the frontage that ends up being a much safer space. It's not something that you go to as the first option, but when you're trying to solve a problem like this, he felt like all options should be on the table. He would be happy to meet with the resident and go through a list of options and either report back to the Committee or back to Mr. Foote and then Mr. Foote could report back to them.

**MOTION by Mr. Kitsis that the DPW visit the property owner at 263 North Amherst Road to assess what the sight distance was first and then investigate options to improve sight distance if necessary. Seconded by Mr. Jean. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

### **VIII. Comments or Concerns**

Chief Bryfonski reminded everyone that school was in session, stop for school buses displaying the stop signal and stop sign, and be vigilant for students and parents at bus stops in and around various school locations.

Chief Bryfonski asked everyone to be mindful of the speed reduction of 10 MPH below the posted speed limit when the School Zone flashing signal was activated. The PD have been and will continue to conduct radar enforcement of School Zones, which are clearly marked by the flashing signal and signage indicating the end of the School Zone.

Chief Bryfonski encouraged walkers, pedestrians, and bicyclists to wear bright reflective clothing, carry a light, and walk against traffic when out at dusk, in dim light or darkness.

Chief Bryfonski reminded everyone that drunk driving was also drug driving and drug driving was also drunk driving. There were 146 traffic fatalities in NH last year; 92 fatalities involved drunk or drugged drivers; 63% of all fatalities in NH involved impairment.

**MOTION by Mr. Jean to adjourn at 7:47 PM. Seconded by Councilor Radke. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford