



APPROVED

Town of Plaistow - Highway Safety Committee
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE- Friday, October 1, 2010

PRESENT- Chief Stephen Savage, *Chairman*; Chief John McArdle, *Vice Chairman*; Ernie Sheltry, *Citizens Representative*; Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; Lisa Withee, *Citizens Representative*; Dave Walker, *Rockingham Planning Commission*; Doug DePorter, *NH DOT*; Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager*; and Dan Poliquin, *Selectmen Representative*

EXCUSED- Leigh Komornick, *Town Planner*; and Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector*

ABSENT- Richard Latham, *Citizens Representative*

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER- 9:35 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None.

MINUTES-

Chief Savage asks for motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting on 08/20/10. S. Fitzgerald motion to accept, seconded by L. Withee. All in favor, none opposed.

NEW BUSINESS -

Discuss costs for raised crosswalks at the Town Hall and in front of Pollard. D. Garlington to provide an estimate on costs for the raised crosswalks.

C. Savage comments that they are looking for a rough idea on the cost for raised sidewalks and what the State thinks about placing them on a State road.

D. Garlington indicates that he wasn't present at the last meeting. However, he visited Concord and viewed speed tables they have at 4-way stops which were raised a few inches. He asked the City's Director of Public Works, Utility Division about them who indicated that they were done in-house for approximately \$4,000. D. Garlington estimates it would cost Plaistow to sub it out approximately \$7,000 - \$8,000 per raised crosswalk. States his concern about potential drainage issues and that they might need to be raised away from the curb to allow for drainage.

C. Savage mentions the concern is with the speed of vehicles in the Town Hall and Pollard School area, the truck traffic, as well as plowing issues for the raised crosswalks. D. DePorter indicates another concern would be empty trucks rattling over the raised crosswalks and how local residents will not be pleased with them.

C. Savage states that discussion would be more for an elevated plateau than a speed bump. D. Garlington questions if the concern is for people in the crosswalk or for speed. C. Savage states it is for both.

S. Fitzgerald mentions the driving pattern and the large amount of traffic so close to the school. Explains how drivers speed up as soon as they cross over the tracks proceeding south. Would like to design something within NH DOT standards, which could be a small piece of the enormous efforts to calm traffic. States a raised crosswalk is needed in front of the Town Hall as well as maybe signs. Driver's need to understand they are in a village area and that they need to slow down.

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D. Garlington suggests groove payment that warns you that a crosswalk is coming. D. Poliquin has seen grooved payment actually in the crosswalks. D. Garlington suggests the groove payment be installed before you come up to the crosswalk to give drivers pre-warning. D. DePorter states they are very effective on the Highway but not sure how effective they would be with lower speeds in Town. They do get your attention but not sure the residents near them would want them. D. Poliquin comments that the crosswalks he has seen are grooved and coated with a maroon/red color.

S. Fitzgerald comments about the speed of trucks on Main Street and how a few speed tables would help remind drivers they are not on a highway but on a Town Main Street.

C. Savage asks D. Garlington what he thinks groove pavement would cost. D. Garlington feels it would be cheaper than raising a crosswalk. S. Fitzgerald doesn't feel grooved payment would be ideal and that it would cause noise for neighbors close to them. D. Garlington comments that the raised crosswalks would cause the same noise as grooved payment.

S. Fitzgerald would like to move the truck traffic to Route 125 where it should be.

C. McArdle thinks the idea is good, but at 2 a.m. the noise from them might bother the residents nearby. Mentions that UNH has installed a round-a-bout in a location where he didn't think they couldn't install one. Should look at every possible solution, but reminds everyone that with every possible solution there will be an issue or complaint. Questions how urgent the concern is. Believes if you elevate enforcement it might solve the problem also, but also understands the Town doesn't have the man power or budget to do this.

L. Withee comments how she utilizes the roads everyday and drivers do not stop to allow you to cross in the crosswalk.

C. McArdle comments that the Committee is focusing on a small stretch of the road from the Historical Society to the railroad tracks, which can't be patrolled effectively with the resources the Town has.

S. Fitzgerald comments about the speed in front of the Town Hall and states that driver's don't feel they are in a village but that they are on a state highway. The challenge will be how to frame the changes around calming the road down.

C. Savage asks that if D. Garlington's figure of \$7,000 is correct, who would pay for it. D. DePorter isn't aware of any funding. D. Walker would hesitate to go through any Federal programs for the small amount of money as the process would take years and indicates that the best approach would be through State or local funds.

S. Fitzgerald feels something could be worked out if the State is willing to assist. That with a couple of joint partnerships and solutions it could work. Feels a speed table might have significant benefits.

C. Savage asks what the next step would be? Would the State have to engineer the design? D. DePorter indicates that if the Town had the project it could be worked out. Won't speak for projects development, and indicates that in his District there is no expertise in raised crosswalks.

C. Savage asks if it could stay at the District level or would it have to go north. D. DePorter believes you will want to go higher unless you have a consultant. S. Fitzgerald feels they could find somebody to support this and to partner with. (Excuses himself from the meeting at 9:55 a.m.)

D. Garlington states how he has never seen or heard of them until he was referred to the City of Concord. Doesn't feel there will be an issue with plow trucks or fire trucks.

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D. Poliquin states all vehicles including fire trucks and police cruisers will have to slow down. D. Garlington states you just have to be careful how to cross over them in the fire trucks so you don't damage the vehicle.

C. Savage favors doing two crosswalks so drivers don't pick up speed after they cross one causing them drive at a reduced date knowing they are coming up to another raised crosswalk.

C. McArdle mentions the bumps at the TRHS and how drivers still speed between them. Agrees if people know they will be in the area with the raised crosswalk they should slow down. D. Poliquin comments that the majority of truck drivers don't go over 35 mph and won't want to drive over crosswalks at that speed.

L. Withee doesn't feel the crosswalks will be an issue with buses and for the most part they currently drive at a safe speed. Mentions the Town needs to get the word out to the public about speed and the concern the Town has about it on Main Street.

D. Poliquin agrees with L. Withee comments. He has noticed an increase in enforcement on speed on Main Street in the past couple of months. Agrees with raised sidewalks and also installing the small little guy signs. When the Town had one out before it worked. Drivers will see them coming from both directions and feels they could make a difference. Comments that drivers don't pay attention to signs.

C. McArdle mentions how people don't see the signs that they drive by every day, and explains that they just become the background. Mentions he has seen signs recently with LED lights in them, which grab your attention and questions using something with an LED light in it.

D. Poliquin agrees and states you need to have something to bring the raised crosswalks to the driver's attention and noticed the little guy signs seemed to have worked. D. DePorter comments that those signs are only seasonal. He receives a lot of calls about crosswalks from Towns and these signs, which are effective when utilized.

D. Poliquin mentions the LED light at Exeter Hospital, which catches your attention. Believes they are inexpensive. D. DePorter is not sure what the policy is on LED signs and is not sure of any in the District. D. Poliquin has noticed these signs near the hospitals, and is not sure if they are private roads.

C. Savage asks if D. Walker can research it and get back to them.

D. Poliquin asks if the raised crosswalks maintain the same level as the curbing or is there still a step down or up. D. Garlington states they were not as high as the curb. However the issue is water needs to be able to move to a catch basin. D. Walker mentions in some cases you raise them only to the white fog lines to allow for drainage on the side and other uses on the side such as bicycles. You can set up the design which fits the Town best.

C. Savage asks what to do at this point if there is an interest. D. DePorter mentions possible funding could be through the Safe Routes to School Program. D. Walker agrees and mentions they do small grants in the amounts around \$10,000, which would be a potential way to fund it. C. Savage suggests \$15,000 to fund two raised crosswalks.

D. Walker mentions rubberized speed bumps that might be worth looking at as a temporary crosswalk and will look into them some more. D. Garlington states a temporary speed bump would cost \$1,000. D. DePorter states that NH DOT would not accept a speed bump in the road. D. Walker mentions the rubberized mats, which are more set up as a speed table and will look into them.

C. Savage comments that there is an interest with the Town to try to work a partnership with the State on this small project. States the Committee needs to move forward. D. DePorter mentions that the Town should have a plan on removing them in case they don't get accepted favorable by the residents.

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C. Savage asks if the Board of Selectmen would be interested in a public hearing on what the Committee is looking to do. D. DePorter feels your opposition will be the abutting houses.

D. Garlington comments about the upcoming construction on Route 125 and how more trucks will use Route 121A because of the construction.

C. Savage will postpone any action till the next meeting so D. Walker can do more research and D. DePorter will find more information about speed tables and LED signs. D. Garlington suggests he contact Jim Major with the City of Concord.

D. DePorter mentions that the Town of Newmarket uses brick crosswalks, which are textured as an option to think about. D. Walker has seen brick crosswalks, which are more visible than a standard crosswalk and provide a village feel. D. Garlington mentions the need to give drivers advance notice of an upcoming crosswalk in the road.

C. Savage will put this back on the Agenda for the next meeting and will invite D. DePorter and D. Walker back for the meeting. D. Poliquin will ask the BOS if they will support a public hearing. D. Garlington mentions the need to look at the time frame of installing the crosswalks. D. Poliquin predicts it wouldn't happen until next summer.

D. Walker comments that the corridor study mentions raised crosswalks. States that speed tables alone will be somewhat effective but you need to look at the final picture on redesigning the roadway to slow the traffic down with education and enforcement, the whole package. Speed tables might not be necessary with other designs but they could still work.

Discuss placing a "No Left Turn" sign at the entrance to the old Shaw's Plaza on Haseltine Avenue.

C. Savage comments that M. Dorman requested this matter be on the Agenda and that drivers are taking left turns from into the old Shaw's Plaza, which is prohibited. It is causing traffic to jam on Route 125. Indicates that the solution is when the owners of the Plaza come back to the Planning Board it should be discussed with them to close the entrance. D. Garlington believes it was already mentioned. States that by the time a driver sees a sign they will already be making the turn.

D. Poliquin states that you don't see the sign in place now and an "Exit Only" sign should be on the plaza side, which he thought was already approved. C. Savage states you can't exit the plaza onto Haseltine Avenue now and the access has been changed to make it harder to try. D. Poliquin states you need to change the entrance to make it impossible to make a left hand turn. D. Walker mentions redesigning the entrance so it is impossible to make a left turn unless you drive over the curb.

C. Savage states there has been a discussion about a big box having an interest in the plaza and if it happens and depending on the site plan the Town will have an opportunity to correct the deficiency.

D. Garlington mentions if the road swap changes it will be a State decision. D. Poliquin states it should happen before the swap while it is a Town road and then it will stay in place once the swap occurs. Would like to do something now before it becomes a State road.

D. Poliquin questions if the Town has an easement to place the sign or if it needs permission from the plaza to install it. D. Garlington comments that it would have to be outside the Town's right-of-way. D. Poliquin states they already gave the Town a deeded easement to put the turn lane in. D. Garlington has already marked it to install a sign.

C. Savage comments that there are no objections to placing a "No Left Turn" sign up.

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OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion of Highway Safety Committee inclusion into Master Plan.

C. Savage speaks about the Committee needing to be included into the Master Plan to give validation to the Committee. D. Poliquin explains that he's discussed this with the Board of Selectmen after the last meeting and they agree to include the Committee in several areas of the Master Plan where it's applicable. States that S. Fitzgerald was given a directive to see that it gets incorporated.

Discussion of proposed crosswalk at Kelly Road and Old County Road (Recreation Field).

D. Poliquin is not sure how much the Town has for property on the side of the road for a right-of-way. Mentions that it could go straight across with a gravel area up to Carli Way or placed directly on the other side of Kelly Road and diagonally across to Carli Way. Wherever it's placed we'll need an area for people to continue on.

D. Garlington states that it's a crosswalk to nowhere because you are not exiting it onto a sidewalk. Asks where the pedestrians are coming from. D. Poliquin states there has been an increase of foot traffic from Kelly Road to the recreation fields.

C. Savage asks if there is a way of rethinking the crosswalk area and angling it to where the paved shoulder is on the other side.

E. Sheltry comments that he sees a duty Officer at the recreation fields and questions if an officer is present then a crosswalk might not be needed. C. Savage states that the summer is very busy at the recreation field and there is no way to put an officer there at each event and is not sure if a crosswalk is the answer but either way wouldn't be able to do it till spring.

D. Garlington comments that the biggest issue is coming down Old County Road you have a steep grade of 9% or more for drivers/trucks to stop.

C. Savages asks if there is a street light by the recreation field. D. Garlington thinks there is one at Kelly Road but not at Carli Way. C. Savage states that a light at Carli Way might work and would like look into this option.

D. Poliquin states that the Recreation field is still a work in progress and plans on addressing issues for quite a while. Confirms that Carli Way is not an accepted road and is only a right-of-way. D. Garlington states that D. Hoyt owns the road as it is a right-of-way to his property and that the Town also owns land on the other side of the right-of-way. The Town has given him access to his back piece of property so it is not land locked.

C. Savage would like to continue to keep this item on the Agenda and asks the Committee to take a look at the street light situation and to consider maybe adding a street light if necessary.

D. Garlington comments that he has received prices to put signs on Old County Road that say, "Recreational Field Ahead", at approximately \$150 per sign and suggests installing them next spring on Old County Road. C. Savage agrees with the idea. D. Poliquin agrees it is a good idea and explains that there is no major identification of that entry way as a recreation field. Line of site for the current sign is not seen when coming down Old County Road.

D. Garlington explains that his concern with the crosswalk is the grade of the road coming down hill because if you have a large truck coming down the 9% grade at 25 mph you will have not brakes at the bottom.

C. Savage asks if there is power at the intersection to light of the area with also a lit park sign. D. Poliquin believes there are future plans to put a lit park sign up.

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D. Poliquin states the Board of Selectmen and Recreation Commission have also talked about possibly putting a gravel shoulder along Carli Way to help with the parking issues. If this occurs it might be the time to lay a piece of conduit down. D. Garlington states there is gravel there and that they are talking about using the area that is grass and his recommendation was to use it now. You can't do it as a parking lot due to drainage issues, slope issues, and an abutter.

D. Poliquin believes the concern was that in the fall it can get muddy quick. D. Garlington states his suggestion was to let them use the top portion and where it goes downhill to a culvert put two 20' sticks of pipe in to allow you to come that way go down the hill go across the culvert where you put a small bridge in and then come back out closer to where the recreation field entrance is. It allows people to park, walk down, and cross over the little bridge to go into the recreation fields. D. Poliquin states this is the first he's heard of the idea, which makes sense. As far as he knows there is no future plan for that area. D. Garlington states this way would only effect very minimal compared to the other way.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- D. Garlington states he spoke with S. Fitzgerald about the Garden Road bridge project and while working on it he would like to down size the road opening at West Pine onto Garden Road. Comments that drivers don't stop going onto Garden Road. There is a stop sign in the middle of the intersection and he would like to remove it, bring the road up more to where it should be, and stripe it. Would like to do this in coordination with the Garden Road bridge construction. The contractor has given him a price that is reasonable and doing this should hopefully slow people down at the intersection.

C. Savage agrees that there is a speed issue at that intersection because it merges so easily. D. Garlington states the intersection is set up with the small island because there use to be telephone pole in the middle. States it will cost \$3,200 to make the change plus restriping.

C. McArdle motions to make the recommendation to go along with D. Garlington's suggestion. Seconded by L. Withee, No discussion, all in favor, and none opposed.

- D. Garlington comments that the Road Agent from the Town of Newton has approached him and would like Plaistow to post their portion of Crane Crossing Road, as "no thru trucking". Plaistow's portion is somewhat suitable for thru trucking but when you are on the Newton portion of the road it's not suitable. However, without Plaistow posting on their side, it does no good for Newton to post it.

C. Savage asks what the concern is. D. Garlington states it is just trucks and the restriction would be no thru trucking. C. Savage states it wouldn't stop delivery trucks, landscape trucks, or oil trucks if they have a stop on the road.

D. Garlington told Newton's Road Agent that the only issue they would have is enforcement. Knows the Town did something similar on Corliss Hill Road with the City of Haverhill. D. Poliquin doesn't believe the Board of Selectmen would be opposed to it. It is a bad road even on the Town of Plaistow's side especially coming off of Kingston Road.

D. Garlington questions if a public hearing is necessary. D. Poliquin states a public hearing will be needed. D. Poliquin states that you have to give the public an opportunity to speak before positing this and that S. Fitzgerald can do this.

D. Garlington motions to support posting Crane Crossing Road as "no thru trucking" in conjunction with the Town of Newton posting "no thru trucking" on their side. Seconded by C. McArdle. No discussion, all in favor, and none opposed.

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C. Savage asks if a letter to the BOS is recommended. D. Poliquin requests a memo to the BOS.

- C. Savage discusses an e-mail he received from C. McArdle about a resident on Newton Road who is suggesting the tree at the corner of Forrest Street and Route 108 be removed before it comes down possibly causing an accident and injuring somebody.

C. McArdle states that the resident is concerned about the tree and was not sure what property it is on. C. McArdle doesn't believe it is on Town property. L. Withee asks who has been removing trees around town lately. C. McArdle states Unitil is removing trees that involve wiring issues. D. Garlington states they are doing it in sections and are currently at the Sweethill Road area.

C. Savage asks if the tree is a site issue. D. Garlington states it is a dead tree. D. DePorter is not familiar with the tree but states it is NH DOT's policy that if it's within the State's right-of-way and is dead, and NH DOT can get a tree release from the resident that they will put it in their program to have it removed.

D. Garlington believes the owner would be willing to sign a release. Tells D. DePorter if NH DOT can first determine if it is on the State's right-of-way he can have a tree release signed by the resident. D. DePorter will look into it and get back with D. Garlington. D. DePorter asks if there are wires involved with the tree, because if it's in the wires they can't take it down with their tree service and would need to involve utility workers.

- D. Walker mentions that he brought conceptual plans for the Committee to review after the meeting and provide feedback. C. Savage asks if the Board of Selectmen would be interesting in looking that conceptual. D. Poliquin confirms they would.

ADJOURNMENT-

D. Garlington motions to adjourn, seconded by D. Poliquin, none opposed all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE –date and time be determined.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah E. Gibbs, Recording Secretary