



# APPROVED

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

## PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**MEETING DATE** – Friday, October 25, 2013

**PRESENT** - Chief Stephen Savage, *Chairman*; Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman* (arrived at 9:45 am); Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager*; Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector*; Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; Leigh Komornick, *Town Planner*; Dan Poliquin, *Selectman Representative*; Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative*; Ernie Sheltry, *Citizen's Representative*; and Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative*

**EXCUSED** – None

**ABSENT** - None

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** - 9:30 a.m.

**MINUTES** – S. Fitzgerald motions to accept the minutes of 09/20/13. Seconded by M. Dorman - No discussion – None opposed – All in favor except L. Komornick who abstained.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**- None

### **NEW BUSINESS** – NH Highway Safety Agency Grants

Chief Savage briefs the Committee about NH Highway Safety Agency Grants he applied for recently. 1) 22/4 Hour Red Light Running Patrol; 2) 22/4 Hour Speed Enforcement Patrols; and 3) 22/4 Hour DWI Patrols. Explains that the applications are preliminary and no grant awards have been issued. Speaks about how the Officers have tripled their self-initiated activity over the past year with an increase also in motor vehicle stops. S. Fitzgerald briefly comments about compliments he's received about the increase in traffic stops over the past year.

Chief Savage states that the southbound radar panel has been repaired and is back up and running.

L. Withee comments on how she'd like to see the schools pulled in to help get the word out about traffic safety. S. Fitzgerald suggests the Chief attend a PTA meeting to discuss traffic safety. Chief Savage isn't opposed to attending a meeting and suggests bringing along Lt. Baldwin to one.

S. Fitzgerald announces that the Town has received the 2013 Safe Routes to School Grant and how the Board of Selectmen agreed to a supplemental commitment of \$100,000 towards the grant. He thanks the Committee for their help and support. L. Komornick explains that part of the grant includes educational flyers, a bike rodeo for the children, and additional traffic control devices in the school zone.

Chief Savage mentions the large span between the current two radar panels and suggests placing two more closer to the school/Village District.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Discuss the Planning Board's recommendations from the Land Use Summit and provide any recommendations and/or changes to the Planning Board's current recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

# APPROVED

S. Fitzgerald hands out the Planning Board's recommendation letter to the Board of Selectmen dated 09/25/2013 and excuses himself from the meeting at 9:40 a.m. L. Komornick goes through the letter explaining how it provides an overview of the entire process. Explains how the recommendations are broken down into two tables (Table 1 – Policy Change Recommendations and Table 2 – Specific Project Recommendations). L. Komornick begins discussing Table 1 and comments how education to keep the public informed and involved in specific project designs and concepts should be considered a high priority. Feels the radar data will help support the recommendations. Chief Savage quickly speaks about the radar panels and that statistics will be collected from them before the end of the year.

L. Komornick continues to go through each policy area including discussing installation of shoulders. D. Poliquin questions what the benefit is in installing 4' shoulders. L. Komornick indicates that it will provide pedestrians a place to walk. D. Poliquin believes it will make the road look wider, which will increase the speed of traffic.

L. Komornick comments about how north Main Street currently has no shoulders and further explains that the 4' width is only a recommendation. States how she will take all the comments today to the next Planning Board meeting. Chief Savage agrees with D. Poliquin about a 4' shoulder being too wide, which will cause drivers to increase their speed. L. Komornick questions which is better, no shoulder or a shoulder. L. Withee believes you need a shoulder.

Chief McArdle gives an example on Forrest Street where the shoulder at locations along the road narrows down to nothing and fears if you open the road up more it will increase the speed on roads that speed is already a concern on.

L. Komornick suggests completing two profiles, one for the Village District and another for the rest of the road. Expresses her interest in working with the Committee to develop a profile that will accommodate more room without making the road seem more open.

D. Poliquin comments if the concern is pedestrian traffic, if so, should then consider installing a curb for the sidewalk, which will make the road not appear so wide.

C. Savage mentions the bump outs recommended in the Main Street Calming Study. Believes L. Komornick's idea of having two separate profiles is a good idea.

L. Komornick continues to discuss the recommendations including lowering the speed limit to 25 mph in the Village District. D. Garlington states that the NH DOT requires speed limits on State roads to be 30 mph or greater. L. Komornick will bring this information back to the Planning Board. L. Komornick comments how the only way to reduce the speed to 25 mph, would be for the Town to take ownership of it. Comments that this recommendation has no priority but is only listed because it has been mentioned several times. D. Garlington suggests changing the wording in this recommendation from: "Con: High cost of road maintenance" to: "Con: High cost of road maintenance/infrastructure." L. Komornick agrees.

Chief Savage asks about the Seaver Brook bridge situation. Chief McArdle states that it's considered a culvert and not a bridge. Chief Savage questions if the State has any plans to work on it. L. Komornick explains that the CIP includes culverts/drainage areas to set up a Capital Reserve Account to fund upgrades and repairs to them.

D. Poliquin questions what the classification difference is between a bridge and culvert. Comments how the Westville Rd. bridge isn't any different than Seaver Brook. M. Dorman explains the difference between a culvert and bridge. Chief Savage speaks about how he's never heard anything about Seaver Brook, so was just questioning if the State would be working on this one similar to the one they just did on northern Main Street.

# APPROVED

L. Komornick proceed to Table 2 with the first project listed as the Elm St./Main St. intersection. D. Poliquin doesn't agree that a "T" intersection at this location will solve the problem. Chief McArdle agrees, unless it has significant radius to turn. D. Poliquin believes the easiest solution is to take the traffic island and move it over to the slip lane and create a turn out lane. Believes a "T" intersection or 3-way traffic stop will cause significant traffic snarls. L. Komornick comments that the plan was only a preliminary sketch and once the Town receives funding they'll be able to bring on an engineer on to do a more lengthy study.

Chief Savage suggests changing the wording to eliminate, "T-intersection". L. Withee suggests installing flashing yellow lights at the intersection. M. Dorman explains that this will be part of the discussions at a later date. L. Komornick confirms that they will be hiring an engineering firm to look at the intersections.

L. Withee asks if the Safe Routes to School Grant includes any funds to purchase items such as crosswalk signs that have flashing lights. L. Komornick confirms there is funding for several signs.

L. Withee also asks if the Town plans on moving the current crosswalks to better locations. L. Komornick confirms they are and also mentions that the NH DOT has a protocol they follow before deciding to install any flashing lights on State roads.

L. Komornick continues discussing the projects and speaks about the East Pine St./West Pine St./Main St. intersection with a suggestion to change the wording in the Planning Boards recommendation. Understands there's not much enthusiasm for roundabouts. D. Poliquin makes note of a typo in the recommendation, which "Elm Street" needs to be deleted.

M. Dorman mentions that the Town has been told by NH DOT that they won't install stop signs at this location, doesn't believe they will install a round-about either, but possibly a flashing light. L. Komornick states that the Town should still want to look at funding and how she understands the concerns with emergency vehicles traveling through a round-about but believes that they should continue to study each intersection to see if there are any viable options available.

Chief McArdle comments that while these are great ideas, the Town needs to look at these realistically. Need to look at whether or not the Town will take the property in order to install a round-about and look at whether or not he, as the Fire Chief, would support a round-about on a roadway that gets the fire department to the southbound side of Route 125 as effectively as it does. L. Komornick explains how this is all part of the discussion and need to look at this intersection to see what the options are for traffic calming.

Chief Savage suggests if a discussion is held about a flashing light at the intersection of Elm St., it might be the time to speak about one at this intersection.

D. Poliquin believes the biggest issue at this intersection is the line of sight southbound and looking north trying to cross the intersection or travelling south on Main Street. Need to think about where you would pick up a flashing light heading south before you get to the intersection. D. Garlington comments that you need to have a telephone pole nearby.

D. Poliquin comments how any round-about installed would need to be bigger than the standard size for them at this intersection due to the line of sight safety issue it has. States that this is the only location on Main Street he'd support one on due to the line of sight issue.

D. Poliquin states that the Board of Selectmen should submit a request and recommendation to NH DOT first.

# APPROVED

D. Garlington believes the State will not do much on this road and the only way to make these changes would be for the Town to take over the road. D. Poliquin questions that if the Town supplied the majority of funding for the changes, they might consider them but the battle would still continue because they would still be maintaining ownership.

L. Komornick continues down the project list discussing the Main St., Library, and the Little River Bridge, which hasn't been mentioned in quite some time.

Chief Savage doesn't believe the signs placed on top of the radar units informing people they are entering the Village District work. D. Poliquin states how Sign DeSigns offered to supply a few signs for the Village District and provided a few samples to the Town Manager. Stresses how you can't put too much on the signs. Chief Savage mentions that the Town is working with George Pynn for "Welcome to Plaistow" signs.

L. Komornick continues down the project list and believes the Crosswalk at Pollard School listed as a medium priority will be addressed with the Safe Routes to School Grant.

L. Komornick speaks next about the Westville Rd./Main St. intersection and its complexity. L. Withee questions if you can make the intersection "right turn only" and do the same at the end of Pollard Road. Believes making left turns at the end of these roads onto Main Street is too dangerous. D. Garlington comments how a reason is needed to restrict traffic.

L. Komornick discusses the Library Entrance/Bittersweet Dr./Main St., which is the southern entrance into the Village District.

L. Withee comments how drivers don't acknowledge the crosswalk and how she'd like to see flashing lights at the crosswalks. D. Latham comments how some signs are more effective than others. Chief McArdle mentions the led lights that UNH has are constantly flashing at the crosswalks. D. Poliquin mentions that Exeter Hospital has similar signs.

L. Komornick asks Chief McArdle for his thought of the round-about in Durham. Chief McArdle isn't in favor of roundabouts. Mentions his willingness to contact the Durham Fire Department to see what they think about them.

L. Komornick moves on to the next intersection Main St. (north)/Route 125 intersection.

D. Poliquin questions why a passing zone was installed northbound at this intersection proceeding north on Main Street. D. Garlington explains that the two lanes are for merging traffic coming from Route 125.

L. Komornick questions if the signal timing is an issue at this intersection. D. Poliquin explains how signals are tripped so you can't time them. L. Komornick believes that you can change the timing pending on the time of day. Mentions her uncertainty as to why timing was mentioned in the recommendation and will look into it.

L. Komornick further discusses the following; 1) Bump out at Pollard School; 2) Pollard Rd./Main St. intersection; 3) North Ave./Main St. intersection; and 4) Ingalls Terrace/Main St. intersection.

Chief Savage mentions how awful the crown of the road is from Town Hall to the museum. D. Poliquin mentions that the last time they paved, they did try to lower the crown.

L. Komornick goes over the last three project areas, 1) Bump out and crosswalk at Town Hall; 2) Main St. (south)/Route 125 intersection; and 3) Danville Rd./Main St. intersection.

# APPROVED

R. Latham questions if the projects are listed in the order of priority. L. Komornick confirms they are.

Chief Savage mentions his reluctance to make or accept any motions before the Planning Board's letter goes before the Board of Selectmen. M. Dorman suggests leaving it as a review for today.

D. Poliquin suggests the Committee send a brief memo to the Board of Selectmen with comments made to the Planning Board's recommendations.

L. Komornick suggests the Committee wait until after the Planning Board makes the additional changes. D. Poliquin states the Board of Selectmen will want to see support from the Committee.

Chief Savage confirms he will prepare a brief memo to the Board of Selectmen referencing the Committee's support.

D. Garlington believes some of the recommendations need to be better defined.

## **COMMENTS – Old Shaw's Plaza**

Chief Savage mentions the site development plans for the old Shaw's plaza and explains the changes that will be made which will improve the plaza and that construction should be starting soon.

## **COMMENTS – Park-n-Ride on Westville Road**

R. Latham speaks about the park-n-ride on Westville Road and how when exiting it you are not allowed to make a left turn and would like to know why there is a no left turn sign posted at the exits. M. Dorman explains that when the park-n-ride was created the thought was that too many cars would be using the lot and it would be better to direct them onto Route 125 instead of Main Street.

**ADJOURNMENT- Motion** to adjourn by D. Garlington and seconded by M. Dorman. None opposed. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD**

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah E. Gibbs,  
Recording Secretary