



# Warner Highway Safety Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 5, 2017 UNAPPROVED

Police Chief Bill Chandler opened the meeting at 1:01 pm

In attendance: Police Chief – Bill Chandler  
Fire Chief – Ed Raymond  
Director of Public Works – Tim Allen  
Emergency Management Director – Ed Mical  
Selectman – Kimberley Edelmann

Others present: David Hartman, Tim Blagden, Faith Minton

- A. Bill explained that there are two requests before the Committee. One is to lower the speed limit to 25 mph in the village area from the church to Mill St., and the other is to reduce the speed limit coming into the Simonds School area on the down hill side of Kearsarge Mt. Rd.
- B. The Committee discussed the first request. Bill contacted the District Engineer of Division 5 (NH Department of Transportation) because Main St. is a state road. The town can't reduce the speed limit in this area. Bill was advised that it is extremely rare to drop the speed limit on Main St. in any town less than 30 mph, however, if the Committee decides to have DOT come out and do a field inspection of the area they will do so. Bill said he doesn't have a problem with DOT doing the inspection. There is no cost for this inspection.

Faith Minton said she saw a child that almost was hit by a car on Main St. Bill said he explained to DOT that Main St. has several cross walks, it's quite congested in the middle of the village. The Committee members are in favor of the inspection. They agreed to have the inspection from just before the Police Department to Old Main St.

Tim Blagden lives in Warner and sits on the Governor's Safety Commission, he is also a member of the Bicycle Transportation Advisory Committee at DOT. Tim provided a graphic that shows how frequent it is when a crash involves a pedestrian or cyclist. About 70% of the time there will be an injury, a crash involving an auto only about 20% of the time somebody gets hurt. Tim also provided information from the Federal Highway Non-Motorized User Safety that shows the fatality rate at 20 mph is 5%, 30 mph – 40%, 40 mph – 80%. Tim said changing the speed limit to 25 mph makes a significant difference. Tim said if the town adopted a Complete Streets Policy as a way to manage the public infrastructure in town, that could matter when you go to DOT. Bill asked if adopting Complete Streets will provide a municipality more authority to reduce speed limits on state roads? Tim B. said the policy is the town considers all ages, all abilities, and all modes of travel. It will provide better standing when you go before DOT. Kimberley said she attended a class about roads at the NH Municipal Association and Complete Streets was an hour presentation, but the one thing that was not clear and still isn't clear, is how do we officially adopt Complete Streets. Tim said you could put it into the Master Plan or the Highway Safety Committee could make a recommendation. Ed asked if adopting Complete Streets will hinder any maintenance on the state roads or any of the state's responsibilities. Tim B. said no, it does not. Tim said Hinsdale, Swansey, Troy have adopted it, Concord, Keene, Portsmouth, Dover and Lebanon as well. Bill will contact DOT to complete the inspection and will also talk to them about Complete Streets.

Ed Raymond asked what the state is doing about bicycle riders being more safe. Tim said we educate 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, we do adult education as well. Last year training was organized for over 4,000 students in the state for bicycle and pedestrian safety. Tim is looking for grant money to organize bicycle training for 14-15 year old students as well.

### **Committee Action**

Ed Mical moved to request the Selectmen to allow the Committee to contact DOT Division 5 complete an assessment of Main St. Ed Raymond seconded the motion, motion passed 5-0.

Faith Minton asked if it makes sense to adopt Complete Streets first before having the assessment done? Bill feels the best thing to do is discuss the adoption with DOT prior to them coming out.

- C. The second consideration is to lower the speed limit to 25 mph near Simonds School which was submitted by David Hartman. Bill said years ago the town tried to get flashing school lights to slow the traffic during school opening and closing hours. But the town learned they couldn't do the lights because it didn't meet DOT requirements. This request will remedy the issue. Bill said the Selectmen does have the authority to reduce this speed limit because it's on a secondary road. Statutory does request data and investigation but Bill feels the school is enough data to justify this request.

David said he was motivated to submit the request when he learned the Committee was meeting. He would like to see the speed limit reduced to 25 mph from just beyond the school heading up Kearsarge Mt. Rd. down to the Main St. intersection and then enforced as well. Bill said he received information on Election Day from a resident in that area about the fast moving vehicles so he has directed active speed patrol. And if the speed limit is changed the Police Department will put emphasis on the change as well. Bill said if the speed limit is reduced to 25 mph coming down and directly across the street put a 35 mph going up and he will recommend a sign about 1,000' before the change put a "reduce speed ahead to 25" and near the monument 25 mph going up. Kimberley believes the sign on the way down the hill should read 30 mph not 35, she feels it's a mistake because you can't have 35 mph in one direction and 30 mph in the other direction on the same stretch of road. Faith said lowering the limit may also help when Bill meets with the state.

Tim Allen suggested reducing the speed limit to 25 mph on Geneva and Kirtland as well. Bill said if Kearsarge is posted for 25 mph and there's no posting on Geneva and Kirtland then the 25 mph is the limit until you see another sign that says differently. Tim said if it's going to be assumed then it should be posted.

David recalls entering another towns village area that had a sign that said "Village Speed Limit 25 mph", this would cover all the roads in the village area.

Bill asked the Committee if they are comfortable putting a 25 mph across from the Old Grade School which will take care of Roslyn and Geneva. A 25 mph near Harold Whittemore's property, 25 mph on the southbound side, across the street northbound 35 mph, a 30 mph near Sugar River Savings Bank heading on to Main St. and across the street from that 25 mph. The Committee agreed.

### **Committee Action**

Bill Chandler moved to request to the Selectmen to put a 25 mph across from the Old Grade School which will take care of Roslyn and Geneva. A 25 mph near Harold Whittemore's property, 25 mph on the southbound side, across the street northbound 35 mph, a 30 mph near Sugar River Savings Bank heading on to Main St. and across the street from that 25 mph. Ed Raymond seconded the motion, motion passed 5-0.

- D. Tim Blagden informed the Committee that he has obtained permission from the Water District and landowner near Joppa Bridge to bring the rail trail across. The long term plan is to use Depot St. and Chemical Lane as the trail heads toward exit 9. Having those roads dropped to 25 mph will be helpful as well.

- E. Kimberley asked who is the contact to remove a diesel sign from the Exit 8 sign on the interstate. Removing the sign would keep the big trucks from rolling through the village area. Kimberley would like to talk about this at the next meeting.
- F. The Committee talked about obtaining more information about Complete Streets.
- G. Bill will meet with the Selectmen on April 11<sup>th</sup> and present their recommendations.
- H. Kimberley talked about putting the minutes on the website as well.

Meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm

Recorder of the minutes: Mary Whalen