

Town of Hollis
Highway Safety Committee Minutes
October 19, 2021
1:00pm - Community Room
FINAL

HIGHWAY SAFETY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Belanger, Chairperson;
Paul Miller, Vice Chairperson; Rob Boggis, Fire Chief; Ted Chamberlain,
Joseph Hoebeke, Chief of Police; Deb Lussier (alternate),
Don Ryder (alternate); Herm Stickney; Rick Towne, Selectmen Representative;
Lori Radke, Town Administrator

ABSENT: Joan Cudworth; DPW Director

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Belanger called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm and led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF July 20th, 2021 MINUTES: J. Hoebeke made a motion to accept, 2nd by P. Miller. All in favor, none opposed.

Chairman J. Belanger opened the meeting for discussion on Agenda item 1 under New Business.

1) REQUEST BY KENNETH MERRITHEW, FOREST HILL DR TO INSTALL A CROSSWALK AT RTE 122 AND RTE 130 INTERSECTION, AKA THE "4 CORNERS".

J. Belanger asked who was going to present the request by Mr. Merrithew.

L. Radke stated she received an email approximately 1.5 years ago from Mr. Merrithew asking if the town could improve the intersection and possibly add a crosswalk. Since this location is under the jurisdiction of the State of NH DOT, he got in touch with State Representatives Kat McGhee and Susan Homola. They started working with the DOT to see if there was anything that could be done.

L. Radke stated somehow along the way Joan Cudworth, DPW Director was involved. L. Radke added that there was a Zoom meeting with Kat, Joan and the gentleman from the state who presented an option which would be 100% at the Town of Hollis expense at a cost around \$100,000.

It was noted that some land from the store at the corner would need to be obtained, sidewalks would need to be extended and/or added as was the case many years ago when an upgrade was proposed by the State of NH.

L. Radke stated she believes this intersection is failing and added that it's not on the State of NH 10-year plan. She noted that the town could apply for the TAP Grant which is an 80/20 match in 2023 but it would need to be put on the warrant.

J. Belanger stated years back the town was looking at a by-pass from Woodmont through Upper Elementary School which would exit onto Rocky Pond Rd but it never occurred.

J. Hoebeke noted the accident data found no major issues with traffic accidents and questioned L. Radke on what she felt was "failing" at the intersection. She stated the volume of traffic and the lack of turn lanes. He agreed there's backups during school but they're not relative to pedestrian issues and questioned if installing crosswalks were worth the investment.

There was discussion of how many people actually cross at this intersection and should a study be done. It was also noted that if anything was to come from this, it would be wise to wait for the 2 years to utilize the grant.

Comments from the members included concerns with maintaining the 4-way crosswalk and lights if town installs them, increased danger with vehicles going around stopped vehicles turning, lack of safety for pedestrians stepping into crosswalk without looking and questioning if there's enough foot traffic to warrant such a large expense to the town. It was also noted its important bicyclists adhere to traffic laws and follow the traffic pattern. Another concern was if a crossing light was installed would it bring in panhandlers.

R. Boggis noted that since 2016 there's only been 9 accidents, 1 involved a pedestrian and 1 involved a bicycle but the majority have been car vs car with 1 transported with an injury. He stated there was 1 or 2 more just recently not in the report at the time he researched it.

R. Towne stated the State of NH proposed upgrading that intersection approximately 30yrs ago before the Market Place was built. It was put on a warrant article but it came with so much opposition it was shot down. At that time the State of NH DOT stated that this intersection would be put at the end of their list.

J. Belanger stated he was not unsympathetic to Mr. Merrithews request as he has a grandson with Autism and noted he wouldn't expect or ask something specific be done for him. He suggested the possibility of painting the crosswalk but felt it may be more dangerous with pedestrians stepping out into traffic without looking. He added that he's not in favor of such a large expense for 1 individual.

J. Hoebeke stated that this intersection needs to be updated but it should be at the DOTs expense and not the town.

L. Radke stated she told the DOT it's their responsibility and suggested we might want to "knock" on their door to get it done.

J. Belanger moved to motion – "because this is an intersection of two state highways, the HSC believes this issue should be considered by the state at the time they upgrade the intersection". Seconded by P. Miller. All in favor, none opposed.

OTHER BUSINESS:

H. Stickney questioned if there was a law regarding power skateboards and trikes in town.

J. Hoebeke stated there wasn't anything preventing from using them in town but noted bikes should be ridden in the streets however, he stated the PD doesn't strictly enforce this.

P. Miller asked D. Lussier if she had the opportunity to speak with the neighbors at the corner of Merrill Ln and Depot Rd about the fence. D. Lussier stated she hasn't seen the owners as they have renters there. She added that the lawn had been mowed.

If warranted, the next meeting will be Tuesday, January 18th at 1pm.

With no other business to discuss, T. Chamberlain made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by P. Miller. All in favor, none opposed.

The Highway Safety Committee was officially adjourned at 1:30pm

Respectively submitted by:

Beverly Hill

Administrative Assistant
Town of Hollis - DPW