



# **Town of Hudson**

## **Internal Traffic Committee**

78 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749  
Tel: (978) 562-9963 Fax: (978) 568-9641

## **Minutes of Meeting 9-25-2020**

---

*A meeting of the Town of Hudson's Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) was held on Friday 8-28-2020, at 10:00 AM via Zoom consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus." Eric Ryder, acting as Chair convened the meeting at 10:05 AM.*

The following ITC voting members were in attendance:

Richard DiPersio, Police Chief

Bryan Johannes Fire Chief

Eric Ryder, Director of Public Works

The following non-voting ITC members were in attendance:

Kristina Johnson, AICP, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development

### **River Street- request to lower the speed limit**

Mr. Ryder asked Ms. Johnson to give a brief overview of the issue and any relevant background information. Ms. Johnson noted that since the roadway has been newly paved, concerns about speeding have been raised to her and Chief DiPersio. Ms. Johnson noted that a few of the neighborhood residents (who were in attendance on the zoom meeting) emailed Chief DiPersio about the issue and that he suggested that the issue be added to the ITC agenda.

Mr. Ryder turned over the virtual floor to Ms. Ellen DiLauro, a resident of the neighborhood. Ms. DiLauro also noted that speeding has become an extremely important neighborhood safety issue since River Street has been recently repaved. She thanked Chief DiPersio for listening to the neighborhood concerns, and thanked the Town for the hard work in taking care of the streets and sidewalks; but stated the speeding issues still persist. She noted that she had been before the ITC Board 14 years ago when the speed limit had been raised from 20 MPH to 30 MPH from the Main Street area to Tripp's Pond and from 25 MPH to 35 MPH from Tripp's Pond to the Berlin Town line. She further noted her belief that unlike River Street the other radial streets that lead into the Downtown District have more reasonable speed limits unlike River Street, which has a 35 MPH speed limit. Ms. DiLauro expressed her concerns and inquired why this discrepancy exists.

Mr. Ryder turned over the virtual floor to Anthony Montfreida, a resident of the neighborhood expressed his understanding of statutory speed limits and regulatory speed limits. Mr. Montfreida noted that River Street is governed by a regulatory speed limit. He inquired about the process to lower the posted the speed limit on River Street, and wanted to know more details about whether an original traffic study was completed to support the current speed

limit. And finally, he noted that lowering the speed limit would present an opportunity to make the neighborhood more walkable for the many young families residing there.

Mr. Ryder turned over the virtual floor to Pam Grimes, a long-term resident of the neighborhood also expressed similar concerns as her neighbors regarding speeding in the neighborhood, walking on the sidewalks, and the safety of the children waiting at the bus stops. Ms. Grimes inquired if Public Works would consider adding a white fog line between the roadway and the sidewalk to provide a visual barrier between pedestrians and vehicles. Mr. Ryder agreed to investigate adding a fog line to River Street. Ms. Grimes also expressed concerns about the amount of trucks using the roadway as a cut through, and the safety risks this poses for the neighborhood, as it is harder for trucks to brake effectively at 35 MPH.

Chief DiPersio acknowledged that he spoke with Ms. DiLauro about the speeding on River Street, and he expressed his appreciation and understanding of her concerns. Chief DiPersio noted that he cannot speak to any of the prior traffic studies that had been completed. The Chief pledged to step up traffic enforcement in the neighborhood, but stated that patrol officers cannot be deployed in the neighborhood every day, all day long. Chief DiPersio noted that Department applied for grant money to purchase tools to help collect traffic data and purchase speed enforcement signs.

Chief Johannes recommended that neighborhood residents contact the companies whose drivers are engaging in reckless driving or speeding on the roadway. The Chief encouraged the residents to document the vehicle type, the date, and the time of the incident to pass on to the private company who oversee the delivery personnel. Chief Johannes noted that the River Street is not the only roadway that is the subject of excessive speeding, cut through traffic, and reckless driving, as many other neighborhoods throughout the Town grapple with the same issues.

Mr. Ryder noted that over the past four years the Town has been undertaking more roadway resurfacing efforts, which can result in speeding on the roadway after completion of the project. And finally, Mr. Ryder pointed out that due to COVID there has been a proliferation of home deliveries, as people are generally not going out shopping in the same fashion.

Ms. Johnson provided a thorough overview of the process to petition the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MASSDOT) to request a change to a regulatory speed limit. Ms. Johnson also provided an explanation about the difference between a statutory speed limit and regulatory speed limit, and the recent changes in the 2016 Municipal Modernization Act that allow for communities to lower the statutory speed limit in thickly settled areas to 25 MPH. And finally, she noted the cost to complete the required traffic engineering study, which would be approximately between \$4,000 and \$10,000.

Mr. Ryder recommended that the Town look into using MassDOT Complete Streets funding as a possible mechanism to install signage, or potentially widen sidewalks. In the short-term, Mr. Ryder indicated that the Town can step up traffic enforcement and investigate striping a fog line along River Street.

No further action was taken on this issue.

**Roadway Condition on Brigham St between Washington Street and Park Street**

Mr. Ryder recognized Mr. Joe Marinelli, and turned over the virtual floor for him to address the ITC Board. Mr. Marinelli described a section of Brigham Street that has a rough roadway surface, and he noted that vehicles are consistently driving on the opposite side of the roadway to avoid the rough surfaces and the cold patches that get installed as temporary fixes. Mr. Marinelli offered his observation that the traditional mill and overlay does not have a long lifespan, and tends to deteriorate after 3-5 years. He requested that the Department of Public Works investigate a technique that would keep the roadway in better condition for a longer period of time.

Mr. Ryder noted that Brigham Street is on the radar for resurfacing, but stated that the Department of Public Works will continue to cold patch as needed to ensure a safe roadway condition

No further action was taken on this issue.

**Vehicle queuing at Dunkin Donuts Drive through on Washington Street (at CVS)**

Mr. Marinelli also raised the issue of vehicles queuing at the Dunkin Donuts Drive through at the CVS plaza on Washington Street. He screen-shared a Google Earth view to better describe the issue, which is that vehicles queue so far back past the drive through across the parking lot and block the entrance into the plaza from Washington Street (Route 85) and cause vehicles to exit the plaza in the wrong lane. He recommended the installation of a center island with a stacking lane be installed should the owner of the plaza come back to the Town for any revisions to their development.

Chief Johannes asked if the Town should contact the property owner and inform of them of this situation. Mr. Ryder suggested that Ms. Johnson send a letter on behalf of the ITC Board reminded the property owner that there cannot have traffic from on-site blocking Washington Street (Route 85).

Mr. Ryder seconded by Chief DiPersio moved to have Ms. Johnson prepare a letter on behalf of the ITC Board to the property owners of RK Plaza. 3-0-0. Unanimous

**Discussion of cost estimated for Speed Limit/Truck Exclusion traffic studies**

This item was covered during the discussion of the speeding issues on River Street.

**Minutes from 8/28/2020**

Chief Johannes seconded by Chief DiPersio moved to approve the minutes from the August 28, 2020 ITC meeting. 3-0-0. Unanimous

**Adjournment**

Mr. Ryder seconded by Chief Johannes moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 AM. 3-0-0. Unanimous.