

DERRY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes for December 15, 2022



COMMITTEE MEMBER	PRESENT	ABSENT
Scott Savard, Chairman		X
Daniel Healey, Co-Chair via Zoom	X	
George Feole, Derry Police	X	
David Eastman, Derry Fire Dept.		X
Jane Simard, Derry School Dept.		X
Alan Côté, DPW	X	
Open		
Walter Deyo	X	
Ronald Goldthwaite	X	
Randall Chase	X	
Jeremy Lamothe (School Dept Alt)		
Patti Doyle (School Dept Alt)		
(Police Alt)		
Jim Richardson (Fire Alt)	X	
Mike Fowler (DPW Alt)	X	
Vern Thomas		

In attendance for North Shore Rd:

Mr. Ian Ross – 7 Orchard Dr.

Mr. Phil Gallagher & Mrs. Diana Gallagher – 30 North Shore Rd.

Mr. Derek Scheer – 24 North Shore Rd.

A monthly meeting of the Derry Highway Safety Committee was held on Thursday, December 15, 2022, at the Derry Municipal Center. The meeting was called to order at 9:04am.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 17, 2022, meeting, were reviewed.

**Ron Goldthwaite made a motion to approve the November 17, 2022, minutes as written.
Seconded by Randy Chase.**

MOTION PASSED (5–0). Alan Côté, Chief Feole, & Walter Deyo abstained.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Sign-up sheet for meeting minute taking in 2023 has been distributed. Jill Jamro (DPW) will cover January through March, Sarah Gibbs (DPD) will cover April through June, Fire Administration will cover July through September (waiting on confirmation and person to be assigned), and Jill Jamro (DPW) will cover October through December.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Mr. Paul Chisholm – Keach Nordstrom – possible sight line impacts to the intersection of Franklin Street and Pearl Street due to required setbacks.

Mr. Paul Chisholm stated that 16 Franklin Street is a two-family unit now and one unit burned down about a year ago. The plan is a three-unit condo. He went to the Zoning Board to apply for a variance. The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) requires different setbacks. It is supposed to be within 5 feet of frontage of the property. At the intersection of Franklin Street and Pearl Street, there is heavy vegetation and a fence. The plan is to remove both and moving the building 10 feet away/sight line. There are three way stop controls at the intersection.

Alan Côté stated that the sight line proposed, the ZBA did not grant the setback relief.

Mr. Paul Chisholm replied that from a safety standpoint, these changes would appease all.

Alan Côté stated that he would support this plan and that would help with the ability to push the snow. Mr. Paul Chisholm stated that the red line on the plan depicts the property line.

Mike Fowler stated that the proposed scenario is a way to circumvent the zero-foot setback to deed to the Town. Mr. Paul Chisholm stated that he would not agree with the deed and learned that it would be an uphill battle after speaking with Mark L'Heureux (DPW). It makes sense for an easement. The triangle would hit the Pearl frontage at zero. The Town may not want to go that route. Mike Fowler replied that he wanted the minutes to note that the option was explored.

Alan Côté asked if there would be an easement that would allow for snow storage. Mike Fowler replied that we don't have that in most places in the downtown. Mr. Paul Chisholm stated that he would be willing to allow that if needed.

Motion made by Alan Côté that Jill Jamro, Recording Clerk, will send the draft meeting minutes to the Planning Board that the Highway Safety Committee has reviewed the site plans and supports the site plan as proposed. Seconded by Chief Feole. No further action to be taken.

Chief Feole asked about the building in relation to the lot line for the decks? Mr. Paul Chisholm explained that under the revised plans, there are no decks. There will be what is known as Romeo & Juliet decks (18") off the building, no ground posts will be installed. There was no room for a traditional deck, in order to hit the max setback for Franklin Street which is 5'.

Ron Goldthwaite asked about the watershed management, specifically, the drip line. Mr. Paul Chisholm stated that there is a ditch line in the street and a driveway culvert that leads to a catch basin on Town property. There is a stormwater management report that reflects that the stormwater does not increase and that it will decrease water running down both Franklin Street and Pearl Street.

- 2) Mrs. Lindsay Clapp – 3 Barkland Drive – request for a blinking crosswalk/stop sign on Tsienneto Road between Barkland Drive & Scenic Drive.

Mrs. Lindsay Clapp stated that she has lived in Derry for five years. She fears children walking down Tsienneto Road. They cross over Scenic Drive onto Beaver Lake Ave. There are more neighborhood kids in the area, they ride their bikes to the pond. There are two blind curves, and vehicles are driving fast. She is asking for some type of caution light to slow the vehicles down.

Dan Healey stated that he lives on Scenic Drive. Traveling from Tsienneto Road to the post office, there is a blind drive. This area is tough even in a car.

Alan Côté stated that typically sidewalks cross from one intersection to another. With 4A, the entire geometry of the hill will be reengineered and reconstructed. The one benefit is that you can walk on the sidewalk on Beaver Road. It is never wise to put a crosswalk into a non-protected area. Exit 4A should make a large improvement.

Mrs. Lindsay Clapp stated that there is a sidewalk on their side. She is requesting a caution sign to help protect the kids a little more. She wants to avoid a tragic incident and is looking for a creative solution.

Alan Côté stated that he was not sure if the DOT had pedestrian provisions. Mike Fowler stated that he does not recall provisions for pedestrians. He stated that shoulders will be widened on both sides. He can double check but that is his understanding of the DOT plan.

Ron Goldthwaite asked about bus stops and where those are located.

Mrs. Lindsay Clapp stated that there are more houses and more children.

Dan Healey stated that there is not much the Highway Safety Committee can do, as they are waiting for Exit 4A.

Alan Côté would not advocate for crosswalks. Slow signs have proven to be ineffective. Drivers are creatures of habit, and he recommends that the turtle things be placed only when there are children outside. Otherwise, motorists get used to just seeing the turtles with no children, and they do not slow down. There is no action to be taken.

Mike Fowler stated that improving the sight lines will help. Alan Côté will try to verify with the DOT if there are any pedestrian provisions. Jill Jamro will email Mrs. Lindsay Clapp the outcome.

Chief Feole stated that the improvements by the DOT are 3-4 years out. Mrs. Lindsay Clapp asked how to promote enhanced safety until then.

Alan Côté to conduct a field visit of the intersection and see if there are any stop gap measures that can be implemented. Most people are struck in marked crosswalks.

Motion made by Chief Feole to table the discussion to the next meeting. Seconded by Alan Côté seconded. MOTION PASSED (8–0).

- 3) Mr. & Mrs. Ian Ross – 7 Orchard Drive – request and petition for stop signs on Orchard Drive & North Shore Road.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that last month the issue of speeding was discussed, and he felt like he was not getting a feeling of community from the Highway Safety Committee. There are blind corners and not much visibility on North Shore Road. He recognizes the effort that Mike Fowler put forth. If you are looking right, walking anywhere on North Shore Road, you cannot see anyone. This is a heavily populated lake area where people walk with baby strollers, walk their dogs, and bike.

Mike Fowler replied that his proposed solution mentioned in Memorandum MM22-038, caution signs going east and west on North Shore Road, similar to the back entry at Pinkerton Academy. He conducted a site walk on North Shore Road, the day after the November meeting.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that he felt good about what was to come for safety. An older woman was present at the site walk, what happens when she gets run over? That will be on the town who is not being proactive. When you are pulling out of Orchard Drive, there is no visibility.

Mike Fowler replied that the last Highway Safety Committee meeting was held on November 17, 2022. He met with 5 or 6 abutters on Friday, November 18, 2022. He observed traffic characteristics. In summary, the Highway Safety Committee is limited in what they can recommend given the road width at 22-23'. He appreciates the residents coming forward. On the bottom of page one, it lists the sight distance on Orchard Drive looking left to be at 275 feet, and the site distance on Orchard Drive looking right to be greater than 300'. The geometry of the road does not meet the warrant for a three way stop. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Devices (MUTCD) is used nationwide, and every traffic engineer uses it. Stop signs are not recommended to reduce speed.

There is a four-step test to meet the warrants.

- 1) Where traffic control signals are justified, the multi-way stop is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the installation of the traffic control sign.
NO – A fully signalized intersection is not under consideration.
- 2) A crash problem, as indicated by five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation. Such crashes include right – and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.
NO – the frequency of crash data does not support this.
- 3) Minimum volumes warranting a multi-way stop.
 - a. The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the major street approaches (total of both approaches), averages at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day, and b. The combined vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle volume entering the intersection from the minor street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least

200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay of minor-street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour.

NO – total daily vehicles on North Shore Road are 1605 vehicles per day. Orchard Drive is under 50 vehicles per day.

- 4) Where no single criterion is satisfied, but where Criteria 2, 3a, and 3b are all satisfied to 80 percent of the minimum values. Criterion C.3 is excluded from this condition.

NO – the criteria is not met for all three warrants.

Other criteria that may be considered in an engineering study include:

- A. The need to control left-turn conflicts. *NO*
- B. The need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts near locations that generate high pedestrian volumes. *NO*
- C. Locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to negotiate the intersection unless conflicting cross traffic is also required to stop. *NO*
- D. An intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection. *NO*

This proposed solution does not meet the MUTCD warrants and is not recommended for implementation.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Ian Ross and Chief Feole.

Mr. Ian Ross asked about the criteria for accidents. There have been dogs killed, a person struck, mailboxes hit, etc.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that there have been more than five accidents and that he is just trying to follow the guidelines.

Chief Feole stated that if accidents are not reported to the Derry Police Department, then they would have no record of it and to cut him some slack.

Mr. Ian Ross replied that if a child is hit, how is that counted, he will return to this committee, and the committee can apologize. Chief Feole stated that would be counted as a single accident.

Mr. Ian Ross then asked for an explanation of 3a. Mike Fowler answered that you have to understand the context. It is determined by frequency, constant crossing, such as Manchester Road with 22,000 vehicles per day and on East Broadway with many pedestrians crossing.

Mr. Phil Gallagher recounted the day he was struck by a vehicle on January 6, 2018, retrieving his mail and stated that the safety issues are worse during the summer months.

Mr. Derek Scheer asked what constitutes a high percentage of pedestrians. Mike Fowler stated that is more subjective, rural setting versus an urban setting, there is no guidance on X # of pedestrians, or pedestrians per day or per hour.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that at least once per day, people are swerving and driving recklessly. He stated that conflicts could result in the Derry Police Department being called due to arguments.

Mr. Derek Scheer stated that there was a driver of a green BMW, that the second he approached the road, the driver beeped the horn at him and tried to hit him. He did report the incident to the Derry Police Department.

Mrs. Diana Gallagher stated that drivers are traveling so fast, that there are less people out walking now. She stated that they should be able to walk around the road safely, and the local residents literally fear for their lives.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that this is a case where Derry is limited enjoyment of residents. He is looking for a common-sense judgment. He asked that even it doesn't fit the mold (MUTCD) that this committee is splitting hairs to say that this does not permit the stop signs. He stated that there is so much pessimism from this committee, every request is just shot down, and he is disappointed by the Highway Safety Committee, they shoot down a very reasonable request. The question of liability comes into play.

Mike Fowler stated that looking at visibility from a pure number's standpoint. He measured 10 feet back from the intersection. Engineering Design Manuals recommends the following distances for stopping sight distance: 30 mph – 200 feet & 35 mph – 250 feet. There may be other measures to improve visibility when looking left. Mr. Ian Ross stated that the telephone pole cannot be moved.

Mr. Ian Ross stated that he wants the sight distances to be remeasured.

- 1) A second assessment to be conducted.
- 2) Even if the 85th % speed was 38.25 mph and is at 275 feet. At 40 mph, the required stopping sight distance would be 305 feet. The required feet should be based on a sliding scale, which would take us to 288 feet.

Mike Fowler stated that theoretically, the stopping sight distance for 30 mph would be 200 feet. He recognizes that the 85th % is 38.25 mph. Mr. Ian Ross stated that he appreciates the leeway.

Mike Fowler stated that the broader scope, is that his role as the DPW Director, is to present the board with all the facts, such as pointing out the actual speeds versus the posted speed limit. This is an advisory board, from here it would move to the Town Council and has to be adopted by the Town Council. This is a limited situation for the Town Council to overwrite.

Mike Fowler stated that if the Highway Safety Committee does not recommend a three way stop sign, there has to be something in a rural area that has worked and referenced, Traffic Calming on Main Roads Through Rural Communities, published by the U.S. Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration).

The first option is pavement markings (red background with white lettering), 30 mph, decreased traffic by 9 miles an hour. Statistically, pavement markings reduce speed. The second option is yellow diamond signs installed on both sides and they are also effective. These are interim measures that can be looked at again in 3 months, 6 months, 1 year. He understands that the goal is get back enjoyment of the neighborhood. Regarding a three way stop, does it effect the speed? You will hear the acceleration of vehicles. Will the neighborhood be better off?

Mr. Ian Ross stated that the direct backlash will be near Mr. Derek Scheer's property. Mr. Derek Scheer stated that going North bound toward 102, Beaver Lake Road is where vehicles will gain momentum again.

Alan Côté stated, please understand that a stop sign cannot be used to lower speed limits. Is it safe for motorists?

Mr. Ian Ross asked what the potential downside is for a trial three way stop. Mr. Derek Scheer said that the downside would be if it is shot down by the Town Council. Mike Fowler replied that would be a board discussion. The question is what if the three-way stop doesn't lower speed limits? He deferred to Chief Feole.

Chief Feole stated that a three-way stop would create a lot of traffic violators. People will go through the stop signs. He does not have the police staff to monitor stop signs 24 hours per day. He stated that the stop signs will create a false sense of security. In addition, lowering the speed limit to 25 mph would also increase the number of traffic violations. Chief Feole stated that the goal is to lower the speed of travel.

Randy Chase stated that years ago, the Highway Safety Committee made a decision based on emotions. A stop sign was placed at Fenway and Grove, they are still there, once the stops signs are in, they are in for good. He stated that maybe 1 in 10 vehicles actually stop.

Mr. Ian Ross replied that this is an outlier scenario.

Randy Chase asked if Mr. Ian Ross was going to come back to the committee and apologize?

Mr. Ian Ross stated that he is baffled by the atmosphere of the room.

Chief Richardson stated per their records, Derry Fire has not responded to any accidents on North Shore Road in the last 12 months. There was a minor accident that occurred in the prior twelve months, so one response in two years. He stated that the Derry Police Department may have responded more than Derry Fire. He stated that this is a slippery slope when requesting that the Highway Safety Committee respond outside best practices and national experts. If the situation does not meet the criteria, it sets the precedent and is tough to implement a decision. The criteria is used to hold ourselves accountable, and while he feels for Mr. Ian Ross, when voting we (the committee) need to know why we are voting yes. We have to make conscious decisions to justify our recommendations to the Town Council.

Alan Côté stated that it is really easy to put up stop signs. The cost is minimal at \$300. The proposal submitted by Mike Fowler for pavement markings is more costly. Are we taking action to appease residents or are we making recommendations based on their effectiveness? The Federal Highway Administration has decades worth of study. Orchard Drive is a perfect example of an area that does not meet the criteria for a three-way stop. We need to look at the end result.

Walter Deyo stated that Orchard Drive is a dead-end road and that 98% of the traffic lives there. The residents should know their situation is dangerous and be able to police themselves. North Shore Road can benefit from caution signs, lights flashing, to get driver attention.

Mr. Phil Gallagher stated that the goal is a reduction of speed in this area. Drivers will drift above the speed limit no matter what is posted, and they are looking for help from this committee.

Mr. Derek Scheer stated that more police presence is needed on the road, maybe three times more. He stated that former Chief Garone always said that he did not have enough staff and he ignored their requests time and time again.

Chief Feole responded that there is something the committee can do. For many years, residents have come forth with concerns about speeding. The DPW Director conducted a comprehensive study. It would be worthwhile to implement those measures to try to get speeds reduced, as all of the issues are based on speeds. The red markings with white lettering, will go a long way to fix the problems on the road as well as battery powered speed signs.

Mr. Derek Scheer stated that the sign-post location is not angled correctly. Chief Feole will ensure that this is fixed. Chief Feole stated that they invested in permanent signs flashing vehicle speeds on West Broadway and South Main Street for a cost of about \$2,500 each. We are coming up to the budget prep season, the flashing lights coupled with the DPW Director's recommendation, both measures will slow speed travel.

Alan Côté that there is a speed limit on the sign that also displays how fast a vehicle is traveling.

Mike Fowler stated that the first speed reduction measure is the 2 permanent thickly settled signs and pavement markings (seasonal) and the second part is to vote on a three-way stop.

Mr. Phil Gallagher stated that Mr. Ian Ross is set on a three-way stop, but his goal is really to reduce the travel speed.

Dan Healey stated that he agrees with Mike Fowler's analysis.

Motion made by Randy Chase to install a three-way stop on North Shore Road, east and west and at Orchard Drive. Seconded by Chief Feole. MOTION FAILED (0-8).

Motion made by Chief Feole for two permanent flashing beacon speed limit signs, two thickly settled signs, and pavement markings (in the spring). Seconded by Alan Côté. MOTION PASSED (8-0).

Randy Chase asked about a single line down the center of the road at the same time. Alan Côté replied that the study did now show a single line, it may not be beneficial.

Chief Feole stated that they can budget for the speed control measures for the next fiscal year which starts July 1, 2023, and that Town Council approval is not needed as there is no ordinance involved.

Ron Goldthwaite asked about the yellow signs.

Mike Fowler – stated that part of the recommendation is to install two thickly settled signs and negating the diamond signs. Mike Fowler stated that he wants a successful outcome and that he appreciates everyone coming today.

4) Mr. David Pouliot – 146 Warner Hill Road – request to adopt a similar program/ordinance currently in use in Manchester (no turn on red during school hours). Also, second paragraph is about a school crossing guard's authority to detour traffic on a public way and a request for the committee to suggest a protocol for employees while working on Derry roads.

Discussion ensued about the request. A school crossing guard is able to detour traffic as needed. Regarding a no turn on red during school hours, not being able to take a right hand turn at Betley, at the post office, and westbound, concerns about traffic backing up at Pinkerton Academy were discussed.

Alan Côté made a motion to prohibit a right turn on red in all directions during school hours on Tsienneto Road and North Main Street. Seconded by Chief Feole.

MOTION FAILED (0-8).

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

**Alan Côté made a motion to adjourn at 10:50 am.
Seconded by Ron Goldthwaite.**

MOTION PASSED (8-0).

The next meeting is Thursday, January 19, 2023, at 9am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jill Jamro, Recording Clerk