

Public Safety Committee
Council Chambers
May 15, 2019
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor David Walker
Councilor Robert Gates
Councilor Geoffrey Hamann
Councilor Jeremy Hutchinson
Councilor Peter Lachapelle

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Gary Boudreau, Deputy Police Chief
Dan Camera, GIS/Asset Mgmt. Technician
Shane and Kimberly May, 41 Whitehouse Rd.
Rob Partridge, Goodfellas Brick Oven Pizzeria
Sandy Averill-Maple Street

Minutes

Councilor Walker brought the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Public Input

Shane and Kimberly May were present to discuss a safety issue with trying to get out of their driveway at 41 Whitehouse Road. Shane May stated they sent a letter last fall to the City Council regarding the safety hazards trying to get out of their driveway. The area has a hill which makes it hard to see when getting out of the driveway. He read the letter regarding his concerns. Since moving there a year and a half ago they've had several close calls. It's difficult in the winter with the snow banks and since the road has been redone it has gotten worse. They have to hit the gas and hope for the best or get out of their vehicle, look to see if a vehicle is coming, and then get back in. They fear for their safety and the safety of others leaving their driveway. He is requesting either a blind driveway sign or a mirror to help. Timothy Goldthwaite, an Assistant City Engineer at DPW, has been out to look and agreed that in one direction the line-of-sight is less than ideal. Councilor Walker asked Mr. Bezanson if there are mirrors up in the City. Mr. Bezanson said yes, but they're privately owned. The City does not install them, but the City has allowed citizens to put them up on a case-by-case basis with input from DPW. In this location on Whitehouse Road, there was a mirror installed previously, but it's no longer there. Councilor Lachapelle said we

do not put up the mirrors but can we recommend one and have them consult DPW. Councilor Walker said that they could recommend a “blind driveway” sign. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to install a “blind driveway” sign heading out of Rochester at the discretion of DPW. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hutchinson. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

Mr. May asked if they could find a solution for where to place the mirror; is it something they could do? Councilor Lachapelle said if they could come up with something, he has no problem recommending a motion to install mirror.

Councilor Walker said they could add a motion to install driveway mirror.

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to allow the owner to put up a driveway mirror in the City’s right-of-way, as long as they consult with DPW on where to place it. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

Washington Street Crosswalks

Sandy Averill from Maple Street was present to voice concerns about the Washington Street crosswalks near Chasse Street and Fairway Avenue. She thanked the Committee for painting the area approaching the Washington Street crosswalk for no parking and installing the “No Parking” sign near the corner on Fairway Avenue that was missing for a long time. She stated it has made it easier to make right turns onto Fairway. It can still get a little dicey trying to walk the remainder of Fairway because there are no sidewalks there, but she thinks the sign has been helpful.

2. North Main Street-Do Not Block Box

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. The Planning Board has approved a bank going into the old Foster’s building at 90 North Main Street. The Planning Board recommended for safety purposes that there should be a “do not block” box painted in front of the entrance on North Main Street. This will alleviate a situation where vehicles making a left turn into the bank would back up traffic on North Main Street into the intersection. Councilor Walker asked Deputy Chief Boudreau if the “do not block” box is enforceable. Deputy Chief Boudreau said he needed to research the statutes and talk with the Legal Dept. about it. Councilor Walker asked if Deputy Chief Boudreau recommends this, and he said yes. Deputy Chief Boudreau said there is one in Somersworth and it keeps people from stopping there; he thinks it’s a good idea. **Councilor Walker made**

a motion to paint a “Do Not Block” Box in front of the entrance to the new bank on North Main Street, and Deputy Chief Boudreau will continue to research enforceability. Motion was seconded by Councilor Lachapelle.

Councilor Hutchinson ask if it was just a painted box or will it say “do not block”. Deputy Chief Boudreau said the one in Somersworth does have a sign that says “Do Not Block Driveway” right by the painted “Do Not Block” Box. ***Councilor Walker amended his motion to include a “Do Not Block Driveway” sign by the painted “Do Not Block” Box at the entrance. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

3. School Zone Signage

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Mr. Bezanson said they looked at the Gonic School, located on Railroad Avenue, this past month. The school walking route plan that they put together includes Pickering Road, Church Street and up to Route 125. They took a look at the critical crosswalks, the most critical of which crosses Main Street at Railroad Avenue. In warmer weather, a moveable temporary crosswalk sign is placed in the roadway. There is also a crossing guard stationed at this crosswalk. There are no signs marking this crosswalk. A typical 5-sided school crossing sign with 2 pedestrians and the arrow pointed down sign are recommended on both sides of this crosswalk. On Railroad Avenue, there is a school zone sign with times when the speed limit is 20; no other school zone signage with reduced speeds are located on any other roads in the area. NHDOT installed signs on Route 125 for the crosswalks at Chesley Hill/Main and Oak/Colby intersections and an advanced warning sign in each direction. Councilor Walker asked what is recommended. Mr. Bezanson said a school zone reduced speed limit should be 10 mph below the usual speed limit for a road. Deputy Chief Boudreau said the prima facie speed limit for Railroad Avenue would be 30 mph. Mr. Bezanson mentioned that if the Committee desired to return to prima facie speed limit, there is a 20 mph sign that needed to be removed. He also pointed out a few older signs, including Slow Children signs, that needed to be removed. End School Speed Limit signs and 5-sided advance warning signs should be added to complete the school zone signage package as detailed by MUTCD. Councilor Walker suggested that the Committee deal with one road at a time. ***Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to approve the school zone package which includes removing the 2 slow children signs on Railroad Avenue, remove the 20 mph speed limit sign, remove the old school zone sign and install the new 5-sided advanced***

warning sign and End School Speed Limit signs. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hutchinson. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

Mr. Bezanson said he recommends on Pickering Road signage at the crosswalk. There are already advanced warning signs on Main St./Pickering Rd.; he can check the locations for distance to crosswalk. Near Quaker Lane there is a slow children sign that should be removed; it is on the same pole as a speed limit sign and NHDOT Urban Compact sign. On Tuttle Court there is a small crosswalk that should have signage or stop control. He recommended a painted stop bar or stop sign there. Mr. Bezanson said there could be children walking from the far side of Church Street, Felker Street area, and Colby Street that would need to cross the crosswalk at Church Street; this is a critical one. There is some signage for regular pedestrian crossing, but it is recommended that this be signed as a school crossing including an advanced warning sign on Church Street.

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to remove the Slow Children sign on Pickering Road and update the crosswalk at the end of the bridge with the modernized school crossing signage. Councilor Hamann seconded the motion. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to paint a stop bar on Tuttle Court at the discretion of DPW. Councilor Walker seconded the motion. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to add modernized signage to the crosswalk by the retirement home on Church Street and add advanced warning signs at the required distance per MUTCD. Councilor Gates seconded the motion. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion. Councilor Walker asked which school for next month. Spaulding High School will be reviewed.

4. E911 Update

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Deputy Chief Boudreau said they did not meet this month, they are working on all the recent councilor votes.

5. Emergency Management Update

There was no one present from the fire department for an update.

6. Other

Washington Street Crosswalk

Councilor Walker asked Mr. Bezanson if he had done any cost investigation for the crosswalk on Washington Street by Goodfellas. Mr. Bezanson stated that the City has signed a new contract with a sidewalk contractor and they are using those contract prices to evaluate costs for options to move the crosswalk on Washington Street. The evaluation is not yet complete, so he had no prices for the Committee tonight. He will have prices for next month.

Rob Partridge of Goodfellas Pizzeria was present to discuss the moving of the Washington Street Crosswalk. He knows there are traffic issues and just came to see if there were any updates to moving the crosswalk further down Washington Street. He appreciates the Committee looking into this and understands that there is no guarantee that the City will approve moving forward with relocation of this crosswalk.

Traffic Complaint by Spaulding High School

Councilor Hamann said he has had three complaints of speed and reckless driving by Spaulding High School and the Community Center.

Waste Management Trash Pickup by Spaulding High School

Councilor Hamann said he had two complaints about Waste Management picking up the trash in front of the high School at 7:00 am, and asked if it could be postponed a little bit. Councilor Lachapelle said he would talk to the route manager. Councilor Hamann said a few minutes would make a big difference.

Seasonal Cold Weather Shelter

Councilor Hutchinson said that he wanted to start the conversation about a seasonal cold weather shelter since it was accepted in the master plan. Councilor Lachapelle said he knows it is a public safety issue and it also should go to the Finance Committee, as well as maybe the Community Development Committee. Councilor Lachapelle said it is a much needed facility. Councilor Walker asked if Councilor Hutchinson had dollar figure. Councilor Hutchinson said he did not. Councilor Walker said they should take the dollar figure from this

past winter season to start with. Councilor Hutchinson said maybe a City-owned vacant building to start until a permanent solution was found. Councilor Walker asked that the Seasonal Cold Weather Shelter be placed on the agenda as a standing item.

Wakefield/Union Street

Mr. Bezanson updated the committee on placing signs on Wakefield and Union Street. He stated that the removable crosswalk sign is there and a permanent right turn only sign was reinstalled as well.

Four Rod Road Speed Trailer Update

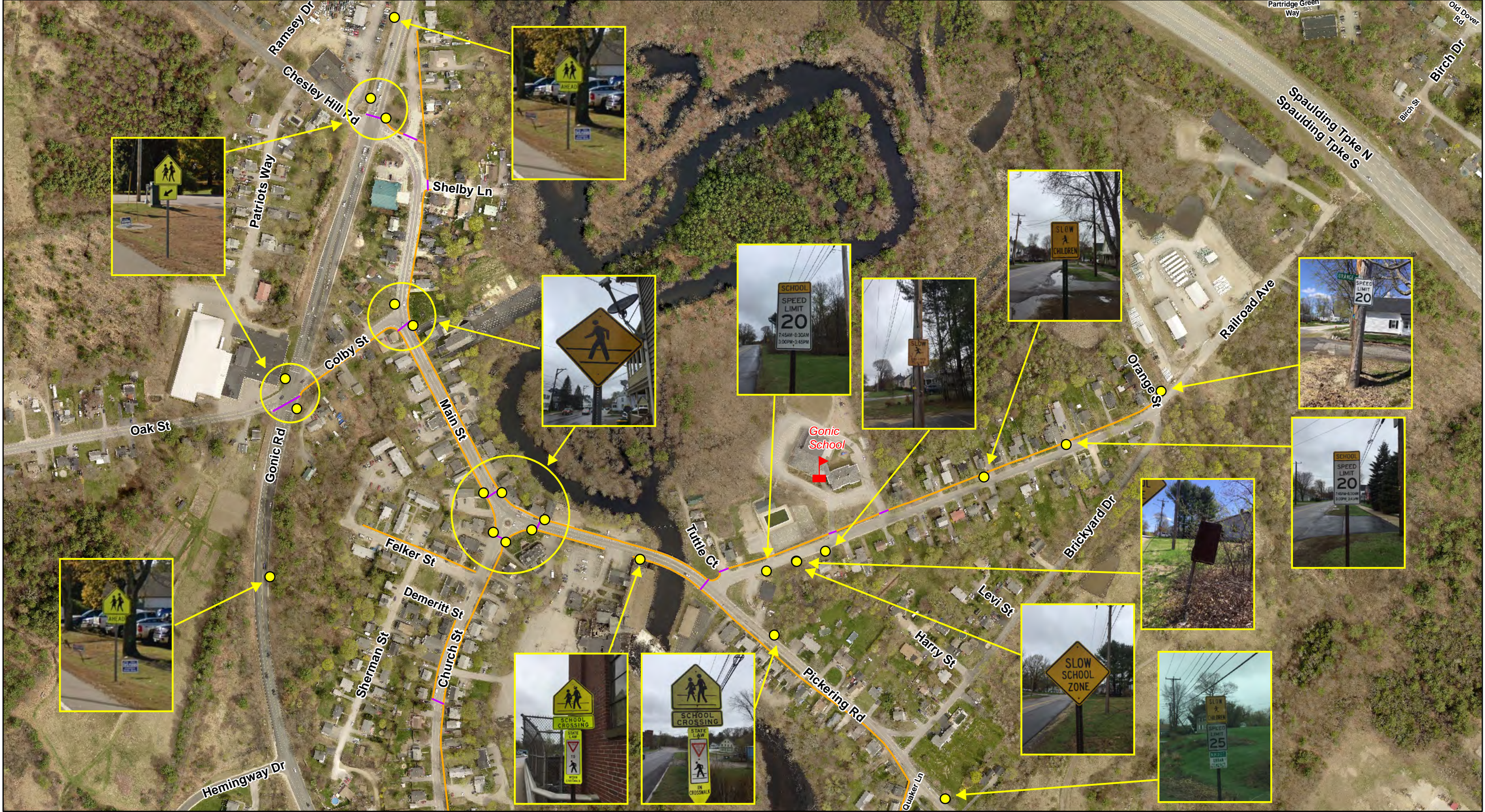
Deputy Chief Boudreau said that now that the warm weather is here the speed trailer has been in use. It was on Four Rod Road for 7 days with vehicle count of approximately 12,000 and the average speed was 32.5 mph and the speed limit is 30 mph and the 85th percentile was 39 mph. Deputy Chief Boudreau said he does not see a speeding problem in the area according to the speed data.

Eastern Avenue Speed Update

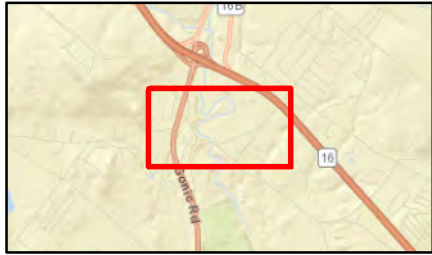
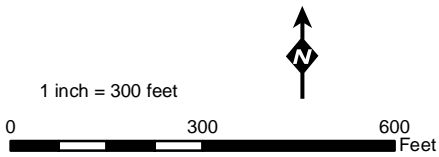
Deputy Chief Boudreau said the speed trailer is currently on Eastern Avenue inbound and it has been out for 6 days with approximately 30,000 vehicles with the average speed being 34.2 mph and the speed limit is 30 mph in the area. In a day or two the speed trailer will be moved to the opposite end of Eastern Avenue outbound.

***Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 PM.
Councilor Hutchinson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II.



- Legend
- Existing Signage
 - Crosswalk
 - School
 - Sidewalk



This map is intended for planning purposes only.
All features shown should be considered approximate.
Date: 5/15/2019
Author: DC - Rochester, NH
Source: NHGRANIT, City of Rochester

Existing Conditions
Gonic School School Zone
Rochester, NH