

**CITY OF CONCORD
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2024**

The Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) met at 9:00 am on November 19, 2024
in the Second Floor Conference Room, 41 Green Street.

Attendees: Alec Bass, Michael Bezanson, Karen Hill, Jim Major, Fred Reagan, John Thomas,

Absent: Matt Cashman, Terry Crotty, Harold Palmer

Guests: Paul Raymond Jr. (NH DOC; Matthew Stefanczak, (NH DOC); Maria Fowler, River Road; Jane Toumpas, River Road; Councilor Horne

1. Introductions

2. Regular Discussion Items

a. *Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2024.*

The meeting minutes of September 17, 2024 were approved.

b. *Overview of City-Wide Crash Data*

September and October data were submitted in advance of the meeting and reviewed.

There were 88 reportable crashes in September 2024. This compares with 88 and 105 reportable crashes in September 2023 and 2022, respectively. 12 crashes resulted in injuries. There were no fatality involved accidents. There were six reported accidents involving a collision with a pedestrian and one collision involving a bicyclist.

There were 122 reportable crashes in October 2024. This compares with 95 and 88 reportable crashes in October 2023 and 2022, respectively. 24 crashes resulted in injuries. There was one reported accident involving a collision with a pedestrian and no collisions involving a bicyclist.

Thomas noted that October accident rates were at an all time high. The Committee briefly discussed factors that could have contributed to the high number.

Hill noted the 4 accidents in October at Hall/Water, which she confirmed is a signalized intersection. She did not ask Thomas to follow up at this time, but will continue to monitor.

c. *City Council Meeting Update*
No update provided.

d. *Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) Update*
No update provided.

3. Ongoing Discussion and Action Items

a. None.

4. New Discussion and Action Items

a. *Resident request for crosswalk warning signs (W11-2) at East Side Drive crosswalks at Sugarball Road, S Curtisville Road, and Portsmouth Street.*
The Committee reviewed the crosswalk locations, noting existing inconsistencies with the crosswalk signage at intersections along East Side Drive. Hill also mentioned that some existing signs are also faded and not fluorescent or reflective. The Committee agreed that East Side Drive is a higher volume, collector street with a few of these crossings designated as school crossings, therefore consistent crosswalk signage is recommended. Major agreed that as soon as resources allow, GSD will install/update signage at all crosswalks between Sugar Ball and Portsmouth Street.

b. *Resident concerns in regards to the safety of the intersection of W Parish Road and Carter Hill Road.*
Hill shared phone notes with the resident as well as an overview of the intersection, including average daily traffic and recent accident data which showed an average of about 1 accident per year.

- Carter Hill Road : Collector Street with ADT 2,832 (2020)
- W Parish Road : Local Street ADT 378 (2009)

Major shared that GSD has occasionally cleared overgrowth near the intersection, recalling it was done as recently as this year.

Bass stated the City has limited right-of-way on the northwest corner of the intersection along Carter Hill Road where visibility is limited due to existing trees, elevation, and curvature of roadway.

Thomas shared Carter Hill Road is a road they perform regular enforcement on.

The Committee could not identify any short or long term improvements for the intersection, outside of efforts already being taken to mitigate hazards at this intersection. Hill will respond to the resident and continue to monitor the accidents and overgrowth.

c. *NHDOC request to examine signage improvements at the N State Street crosswalk at #281.*

**This item was heard first as members of the public were in attendance. Paul Raymond and Matthew Stefanczak left after this item.*

Paul Raymond Jr. and Matthew Stefanczak, from NH Department of Corrections, attended the meeting to present and speak to their concerns. Raymond provided the Committee with a handout (included at the end of these minutes). He mentioned that the request comes in light of a recent close call with members of their staff almost getting hit by a vehicle while in this crosswalk on N State Street.

He mentioned that this crosswalk is frequently used at all hours of the day as it connects staff and others to the warehouse, the overflow parking lot and the bus stop. He mentioned that there have been accidents in the past with their employees (2 recorded in the last 3 years with many near misses). He has concerns with safety, lack of lighting, and inconsistent driver yielding behavior at this location. These concerns, coupled with high pedestrian use and high roadway volumes, has been a concern of theirs for some time.

Stefanczak shared that they have 76 staff members, many of whom have to park in the overflow lot across the street due to shift overlaps. He mentioned that much of the staff shifts occur at night time, which further reduces the visibility of the crosswalk.

Hill shared that the crosswalk has an existing median refuge island, flanking crosswalk signage, and the overhead light was just moved recently to be closer to the crosswalk.

Hill asked why folks are not crossing at the signalized intersection. It was discussed that users would need to travel south to go north as the facilities and walkways they are accessing are all to the north. Raymond did say that some folks do practice that behavior and they have encouraged it as well. He is ultimately asking for increased visibility at the existing mid-block crossing, preferably in the form of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB).

Hill asked if the State is willing to fund the improvements. Raymond mentioned that it is not something they can commit to with their current budget, at least in the short term.

Major asked if the State's Traffic Bureau could provide assistance. Raymond was not confident that they would be able to assist, whereas this location is

within the urban compact. He mentioned that he first reached out to the State and they recommended he speak with the City.

Hill mentioned that the City only has one RRFB, at Whitney Road that was installed in part with a capital improvement project. She agreed that they are a proven safety countermeasure, but added that the City does not have a current policy for placement or a dedicated funding source. She mentioned that they currently cost about \$30k per installation, which is something that would need to be requested in the City' budget. The Committee agreed that this location could be eligible but agreed that a policy and funding would need to be further explored.

Hill and Thomas will look into smaller potential grant opportunities in the interim.

Everyone agreed that until further improvements could be explored that it is best to encourage folks to cross at the signal.

d. *Resident concerns in regards to speeding on Village Street between #175 to #279.*

The Committee reviewed the available speed data and did not feel that speeds were unreasonable given the context of the roadway. It was discussed that the road was reconstructed in 2015 and at that time traffic calming measures were implemented including a gateway median island in this area. The Committee agreed that narrowing lanes through pavement markings may be advisable when the roadway is repaved in the future.

e. *Referral from Councilor Horne in regards to a resident's concerns with speeding on River Road. Request for curve warning signs near Borough Road.*

**This item was heard second as members of the public were in attendance. Maria Fowler, Jane Toumpas, and Councilor Horne left after this item.*

Maria Fowler, 1 River Road; Jane Toumpas, 64 River Road, and Councilor Horne all attended the meeting to speak to their concerns.

Fowler shared that two utility poles on either side of her property have been struck by motor vehicles within the last 18 months. She has concerns with excessive speeding and lack of curve signage in this area of River Road. She also mentioned she has had to replace her mailbox twice in the last 6 months due to motor vehicle collisions.

Toumpas shared that the utility pole in front of her house was hit in 2018, and has had countless side mirrors taken off due to drivers exceeding speed limits and not being able to navigate the roadway.

Hill reviewed speed data from 2021 that was collected near 10 River Road. It was noted that average speeds were 35 and 36 mph, however a few excessive speeds were noted.

The Committee reviewed signage along the corner and agreed that chevron signs could be added on the existing posts to face Washington Street. Hill will also confirm where a curve warning sign could be placed and if an advisory speed is warranted. Major agreed to install after confirmation.

Thomas agreed to really increase targeted enforcement of the corridor with the upcoming highway safety grant to hopefully curb the speeding issue on the roadway. Fowler offered her driveway for such efforts.

5. Other Items

a. *Review concepts for North Main Street crosswalk and bus stop improvements.*

Hill shared concept plans and options with the Committee to inform them of what is being presented at the public meeting. The Committee did not have much input at this time.

Next Meeting: December 17, 2024.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

Attachments:

NH Department of Corrections Presentation to TOC (Item 4c)

New Hampshire Department of Corrections

Paul Raymond, Jr., Assistant Commissioner
Major Matthew Stefanczak,
Acting Deputy Warden, NHSP-M

City of Concord Traffic
Operations Committee (TOC)



November 19, 2024



The Case for Installing a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)



On Thursday, November 7, 2024, two uniformed staff members were crossing the street while using this crosswalk and nearly got struck by a vehicle.



11/19/2024

NH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

2

Why Focus on Pedestrian Safety?

- **Critical Location:** Crosswalk at the NH State Prison for Men, 281 North State Street (Route 3), Concord, NH
- **Key Users:**
 - **Staff & Volunteers:** Overflow parking
 - **Visitors:** Often unfamiliar with the area; Overflow parking
 - **Warehouse Staff:** Accessing the Warehouse/NHSP-M by foot
 - **Minimum-Security Resident Workers:** Accessing the bus stop and walking to the farm
- **Objective:** Demonstrate the need for an RRFB to enhance safety and visibility.



Challenges at the Existing Crosswalk

- **Traffic Factors:**
 - Higher-speed vehicular traffic on North State Street
 - Inconsistent driver yielding behavior
- **Visibility Issues:**
 - Poor visibility during dawn, dusk and nighttime
- **Safety Concerns:**
 - Potential for crashes, near-misses, and delayed crossings



Benefits of an RRFB

- **Effectiveness:**
 - Increases driver yield rates up to 96%.
 - Reduces pedestrian injury risk by improving visibility.
- **Key Features:**
 - Flashing lights catch driver attention.
 - Easy activation for pedestrians.
 - Highly effective in both daylight and low-light conditions.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:**
 - Long-term safety improvement for a reasonable investment.



Why This Location?

- **High Pedestrian Activity:**
 - Facility staff, visitors, volunteers, and resident workers crossing frequently.
- **Traffic Flow Characteristics:**
 - Speeding vehicles and intermittent surges during peak hours.
- **Existing Issues: Current signage, Visibility Enhancements, and Pedestrian Refuge Island not enough.**



Why This Location? (Cont.)

- **Crash Data – Last 3 Years:**
 - 31 Crashes in the vicinity of the Prison (Perimeter Road North to Palm Street) – (17) 39% resulted in injuries
 - 2 have been MV vs Pedestrians (both staff members)

Data Not Available:

Near Misses & The Next Crash



RRFB Success Stories

- **Federal Highway Administration Studies**
 - Driver yield rates increased dramatically after RRFB installation.
 - Reduces accident rates at high-risk crossing.
- **Traffic Flow Characteristics:**
 - Speeding vehicles and intermittent surges during peak hours.
- **Existing Issues:**
 - Current signage, Visibility Enhancements, and Pedestrian Refuge Island not enough.





Thank you

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