

TOWN of AMHERST

**Highway Safety Committee
DRAFT Minutes**

**September 29, 2022
Amherst Police Department**

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 2:00 pm with all members present:

Mark O. Reams, Committee Chair, Chief of Police; John D'Angelo, Selectman; Matthew Conley, Fire Rescue Chief; Eric Slosek, Director of Public Works; Steven Chamberlin, Interim Superintendent of Schools

New Business

- a. Discuss proposal for additional stop sign(s) on Boston Post Road at the intersection with Cricket Corner Road.**

The meeting began with mention that the proposal for additional stop signs at this intersection was raised by a mother who had lost her son in a recent fatal car crash at that intersection. Chief Reams provided photographs of the intersection landscape from all angles for review by the committee. Chief Reams also stated that as the accident was still under investigation and as the victim was juvenile, no information would be released other than to state for purposes at hand that the accident would not have been prevented by creating a four-way stop. Chief Reams also stated for the record that the committee members were sincerely sympathetic to the family for their tragic loss as we are parents ourselves. However, it is the committee's job to objectively evaluate traffic control measures absent any understandable, emotional component. Selectmen D'Angelo mentioned that the family had already disclosed some information relative to the accident and that Chief Reams did not need to be so delicate with regard to releasing information. Chief Reams pointed out that even if the investigation had been concluded, the police department would not be releasing any accident information as the involved victim was a juvenile.

The committee discussed the current intersection traffic control measures which include two stop signs for both Cricket Corner approaches to the intersection with Boston Post Road. The committee recognized that Boston Post Road is the primary roadway at the intersection, and that Cricket Corner is a lesser volume intersecting road which has stop signs in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as *"an intersection of a less important road with a main road where application of the normal right-of-way rule would not be expected to provide reasonable compliance with the law."* The current stop signs for both Cricket Corner Road approaches are also in place in accordance with MUTCD recommendations which allow for stop sign applications when *"the ability to see conflicting traffic on an approach is not sufficient to allow a road user to stop or yield in compliance with the normal right-of-way rule if such stopping or yielding is necessary."*

With regard to the proposal of creating a four-way stop at the intersection, the committee referenced MUTCD guidelines for multi-way stop sign applications. The committee determined that the intersection does not qualify for additional stop signs under MUTCD guidelines as Boston Post Road is the primary roadway and Cricket Corner is a lesser volume road as already noted. Also, crash data does not support the need for additional stop signs. MUTCD calls for multi-way stop consideration when *“five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation. Such crashes include right-turn and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.”* The committee looked at historical crash data and found that there had been just five qualifying collisions in the last 17 years. Also, all five of those collisions had involved vehicles that had either failed to stop at one of the Cricket Corner Road stop signs or had failed to yield to intersecting traffic from those stop signs. MUTCD recommendations also call for multi-way stop consideration when the primary roadway averages 300 vehicles per hour in any given eight hour period. The committee noted that traffic counts for this section of Boston Post Road support an average of roughly 100 cars per hour in any given eight hour period. In addition to MUTCD issues, the committee pointed out general traffic safety concerns associated with suddenly posting stop signs in the middle of an otherwise open and winding stretch of road.

All members concurred that the committee recommend to the Board of Selectmen that additional stop signs not be installed. On a related safety note, Selectman D’Angelo said that he had personally viewed the area and found that there was some underbrush growth just south of Cricket Corner intersection which was beginning to interfere with driver line of sight. DPW Director Slosek said that one of his crews would trim back that vegetation.

Old Business

A motion to approve minutes from the previous meeting made by Selectman D’Angelo, seconded by Chief Conley. Motion passed with 4 in favor, and one abstention.

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.