

Town of Needham
Transportation Safety Committee

Minutes: May 14, 2025

Location: Training/Community Room, Public Safety Bldg., 88 Chestnut St.

Livestreamed on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81557096612>

ADOPTED JULY 9, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Guus Driessen, Tyler Gabrielski, Justin McCullen, Lt. John McGrath,
Barry McNeilly, Tom Ryder, Rebecca Tarantino

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

MEMBERS REMOTE: Donna Mullin, Robert Wilson (Technical Advisor, non-voting)

GUESTS: None

1. INTRODUCTION, ROLL CALL, CALL TO ORDER

At 7:03 p.m., J. McCullen called the meeting to order, took roll call, and disclosed the video recording.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 2025

R. TARANTINO MOVED AND G. DRIESSEN SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 3/12/25.

VOICE VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; T. GABRIELSKI, AYE; J. MCCULLEN, AYE; J. MCGRATH, AYE;
B. MCNEILLY, AYE; R. TARANTINO, AYE; T. RYDER, AYE. UNANIMOUS. **MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

3. OLD BUSINESS/ STATUS UPDATE REPORT - R. WILSON

MANNING ST. - STOP SIGN (NEAR POWERS ST.) PEDESTRIAN OBSERVATION

DPW noted 48 pedestrians crossing in the morning, and four bicycles, all of which crossed Powers St. There were no vehicle/pedestrian conflicts in the observation period. In the afternoon, there were 62 pedestrians with 44 crossing Powers St., and 4 bicycles, also with no vehicle/pedestrian conflicts.

BRADFORD ST. AND CYNTHIA RD. – SPEED STUDY RESULTS

Approximately 420 vehicles from both directions were observed. A speed of approximately 28-29 miles per hour for the 85th percentile of vehicles was observed. There was a request to do a similar traffic count on Cynthia Road, where there were approximately 140 vehicles per day, and the 85th percentile speed was between 22-24 miles per hour.

ACTION: None at this time. Vast majority of vehicle traffic is below the 30 mile per hour speed limit.

POLLARD SCHOOL – PEDESTRIAN CROSSING/SIGNS AT PINWOOD RD.

ACTION: Flashing crossing signs have been ordered and will be installed.

4. PETITIONER SIRI ALLEN- SPEEDING ON WEBSTER ST. (SOUTH OF DEDHAM AVE.)

The Petitioner presented to the Committee that Webster St. has become a traffic overflow as a result of the lights installed on Chestnut St. Residents previously had a traffic study in 2018 and 2019, but some the results were inconclusive as a result of the cords on the street breaking. The Petitioner notices that within the last two years, traffic has increased in this area and worsens during school hours. Members discussed the previous findings and introduced the UrbanSDK speed monitoring platform that can be used to verify speeding.

ACTION: Install portable radar signs on Webster St. south of Dedham Ave. to collect data

ACTION: DPW will analyze results and follow up at next meeting.

5. PETITIONER TUSHAR TANNA– BLIND CURVES AND SPEEDING ON PAUL REVERE RD.

The Petitioner explained that there is a portion of Paul Revere Rd. where there is a series of blind curves where drivers tend to speed around the curves, and that it is not possible to see the cars coming. There was an accident previously this year where a car crashed around one of the curves. The Petitioner is concerned for pedestrians crossing the road as well as drivers rounding the curves and the speed at which they are driving.

ACTION: Reevaluate signage currently on Paul Revere Rd.

ACTION: Install appropriate advisory signage indicating that drivers should slow around the curves.

6. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION – PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT EMERSON

- It was brought back to the committee that the 35 mile per hour speed limit was inappropriate for an RRFB crossing without traffic calming first. J. McCullen said there are 2-3 with crossings in 35 mile per hour zones, therefore there is precedent for this issue.
- Lt. McGrath noted that this flashing sign crosswalk would be heavily utilized, as there are many pedestrians in this area.
- Residents have previously discussed with DPW ways to reconfigure bus stops and bus routes, but ultimately determined that they cannot be changed.
- R. Tarantino suggested that the signage be visible and appropriately thoughtful to allow drivers to anticipate stopping at the crosswalk.

ACTION: There will be a completed evaluation of the installation of an RRFB crosswalk crossing Chestnut St. at Emerson Road with an advanced warning sign placed at the appropriate location, for fiscal year 2026 for the July TSC meeting.

7. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION- INTERSECTION ANALYSIS AT NEWELL AVE/ MEADOWBROOK RD./ PROSPECT ST./ LEWIS ST.

- Tabled for full discussion until June TSC.
- T. Gabrielski added that every approach to this intersection has stop control and there was a rubber chip resurfacing done last summer.

- J. McCullen said that TSC can table this discussion and obtain some site conditions and decide whether to add or relocate stop signs after Engineering drafts a rough sketch.
- T. Ryder said Engineering carried out a storm water study and found that there is need for reduction of impervious pavement, an addition of more drainage to projects, as well as extending the turn so it is 90°, similar to what was done on Carol Rd., ultimately changing the crosswalk layout.

8. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION (CONTINUED)- TOWN-WIDE 25 MPH

- Members discussed if a town-wide speed limit of 25 mile per hour would be an effective way to reduce speeding.
 - T.Gabrielski has spoken with other community members and determined that this change would most likely be a policy-based change.
 - There are not studies of suburban towns indicating success one way or the other in changing driver behavior through the lowering to 25 miles per hour.
- Members discussed the possibility of looking at data to prevent collisions and accidents as a result of speeding. Members also discussed streets with legitimate speeding concerns that can be targeted and monitored.
 - Lt. McGrath suggested that by using the new UrbanSDK technology, these areas can be more easily identified.
- Tabled for full discussion until June Meeting.

9. TSC EXPENSE ACCOUNT AND FUNDING REQUESTS

T. Gabrielski presented items proposed for funding that are TSC approved and not yet encumbered, expenses that have previously approved that have been put on hold, and expenses that have not yet been approved. The next TSC funding allocation was approved at Town Meeting.

J. McCullen Moved and Lt. McGrath Seconded to fund the push button at Chestnut St. at junction as well as the turning restriction signs for Harris Ave. **VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

10. MATTERS NOT ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE MEETING – NONE

11. ADJOURNMENT

Lt. McGrath Moved and J. McCullen Seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:36PM. **VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Abigail Joyce
Recording Secretary

INFORMATIONAL: The Meeting Packet is available at <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>