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Town of Belmont, MA Traffic Advisory Committee (T.A.C.)

Meeting Minutes, December 12, 2013

Members Present: Peter Curro, Larry MacDonald (Vice Chair), Don Mercer, Dana Miller (Clerk), Linda Nickens (Chair)

Ex-Officio Members Present: Glenn Clancy (Town Engineer), Sargent Benjamin Mailhot (Belmont Police Department), and Andy Rojas (Vice Chair, Belmont Board of Selectmen).

Also Present: Ellie Hilderbrandt of 68 Glenn Road and Diane Coulopoulos of 28 Glenn Road

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Minutes: The committee approved the minutes of the June 20, 2013 meeting.

Glenn Road: Ms. Hilderbrandt and Ms. Coulopoulos reported pedestrian and safety concerns related to cut-through traffic, fast-moving traffic, and parking on Glenn road. Ms. Hilderbrandt explained that visibility on Glenn Road is limited because of a bend in the road, that there are no sidewalks, and that older residents inhabit the neighborhood.

Ms. Hilderbrandt and Ms. Coulopoulos are concerned about the large number of new residences being built in Fresh Pond. Truck noise on Blanchard Street is already very loud and they expect the noise level to increase. In anticipation of the increased traffic that will result from the new residences, Ms. Hilderbrandt and Ms. Coulopoulos recommended a truck restriction for Grove, Bright and Blanchard streets. In addition, they asked that a no-turn sign be installed on Blanchard. Evidently, such a sign is at the corner of Blanchard and Hamilton.

Sargent Mailhot presented the results of a speed study that showed that, of the 233 vehicles traveling on Glenn Road between Taylor and Blanchard Streets over a three-day period in early December 2013, only 6 were traveling at a speed over the posted limit of 30mph. The average car speed was 20mph. The speed study demonstrates that traffic is neither heavy nor moving particularly fast on Glenn Road.

Glenn offered to check records to ascertain the rationale for the turn restriction on Hamilton Road. The committee noted that, in the previous meeting addressing traffic concerns on Blanchard, some in the neighborhood opposed the idea of a no-

turn sign and others wanted a no-turn sign with exemptions for residents—this would be unenforceable.

Glenn explained that truck bans cannot be implemented without State approval and that, in order to win approval for a truck ban, the municipality must create an alternate route for trucks through the same community.

Residents and committee members discussed the design elements of the roadways in this area. Cambridge designed the round-about to prevent larger trucks from getting through. The speed bump was intended to slow traffic, but is relatively ineffective. Linda pointed out that addressing traffic concerns in this area is complicated by the fact that Belmont is responsible for one side of the road and Cambridge for the other—and Cambridge evidently refuses to enforce traffic regulations on the road because the police consider it too dangerous to do so.

Ms. Hildebrandt and Ms. Coulopoulos reported that the Glenn Road group home contributes to parking, pollution, and noise problems. Evidently, the group-home vans beep throughout the day. In addition, group-home employees speak loudly on their cell phones on the street and leave cigarette butts on the street. Glenn indicated that either he or the police would speak with the group-home management about the cigarette butts, cell-phone use, and parking.

Over the past year, there have been two major parking problems on Glenn Road: one related to the group home at the corner of Blanchard and Glenn, where cars park too close to the corner; and the other having to do with the Blanchard Road house under construction—for which the building crew parked, blocking driveways, on Glenn Road. Parking is also heavy on the street when the temple is in use. The residents are concerned that, in such times of heavy and illegal parking, emergency vehicles would not be able to get down the street.

Sargent Mailhot explained that he understands the residents' frustration with the police's limited ability to rectify the parking problems. The police have towed two cars from Glenn Road over the past year but, often, by the time police respond to complaints, the offending cars have already been moved. The residents inquired after the feasibility of hourly parking restrictions, which would be unenforceable, and single-side parking, which isn't warranted. The residents also inquired about permit parking, which is in effect on Sycamore Street. Linda asked if the group home could obtain a variance or special permit for its trucks and other vehicles to park on their property. Linda also pointed out that the TAC doesn't typically address parking concerns.

It was agreed that the TAC would hold another public hearing about Glenn Road traffic and that all of the neighborhood residents would be invited.

Goden Street: Sargent Mailhot presented the findings of a speed study that he conducted on Goden Street in response to a resident concern. His records indicate

that, during the three-day observation period in early December, 2075 cars travelled on the road and that the average speed of travel was 28 mph. The 85th percentile for speed was 33 mph. While 1,363 cars travelled under the speed limit, 592 travelled at a speed of 31 – 35 mph, 103 cars travelled at a speed of 36 – 40 mph, 11 cars travelled at a speed of 41 – 45 mph, 6 travelled at a speed of 46-50 mph and two travelled over 51 mph. One car travelled at 58 mph. Sargent Mailhot will address these moderate speeding problems with increased enforcement. Glenn will report back to the Goden Street resident about this planned speed enforcement.

2nd Traffic:-Enforcement Grant Period: The new grant period begins on Friday, December 13, 2014 and runs through January 1, 2014. The program for this period is “Drive sober or get pulled over,” which is part of a national campaign. The grant pays for a voluntary assignment and mandates a minimum of three stops per hour. A repeat of the pedestrian crosswalk campaign is scheduled for the summer.

El Centro: In response to an inquiry, it was clarified that the restaurant opening on Leonard Street will require a parking permit/waiver.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Miller, Clerk



Traffic Advisory Committee

TOWN OF BELMONT

19 Moore Street
Homer Municipal Building
Belmont, Massachusetts 02478-0900
Telephone: (617) 993-2650 Fax: (617) 993-2651

Linda Nickens, Chair
Laurence Macdonald, Vice Chair
Dana Miller, Clerk

Committee Members

Peter Curro
Donald Mercier
Tommasina Olson
Matt Sullivan

Date: December 9, 2013
To: Members – Traffic Advisory Committee
From: Linda Nickens, Chair
Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall Conference Room 2.** If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Linda via e-mail.

7:00 Call to Order
7:00 – 7:05 Minutes (10/10/2013) 6/20/13 Approved
7:05 – 7:30 Speed Study Data (Sgt Mailhot)
7:30 – 7:40 New Business
• No Known Items
7:40 – 7:55 Old Business
• No Known Items
7:55 Adjourn

Cc: Board of Selectmen – Andy Rojas
David Kale, Town Administrator
Glenn R. Clancy, Town Engineer
Sgt Ben Mailhot, Belmont Police Department
Richard McLaughlin, Belmont Police Chief
Peter Castanino, Director, Department of Public Works
Karl Haglund, Planning Board



TOWN OF BELMONT

460 CONCORD AVENUE
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POLICE DEPARTMENT



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(617) 484-1215

RICHARD J. McLAUGHLIN
CHIEF OF POLICE

December 12, 2013

Traffic Advisory Committee
19 Moore Street
Homer Municipal Building
Belmont, MA 02478

Members of the Traffic Advisory Committee,

Attached are two graphs that show the results of a speed study that I conducted on Goden Street between School Street and Washington Street per your request. I conducted the study during the week of 12/08/2013. The results from the speed spy device show that it operated between Monday 12/09/2013 1:00 PM through Thursday 12/12/2013 5:00 AM.

Goden Street is considered a "Thickly Settled" area which according to MGL Chapter 90, Section 17, has a speed limit of 30 MPH. The 85th percentile speed, which would be used to establish a posted speed limit, from the results of this study was 33 MPH. The average speed was 28 MPH during the time of this study. This information tells me that the "Thickly Settled" area 30 MPH speed limit is appropriate for this roadway.

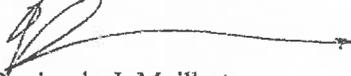
The total number of motor vehicles which traveled on this roadway during the study was 2075. 712 MVs were traveling over the 30 MPH speed limit. 592 MVs were traveling between 31-35 MPH. My thoughts, based on my police training and experience, is that this can be explained by a number of different factors such as speedometer inaccuracy of the MVs to the downhill slope of the roadway to possible RADAR equipment sensitivity. It is unlikely that police presence will provide any significant reduction of minor speeding in the 31-35 MPH bracket.

Speeds in excess of 35 MPH included the following; 103 MVs in the 36-40 MPH bracket, 11 MVs in the 41-45 MPH bracket, 4 MV in the 46-50 MPH bracket, and 2 MV in the 51+ bracket. The highest speed recorded was 58 MPH.

Based on this information I assess that Goden Street has a moderate speeding problem that would support increased traffic enforcement. I also believe that the speeding on this segment Goden Street is comparable to other streets of similar size and volume. According to the data the majority of the speeding appears to occur during the evening commute from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. I will request that the Patrol Division assign an officer to this location during this time period in the coming weeks for additional traffic enforcement.

I hope this information will assist you in your decisions regarding traffic control on Goden Street between School Street and Washington Street and the surrounding area.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Mailhot', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Benjamin J. Mailhot
Sergeant
Traffic & Records Division

Date: 12/12/2013 11:52:27 am

Start Date: 12/9/2013 01:00 pm

End Date: 12/12/2013 05:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 28 mph

Highest Speed: 58 mph

50th Percentile: 28 mph

85th Percentile: 33 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 712

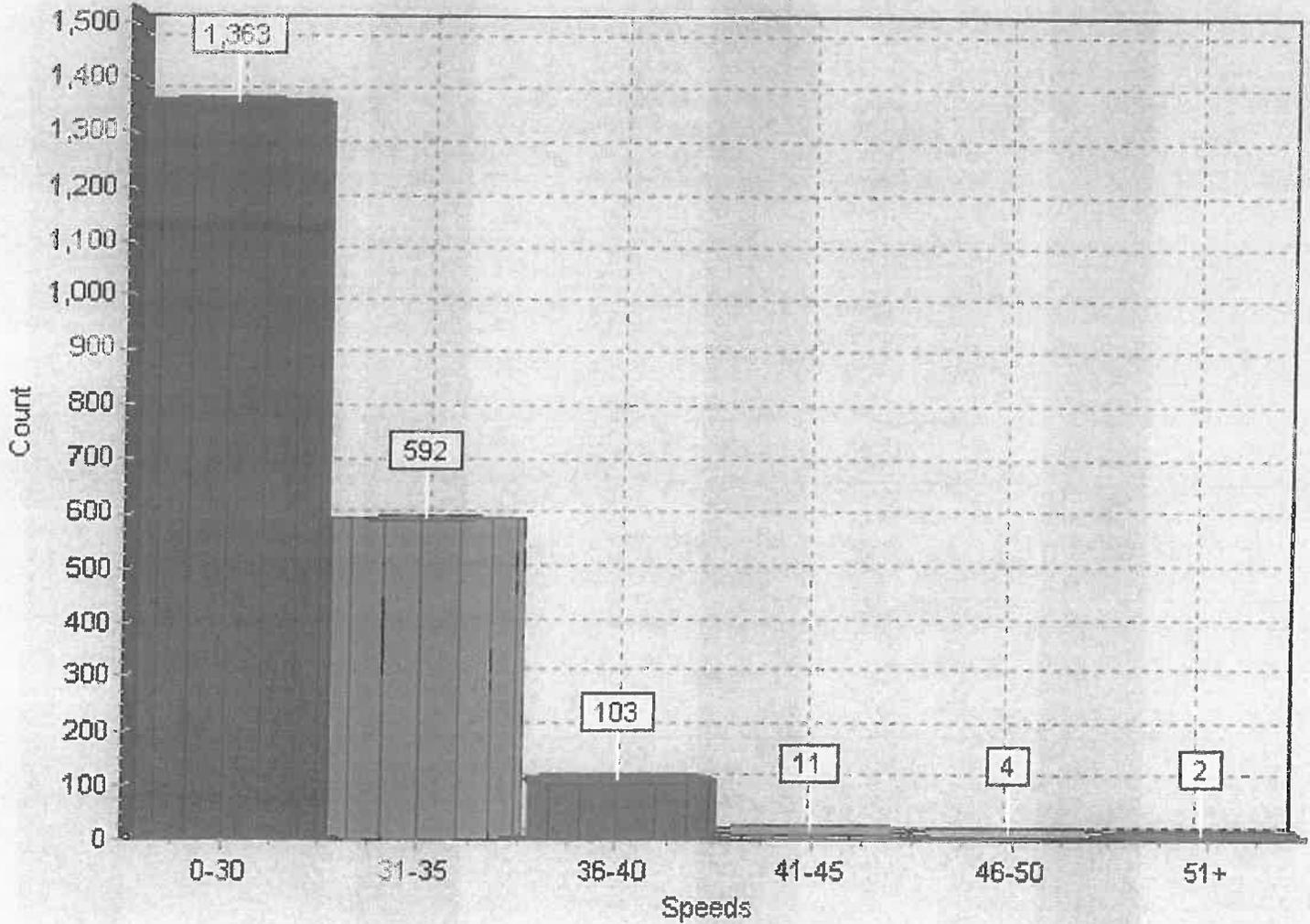
Total Number of Vehicles: 2075

Comments:

Goden Street

Count vs. Speed

12/9/2013 01:00 pm - 12/12/2013 05:00 am



Date: 12/12/2013 11:52:27 am

Start Date: 12/9/2013 01:00 pm

End Date: 12/12/2013 05:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 28 mph

Highest Speed: 58 mph

50th Percentile: 28 mph

85th Percentile: 33 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 712

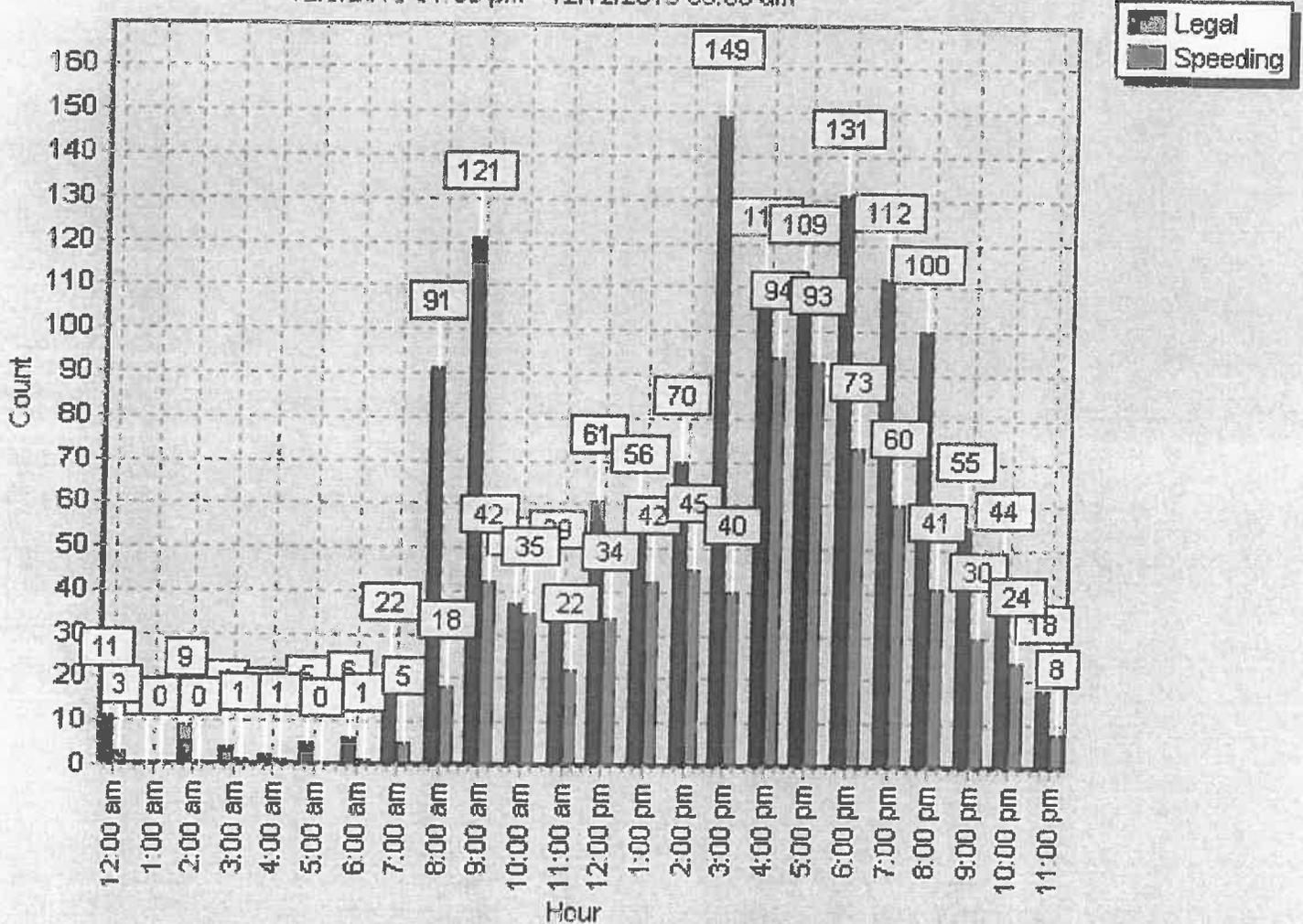
Total Number of Vehicles: 2075

Comments:

Goden Street

Count vs. Hour

12/9/2013 01:00 pm - 12/12/2013 05:00 am





TOWN OF BELMONT

460 CONCORD AVENUE
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POLICE DEPARTMENT



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RICHARD J. McLAUGHLIN
CHIEF OF POLICE

December 9, 2013

Traffic Advisory Committee
19 Moore Street
Homer Municipal Building
Belmont, MA 02478

Members of the Traffic Advisory Committee,

Attached are two graphs that show the results of a speed study that I conducted on Glenn Road per your request. I conducted the study during the week of 12/01/2013. The results from the speed spy device show that it operated between Wednesday 12/04/2013 3:00 PM through Saturday 12/07/2013 2:00 PM. The speed spy device was placed on a light pole on Glenn Road between Blanchard Road and Taylor Road.

Glenn Road is considered a "Thickly Settled" area which according to MGL Chapter 90, Section 17, has a speed limit of 30 MPH. The 85th percentile speed, which would be used to establish a posted speed limit, from the results of this study was 25 MPH. The average speed was 20 MPH during the time of this study. The highest speed recorded was 45 MPH. A total of six (6) vehicles were traveling over the 30 MPH speed limit. Three (3) were traveling between 31-35 MPH, two (2) traveling between 36-40 MPH, and one (1) was traveling 45 MPH. The total number of vehicles which traveled on this roadway during the study was 233. This information tells me that the "Thickly Settled" area 30 MPH speed limit is appropriate for this roadway.

Based on this information I do not believe that speeding is a problem on Glenn Road. From my training and experience I believe that the issue on Glenn Road is one of perception. Due to the narrow roadway, the absence of sidewalks, and the trees that line the street, it is common for people to think that vehicles are traveling faster than they really are.

Respectfully Submitted,


Benjamin J. Mailhot
Sergeant
Traffic & Records Division

Date: 12/9/2013 12:24:19 pm

Start Date: 12/4/2013 03:00 pm

End Date: 12/7/2013 02:00 pm

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 20 mph

Highest Speed: 45 mph

50th Percentile: 20 mph

85th Percentile: 25 mph

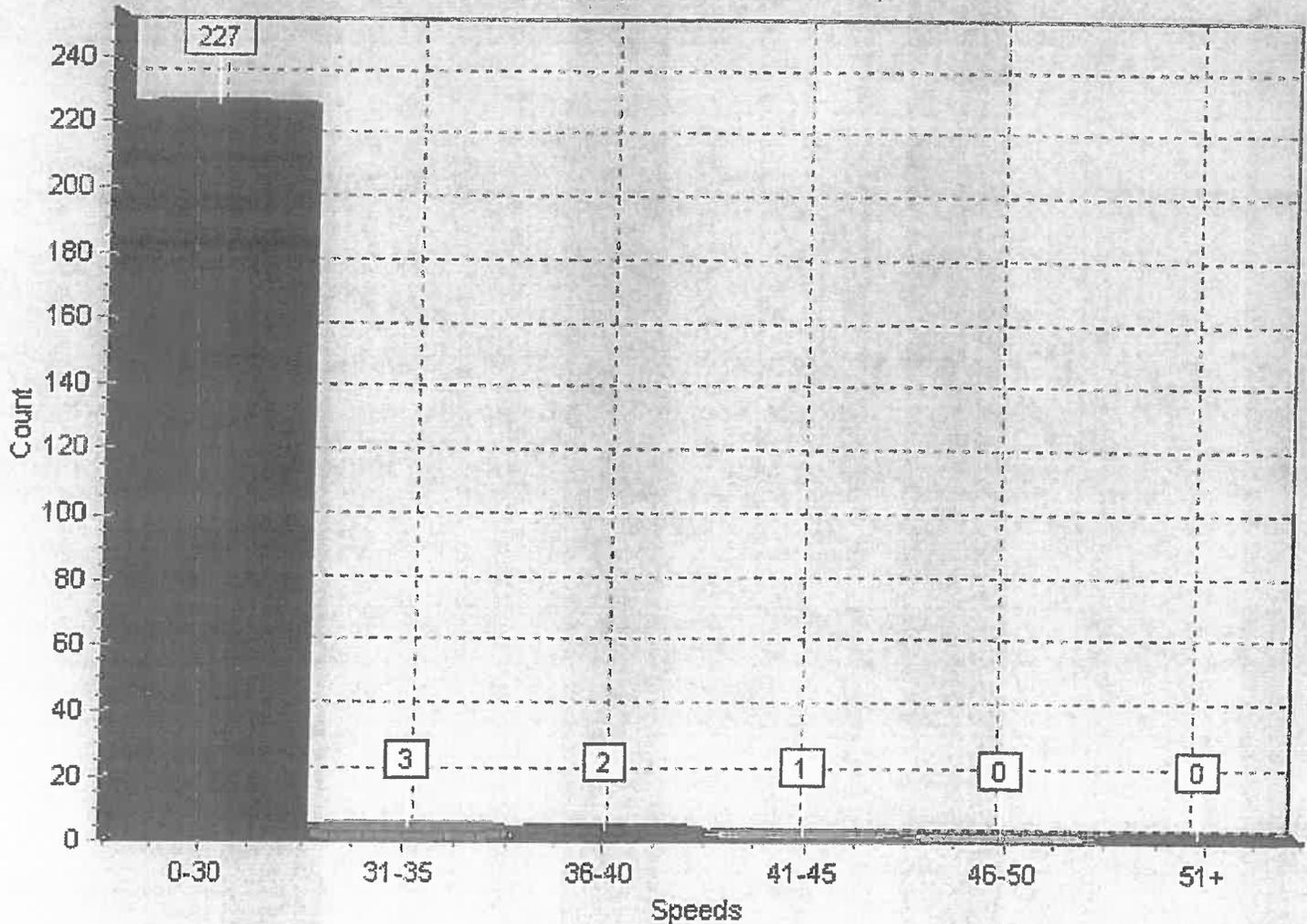
Number Above Speed Limit: 6

Total Number of Vehicles: 233

Comments:

Glenn Road

Count vs. Speed
12/4/2013 03:00 pm - 12/7/2013 02:00 pm



Date: 12/9/2013 12:26:17 pm

Start Date: 12/4/2013 03:00 pm

End Date: 12/7/2013 02:00 pm

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 20 mph

Highest Speed: 45 mph

50th Percentile: 20 mph

85th Percentile: 25 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 6

Total Number of Vehicles: 233

Comments:

Glenn Road

Count vs. Hour

12/4/2013 03:00 pm - 12/7/2013 02:00 pm

