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

Meeting Minutes, October 9, 2014

Members Present: Peter Curo, Joe Griffin, Larry MacDonald (Vice Chair), Dana Miller (Clerk), Linda Nickens (Chair), Tommi Olsen, Matt Sullivan

Ex-Officio Members Present: Glenn Clancy (Town Engineer), Sargent Benjamin Mailhot (Belmont Police Department), Sami Baghdady (Board of Selectmen).

Also Present: Peter Aladjem, 78 Unity Avenue; Alexandra Bacchetti, 100 Lexington Street, C-5; Andrew Bennett, Joice Himawan and Merlyn Liberty, 26 Centre Avenue; Paul Feinberg, 80 Old Concord Road; David and Sheila Flewelling, 36 Sycamore Street; Susan Galli, 55 Old Concord Road; Sarah and Robert Jensen, 92 Sycamore Street; Julie and Richard Mortimer, 81 Old Concord Road; James Pazanese, 177 Lexington Street; Josh Pressey, 108 Sycamore Street; Barbara Skelley, 100 Lexington Street, A5; James Sloman, 68 Old Concord Road; Mark Thurber, 55 Old Concord Road; Paula Van Horn, 97 Sycamore Street; Cynthia Vergados, 623 Belmont Street; Mai Vu, 120 Elm Street; Erin Callahan, School Crossing Guard at the intersection of Sycamore and Lexington Streets.

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Minutes: The minutes of the, September 2014 meeting were approved.

Old Concord Road: This is a private road that, according to the residents, has never been formally recognized by the town. Pedestrians, including students walking to Belmont Day School, use the road. When traffic backs up on Concord Avenue, some cars take this road as a short cut to Pleasant Street.

Glenn explained that, when considering a traffic change in a neighborhood, the TAC usually sends out invitations for a neighborhood hearing to make sure that all residents have an opportunity to consider the proposed change. In this case, however, the entire neighborhood is either in attendance or has sent an indication of their support for a traffic change on the road. At the urging of the residents of Old Concord Road, the TAC passed a resolution for a six-month trial of a prohibited right turn from Concord Ave, headed south to Old Concord, from 7am until 10am, M-F. After six months, the TAC will confer with the residents to assess the effects of the trial.

Grove Street Crossing at Unity Avenue: Peter Aladjem told the Committee that, while there are crossing signs by the most active Grove Street crosswalk to the playground, another crosswalk with signs is needed at the Grove Street intersection with Unity Avenue. In addition, a second set of signs—one on each side of the street—would be helpful at the Grove Street crosswalk to the park that is further towards Belmont Street.

Joe observed that, given our society's move from cars to pedestrian and bike traffic, Belmont needs a town-wide approach to crosswalks. Glenn explained that signs need to be replaced every 5 - 10 years and that, because the town budget is tight, we may not be able to afford signs at all sights. The TAC passed a motion to install cross-walk signs, with arrows at the cross walk, at the intersection of Unity and Grove Streets

Elm Street & Dalton Road: Mai Vu spoke of her concern about the danger that car traffic poses to her children playing near the street. She reported that parking and traffic are more troublesome on Saturdays because of the town soccer games. She asked for a four-way stop to be installed at the intersection. She also asked for "Dangerous Intersection" signs to be installed.

Officer Mailhot reviewed the data that he collected from two speed studies (one before school ended in the spring of 2014 and another after school resumed in the fall of 2014). The studies document neither high traffic volumes nor illegal traffic speeds.

Linda explained that a four-way stop would not be possible because the intersection does not meet the established criteria. Linda observed that a public shade tree on Elm Street blocks the view at one corner of the intersection, but this could be pruned. Ben offered to have a patrol unit monitor traffic on Saturdays to help with pedestrian problems. In addition, Ben will assess the parking in this area.

Sycamore and Lexington Streets:

On Lexington Street, there are four churches, and three schools with cross walks—one of which is in a dangerous location. There is no cross walk to take pedestrians on Belmont Street across the intersection with Lexington Street.

Ben reported that the intersection of Lexington and Sycamore Streets is the most dangerous intersection in town. At the intersection of Beech, Burnham, and Lexington Streets, there have been 14 auto incidences and 3 people injured over the past 18 months. At the intersection of Lexington and Sycamore Streets, there have been 21 auto incidences and

9 injuries over the past 18 months. Sheila pointed out that we have to address both the automobile incidents and the pedestrian concerns. The crossing guard, Erin Callahan, reported having been hit by passing vehicles that disregard her direction. Erin and the Chief of Police are planning to meet to discuss the problem. Residents suggested that the crosswalk at the intersection of Burnham and Beech Streets be moved.

It will be difficult to make traffic improvements at the intersection. The 4-way stop at the intersection of White and Beech Streets doesn't fix the problem. A 4-way stop at the intersection of Lexington and Sycamore Streets would exacerbate traffic congestion during rush hour. Raising the current crosswalk would not slow traffic at the intersection. Glenn wondered if the town might consider making Sycamore a one-way street.

The Committee considered making the lenses bigger on the flashing beacon and pruning vegetation at the intersection to improve driver sightlines. The Committee also considered installing signs that reflect driver speed. Larry suggested that the Committee consider the possibility of a freestanding pedestrian crossing, similar to the crossing light by the Tufts Health Plan on Mount Auburn Street in Watertown.

Ben will check with Sargent Sampson of the Watertown Police Department to learn what level of success has been achieved with the raised crosswalks on Waverly Street. If these are judged to have been successful, Glenn will draw up a budget for their installation at the intersection of Lexington and Sycamore Streets.

Ben will increase traffic police presence at the school crossing on Lexington Street. Ben will conduct a traffic study of five road sections and report back in December; he will gather data on: Beech-Belmont, Beech-Sycamore, and the bottom approaches, including Beech-Burnham. He will also gather speed data for Belmont Street.

Sami asked Glenn to develop a budget for signaling the intersection so that the Board of Selectmen can consider the option.

For the immediate future, Sami asked if we might get a plastic barrel, perhaps on wheels, that Erin could pull into the intersection with her while she is working. Ben offered to speak with the DPW about the barrel idea. Sami also wondered if wearing a uniform and having a whistle to blow might help Erin control the intersection.

New Business:

Belmont Street: Cynthia Vergados, of 623 Belmont Street, told the Committee about an automobile hitting her car while she was starting to back out of her driveway, but was still in the driveway. (Ms. Vergados is now enlarging her driveway so that she will be able to turn around and drive forwards out of it.) Evidently, there have been two traffic deaths in this area and a police officer has temporarily removed the "Yield" sign to repair it (at his own expense, because the town lacks funds) and then re-install the sign. Ben is recording traffic data on Belmont Street today. Ms. Vergados asked the Committee to make a change to the traffic pattern to increase the safety of drivers and pedestrians in this area.

Belmont Center: Glenn will write a response to the topics raised in the public meeting about the plan for Belmont Center. In response to a request from the planning board, Glenn is again having barrels installed to temporarily reduce Leonard Street to one lane of traffic heading from Moore Street to the railroad bridge. Glenn will gather data about the implications of this lane reduction for traffic headed to Pleasant Street from Stella, Prospect, Clifton, and Somerset Streets and Upper Concord Avenue. Also related to the Belmont Center plan: The Board of Selectmen asked that the signage to be posted under the railroad bridge be provisional for now.

Fairview Avenue and Marlborough Street: In November, Ben will present the traffic data that he has collected at the intersection of Fairview and Marlborough Streets.

Committee Elections: The Committee voted to retain Linda as the chair, Larry as the vice chair, and Dana as the clerk.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15pm.

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

Peter Curro
Joseph Griffin
Donald Mercier
Tommasina Olson
Matt Sullivan

Date: October 3, 2014
To: Members – Traffic Advisory Committee
From: Linda Nickens, Chair
Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, October 9, 2014 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall Conference Room 4**. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Linda via e-mail.

- 7:00 – 7:05 Minutes (September 11, 2014)
- ✓ 7:05 – 7:15 Old Concord Road
Resident Request for “No Right Turn” from Concord Avenue 7-10AM
- ✓ 7:15 – 7:25 Grove Street Crossing at Unity Avenue
Resident Request for “Yield to Pedestrians” Sign in Grove Street SIGNS
- ✓ 7:25 – 7:40 Elm Street at Dalton Road
Resident Request for “Four Way Stop” – Discussion of Data TREE PRUNING
CEM & DALTON
- ✓ 7:40 – 7:55 Sycamore Street at Lexington Street
Resident Request - Ongoing Discussion of Accident History + 3 LOCATIONS ON LEXINGTON
- SYCAMORE BOTH APPROACHES
- BECEL & BRUNHAM APPROACHES
- 7:55 – 8:10 Old Business
- BPD Updates on June Action Items
 - Belmont Center Project Update
 - Trapelo Road Project Update
 - Other
- 8:10 – 8:15 New Business
- No Known Items
- 8:15 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

Clancy, Glenn

From: Clancy, Glenn
Sent: Thursday, October 09, 2014 10:47 AM
To: 'lcnickens@verizon.net'; 'pfcirro@gmail.com'; 'Dana Miller'; 'mattsull74@yahoo.com'; 'Don Mercier (mercierbj@verizon.net)'; 'Laurence Macdonald'; 'Joseph.griffin@verizon.net'; 'tomi.olson@gmail.com'
Cc: 'bmailhot@belmontpd.org'
Subject: Comments Regarding Old Concord Road

Three e-mails regarding the proposed AM right turn restriction from Concord Avenue to Old Concord Road. Thanks, Glenn

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Shapiro [<mailto:TSHAPIRO@shulaw.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2014 8:34 PM
To: Clancy, Glenn; Sami Baghdady
Cc: Richard Mortimer
Subject: Old Concord Road

Dear Sami and Glen

I have lived at 600 Concord Ave. on the corner of Concord Avenue and Old Concord Road for almost 20 years. I am very sorry that I have a prior commitment that prevents me from attending the hearing Thursday evening. The morning traffic on Concord Avenue has increased dramatically this year over even the increased traffic last year. An increasing number of cars are turning onto Old Concord Road in the morning creating what I feel is a real safety hazard. I am also concerned with the increased traffic because my deed indicates that Old Concord Road is on my property. In fact, The town declined to remove some dead trees located on the far side of old Concord Road which created a safety hazard because the trees were said to be on my property on the Pinehurst side of Old Concord Road. A sign on Concord Avenue prohibiting right turns during the morning rush hour such as the sign on Concord Avenue at I believe the intersection of Myrtle Street hopefully would solve this problem and help to reduce the risk of the town having liability for accidents on old Concord Road due to the very poor condition of the road as it goes downhill. The town has done minimal maintenance of the road over the years but not enough to improve the very deteriorated condition. Thank you for your attention to this serious issue. Sincerely, Tom Shapiro

From: Melitz, Marc [<mailto:mmelitz@harvard.edu>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2014 10:51 AM
To: Sami Baghdady; Clancy, Glenn
Cc: Julie Mortimer
Subject: Support for "No Right Turn (7-10am)" sign on Concord Ave

Dear Belmont Representatives:

I am writing to express my support for the "No Right Turn (7-10am)" sign on Concord Ave. I live at 34 Centre Ave (right below the change from Old Concord Rd to Centre Ave) and share the concern regarding commuting traffic coming down Old Concord Rd/Centre Ave on weekday mornings.

I will not be able to make it to the Traffic Advisory Committee meeting this Thursday, but want to make sure that my full support for this request is recorded.

Best wishes,

Marc Melitz
34 Centre Ave
Belmont, MA 02478

From: Katie Curhan [<mailto:katiecurhan@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2014 10:25 AM
To: Julie Mortimer; Sami Baghdady; Clancy, Glenn
Subject: Letter of Support for the Traffic Advisory Committee

Dear Mr. Baghdady, Mr. Clancy, and the Traffic Advisory Committee,

This letter states my support for a "No Right Turn" sign from Concord Ave onto Old Concord Rd for the house of 7am to 10am on weekdays. Thank you. My children and I walk on Old Concord Rd on our way to school in the mornings, and fewer cars would mean greater safety for walkers.

Sincerely,
Katie Curhan

183 Somerset St.
Belmont, MA 02478

Date: 9/22/2014 11:28:33 am

Start Date: 6/17/2014 10:00 am

End Date: 6/21/2014 10:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 14 mph

Highest Speed: 33 mph

50th Percentile: 12 mph

85th Percentile: 20 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 2

Total Number of Vehicles: 740

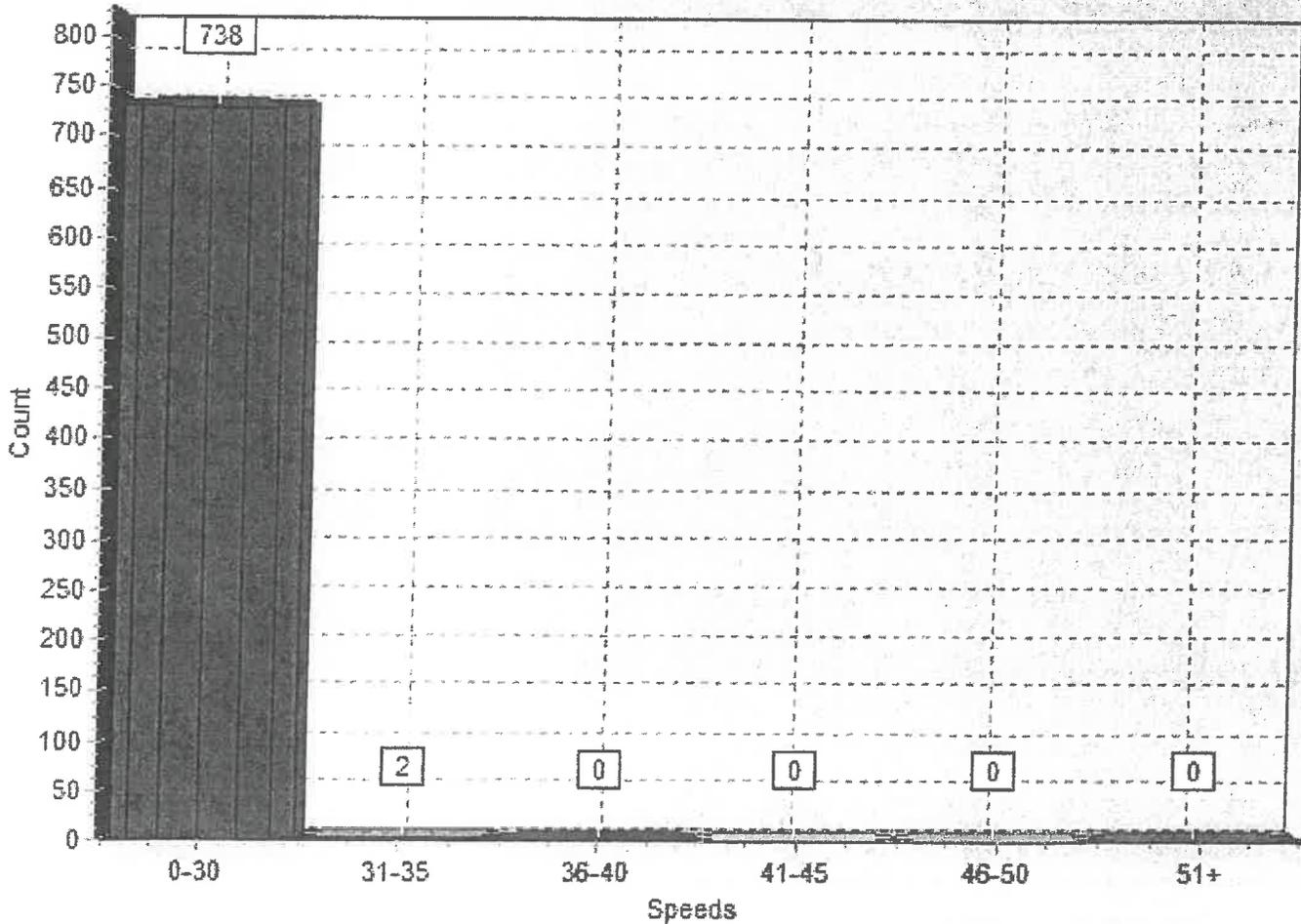
Comments:

Dalton Rd. & Elm St. June 17-21, 2014

Device placed on Elm St.

Count vs. Speed

6/17/2014 10:00 am - 6/21/2014 10:00 am



Date: 9/22/2014 11:28:33 am

Start Date: 6/17/2014 10:00 am

End Date: 6/21/2014 10:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 14 mph

Highest Speed: 33 mph

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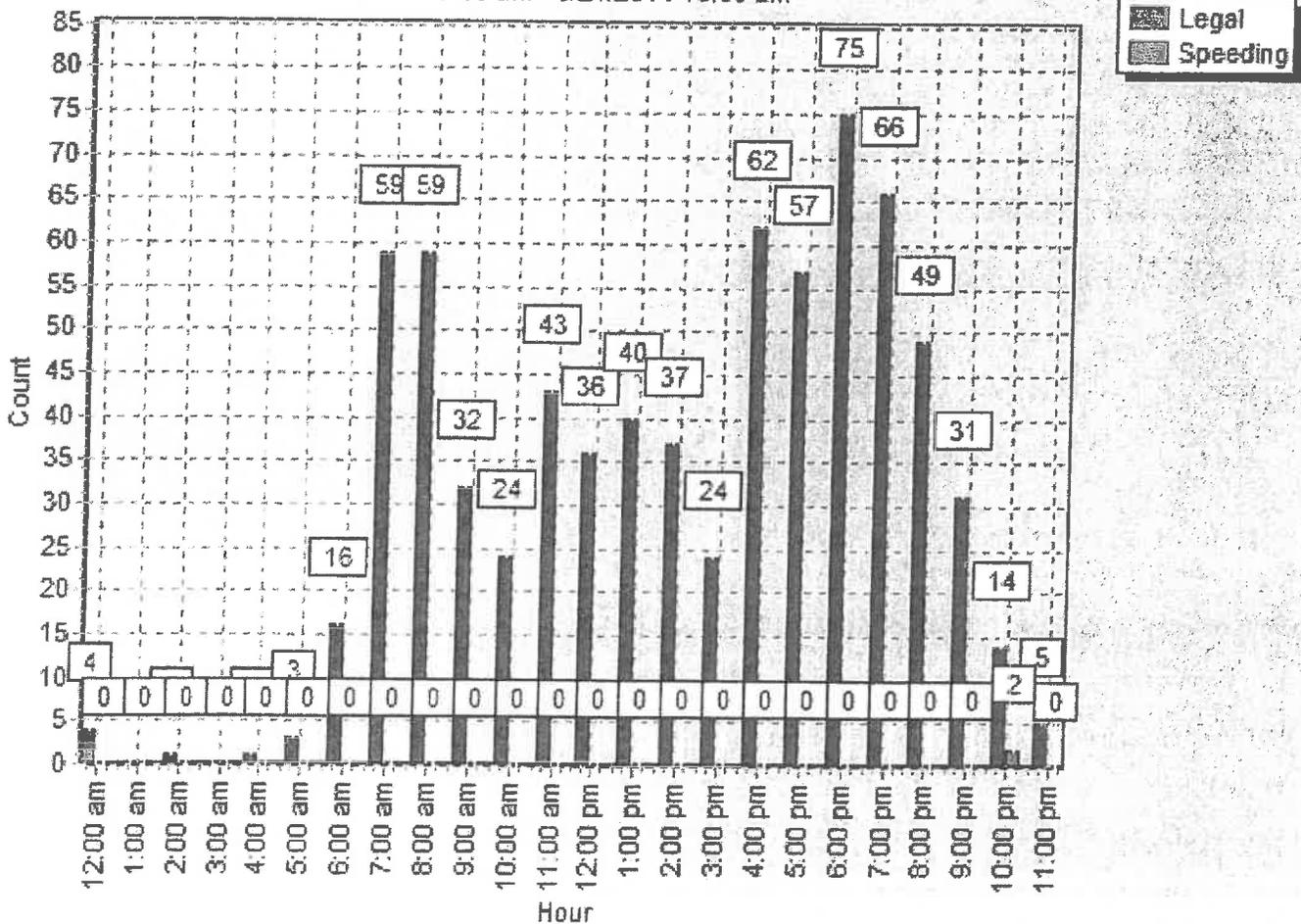
Comments:

Dalton Rd. & Elm St. June 17-21, 2014

Device placed on Elm St.

Count vs. Hour

6/17/2014 10:00 am - 6/21/2014 10:00 am



Date: 9/22/2014 11:24:50 am

Start Date: 9/15/2014 09:00 am

End Date: 9/19/2014 11:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 17 mph

Highest Speed: 51 mph

50th Percentile: 18 mph

85th Percentile: 22 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 7

Total Number of Vehicles: 1215

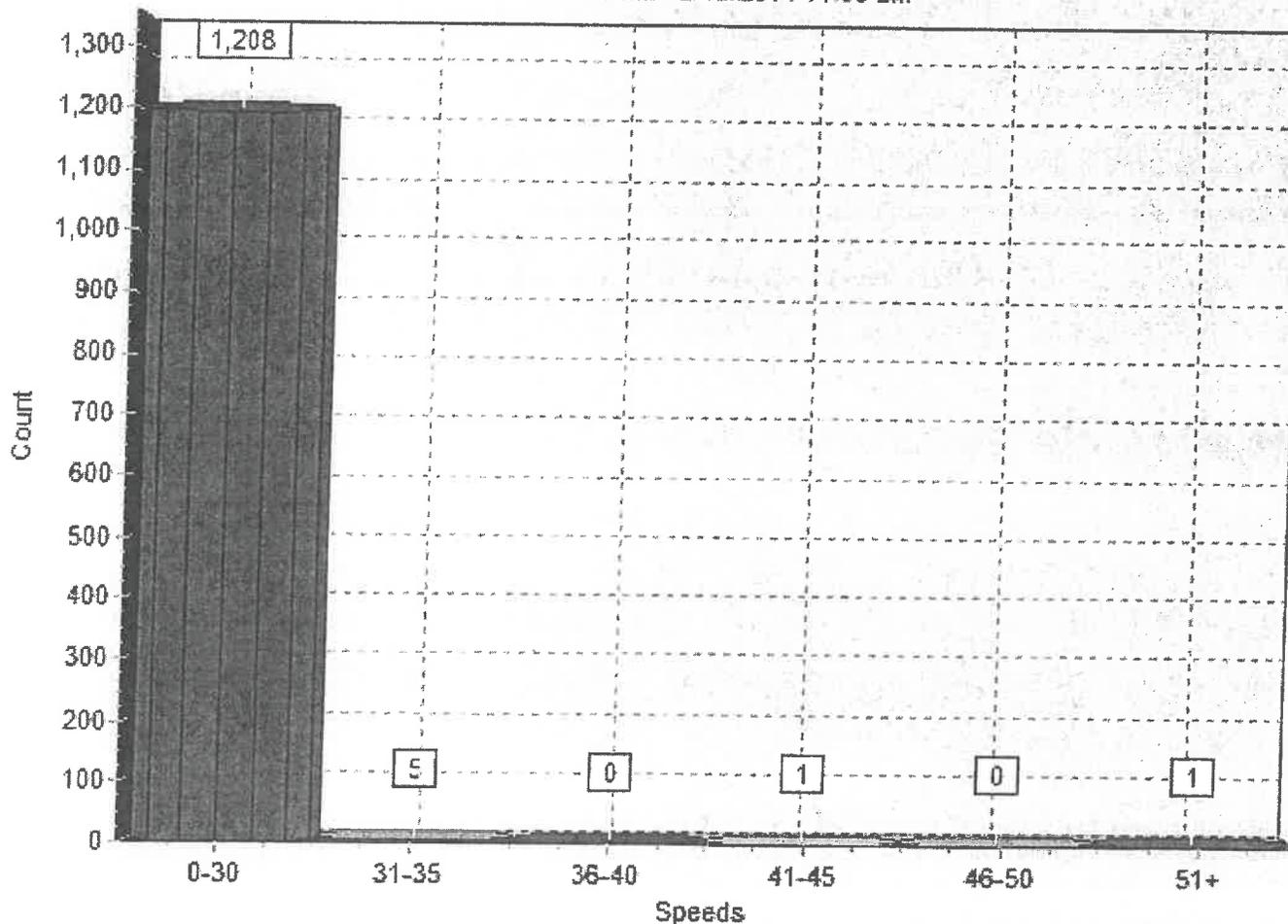
Comments:

Dalton Rd. & Elm St. September, 15-19, 2014

Device placed on Dalton Rd.

Count vs. Speed

9/15/2014 09:00 am - 9/19/2014 11:00 am



Date: 9/22/2014 11:24:50 am

Start Date: 9/15/2014 09:00 am

End Date: 9/19/2014 11:00 am

Time Interval: 60 minutes

Speed Interval: 5 mph

Posted Speed Limit: 30 mph

Average Speed: 17 mph

Highest Speed: 51 mph

50th Percentile: 18 mph

85th Percentile: 22 mph

Number Above Speed Limit: 7

Total Number of Vehicles: 1215

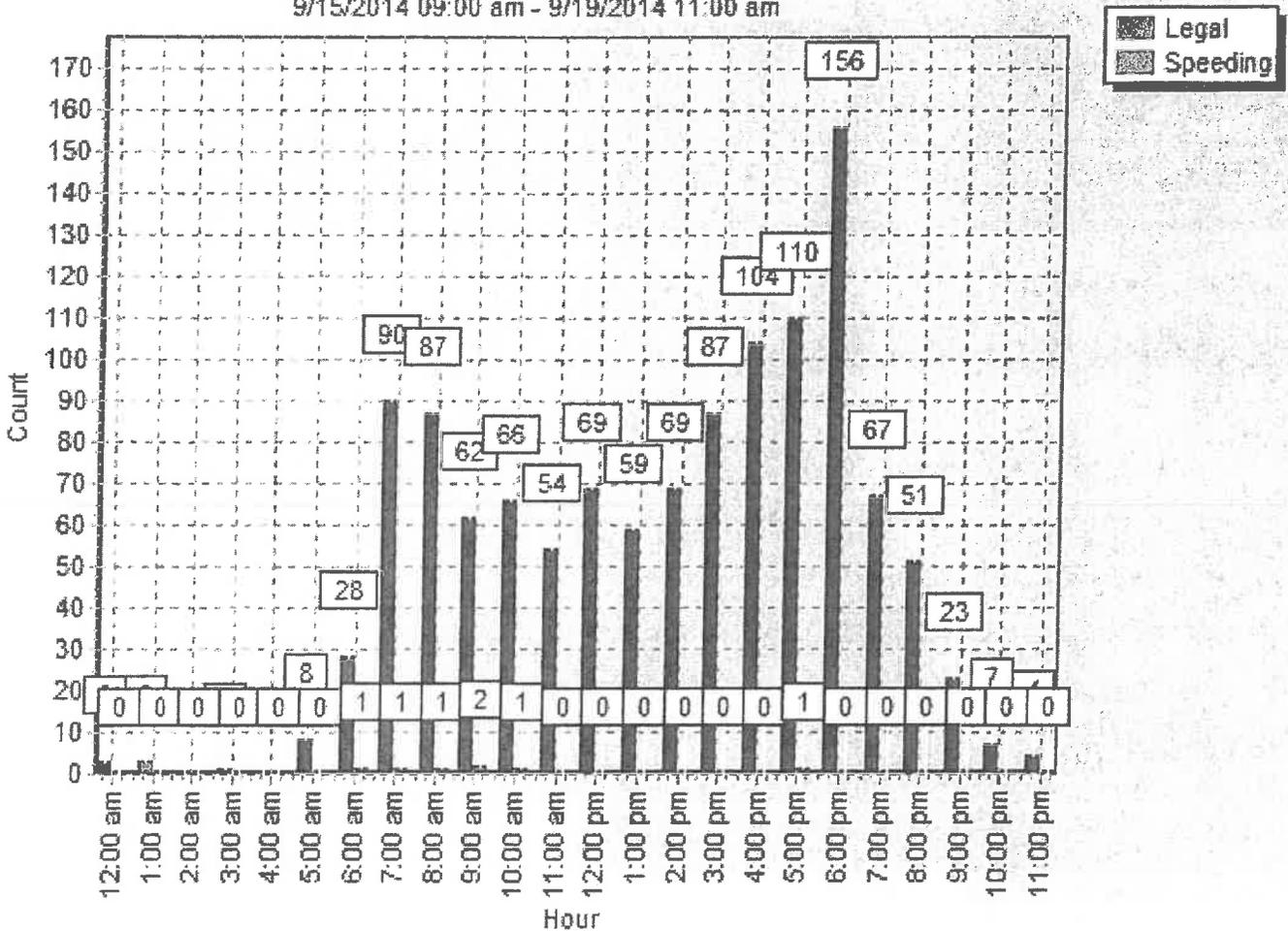
Comments:

Dalton Rd. & Elm St. September, 15-19, 2014

Device placed on Dalton Rd.

Count vs. Hour

9/15/2014 09:00 am - 9/19/2014 11:00 am



Section 2B.06 STOP Sign Applications

Guidance:

- 01 *At intersections where a full stop is not necessary at all times, consideration should first be given to using less restrictive measures such as YIELD signs (see Sections 2B.08 and 2B.09).*
- 02 *The use of STOP signs on the minor-street approaches should be considered if engineering judgment indicates that a stop is always required because of one or more of the following conditions:*
- A. *The vehicular traffic volumes on the through street or highway exceed 6,000 vehicles per day;*
 - B. *A restricted view exists that requires road users to stop in order to adequately observe conflicting traffic on the through street or highway; and/or*
 - C. *Crash records indicate that three or more crashes that are susceptible to correction by the installation of a STOP sign have been reported within a 12-month period, or that five or more such crashes have been reported within a 2-year period. Such crashes include right-angle collisions involving road users on the minor-street approach failing to yield the right-of-way to traffic on the through street or highway.*

Support:

- 03 The use of STOP signs at grade crossings is described in Sections 8B.04 and 8B.05.

Section 2B.07 Multi-Way Stop Applications

Support:

- 01 Multi-way stop control can be useful as a safety measure at intersections if certain traffic conditions exist. Safety concerns associated with multi-way stops include pedestrians, bicyclists, and all road users expecting other road users to stop. Multi-way stop control is used where the volume of traffic on the intersecting roads is approximately equal.
- 02 The restrictions on the use of STOP signs described in Section 2B.04 also apply to multi-way stop applications.

Guidance:

- 03 *The decision to install multi-way stop control should be based on an engineering study.*
- 04 *The following criteria should be considered in the engineering study for a multi-way STOP sign installation:*
- A. *Where traffic control signals are justified, the multi-way stop is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the installation of the traffic control signal.*
 - B. *Five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that 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.*
 - C. *Minimum volumes:*
 - 1. *The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the major street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day; and*
 - 2. *The combined vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle volume entering the intersection from the minor street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to minor-street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour; but*
 - 3. *If the 85th-percentile approach speed of the major-street traffic exceeds 40 mph, the minimum vehicular volume warrants are 70 percent of the values provided in Items 1 and 2.*
 - D. *Where no single criterion is satisfied, but where Criteria B, C.1, and C.2 are all satisfied to 80 percent of the minimum values. Criterion C.3 is excluded from this condition.*

Option:

- 05 Other criteria that may be considered in an engineering study include:
- A. The need to control left-turn conflicts;
 - B. The need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts near locations that generate high pedestrian volumes;
 - C. Locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to negotiate the intersection unless conflicting cross traffic is also required to stop; and
 - D. An intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection.

- #1 RAISED table on Lexington St. @ #169
HOLT ST. POSSIBLE REQ'S 2 CB
- #2 4 way stop @ Beech/Burnham/Lexington
NEED: COUNTS ON BEECH & BURNHAM
ACCIDENT DATA.
- #3 MOVE crosswalk to corner of Beech + Burnham
YES OR ADD SIGNAGE TO EXISTING
- #4 RAISED table @ 117 Lexington St.
9/1 & 9/7/99
- #5 MOVE MBTA stop from Sycamore to Chandler
SIGN OR BUS? Blocks vision
- #6 MOVE telephone pole back 15' on Sycamore
UNLIKELY visual hazard
- #7 RAISED table by Thayer St.
UNLIKELY
SEEMS MOST ACCIDENTS INVOLVE VEHICLE coming
from Waverley Sq
Blinking yellow overhead light @ Sycamore
USELESS
- #8 lengthen light cycle Lexington St. onto
Targeto 12-15 seconds 5pm to 7pm
TBD - NEW SIGNALS
- #9 CUT hedges to 2'-30" @ corner
- #10 WEST side #61/63 #65/67
NEED to pull vehicle into Lexington St
& Sycamore intersection to see up &



BELMONT

BELMONT

Ripley

HOLT

15

#1

Witecumbs

TABLE

#2

2

BEECH

BURHAM

#3

1

TABLE

#4

ING

Chandler

SYCAMORE

#5

#6

#7

SYCAMORE

EX

#10

THAYOR

#7

TABLE

chunch

Thayor

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