

**Vermont Traffic Committee  
Minutes of Meeting Held  
June 14, 2017**

The Vermont Traffic Committee met on Wednesday June 14, 2017. Committee Chair Joe Flynn called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm in the VTrans Board Room, Davis Building, Montpelier, Vermont. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

**Attendees:**

Joe Flynn, Secretary of Transportation, Traffic Committee Chair  
Robert Ide, Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, Traffic Committee Member  
Capt. Tim Clouatre, Delegate for Commissioner of Public Safety, Traffic Committee Member  
Tom McCormick, AAG, Traffic Committee legal advisor

Amy Gamble, Traffic Operations Engineer, Traffic Committee Coordinator  
Marcos Miller, VTrans Traffic Operations  
Joe Kelly, VTrans Traffic Operations  
Tyler Guazzoni, VTrans Traffic Operations  
Chris Mercon, VTrans Traffic Operations

Chris Bump, VTrans Maintenance and Operations District 4  
Wayne Davis, VTrans Municipal Assistance Bureau  
Cos Gardner, VTrans Rail Section

Sandy Gregg, South Hero, Planning Commission  
George Delano, South Hero, Planning Commission Co-chair  
Dave Hobbs, South Hero, Recreation Chair

Charles Safford, Stowe, Town Manager  
Patricia Shedd, Stowe, CLD Engineers project manager

**By Phone:**

Erica Roper, Windham Regional Planning Commission  
Rod Francis, Brattleboro, Planning Director  
Wendy Harris, Brattleboro Retreat Farm, Director of Community Relations  
Buzz Schmidt, Brattleboro Retreat Farm, President

Dave Kiernan, Shaftsbury, Town Administrator

**Agenda Items Discussed**

**Bethel VT 107 No Parking:** Ms. Gamble reminded the Committee that this item carried over from the December 2016 meeting, with the Committee's request that VTrans reach out to the affected property owners. Mr. Bump explained to the Committee that he sent letters to each

property owner, but two were returned undeliverable so he hand carried those two to the residences. One property owner indicated to Mr. Bump that while he had off street parking for himself, if he had a party his guests would not be able to park. Mr. Bump mentioned that there is a pullout available for parking near the end of the proposed no parking zone. The Traffic Committee voted to change the no parking zone from an overnight prohibition to a full time prohibition from December 1 to April 15.

**Brattleboro VT 30 Speed Limit:** Ms. Gamble gave a brief explanation of the engineering study based on the town's request to make permanent the temporary 40 mph speed limit that has been in place for the past 3 years during the interstate bridge project. The engineering study does not support this request; the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds are above 50 mph within the 40 mph zone, the shoulders are wide and the road is relatively straight, and the crash data is below the statewide average for similar road segments. The town is working on a corridor plan which would incorporate traffic calming features and bicycle and pedestrian facilities but this is likely to take several years for implementation. The Committee received several written (e-mail) comments in support of the town's request in addition to testimony by phone from all of the participants for Brattleboro listed above. The general theme of the testimony is that raising the speed limit would be counter to the town's efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and promote this roadway segment as a recreation destination. The Committee also reviewed the videolog of this segment to familiarize themselves with the various areas of concern.

Ms. Gamble explained that the temporary 40 mph speed limit has apparently been ineffective in changing driver speeds and that making it permanent would likely be similarly ineffective without changes to the roadway geometry, and that returning to the 50 mph speed limit would not likely result in higher driver speeds – that speed studies taken in 2003 when the speed limit was posted at 50 mph had similar 85<sup>th</sup> percentiles to the recent study.

Ms. Gamble pointed out that while the town stated that the residents support the reduction in speed limit, the speed studies show that they do not drive as if they support the 40 mph speed zone since the engineering study showed almost no drivers travelling at or below 40 mph. Mr. Francis countered that it is mostly non-local drivers who speed.

Ms. Gamble suggested that the permanent 40 mph transition speed zone could be extended modestly to incorporate both Retreat Farm driveways (instead of having the speed transition between the two driveways as signed before the temporary speed zone was installed). Mr. Schmidt stated that the Retreat Farm is currently working through Act 250 to get a third drive near Upper Dummerston Rd. Ms. Roper suggested that the Committee consider extending the 40 mph speed limit to the Upper Dummerston Rd intersection at a minimum. The Committee discussed this proposal but was concerned that it did not include the recreation fields, which were part of the town's original reason for requesting the 40 mph zone.

Chairman Flynn stated that while he believed that the engineering study and data were accurate, and understood the science behind the engineering recommendation, that if the town supported the 40 mph speed limit and was willing to actively enforce it, that he would support the local preference. The Committee voted to make permanent the 40 mph zone extending west beyond the recreation fields to milepoint 1.76 as requested by the town.

**South Hero US 2 Speed Limit and No Passing:** Ms. Gamble gave a brief explanation of the engineering study based on the town's request to extend the existing 35 mph zone in the village of South Hero easterly beyond the new commercial development and to establish no passing zone through the village. The Committee viewed the videolog for this area. Mr. Delano noted that there is further construction planned, including a fire station, library, and senior housing. He also stated that extension of the double yellow centerline would not be effective in discouraging passing since drivers already pass on double yellow in the village itself, and that the sheriff is in favor of a legal no-passing zone for ease of enforcement. He stated that much of the traffic in this area is through traffic to and from the ferry to New York. Mr. Hobbs and Ms. Gregg both expressed concern about bicycle and pedestrian safety, and noted that South Hero village is a popular biking destination.

Chairman Flynn stated that he is a resident of South Hero and former town official, and that he had spoken to AAG John Dunleavy who advised that he did not need to recuse himself.

After discussion, the Traffic Committee voted to extend the 35 mph easterly to zone to milepoint 3.53, and to eliminate the existing 40 mph transition zone. The Committee also voted to establish a No-Passing zone from milepoint 3.53 westerly to the next marked passing zone, near Keeler Bay.

Chairman Flynn recommended to the town officials that they use in-street pedestrian warning signs at their crosswalks in order to increase pedestrian safety. Ms. Gamble will send the town the application form for a permit to use the in-street signs on the state highway.

**Shaftsbury VT 7A No Parking:** Ms. Gamble explained that the town has been working with VTrans on safety improvements near this intersection for several years, and that the requested no-parking zone will provide additional sight distance at the problematic Buck Hill intersection approach. Mr. Kiernan explained that the residences have parking available at an off-street lot and do not need the on-street parking. The Committee voted to approve the proposed No-Parking zone.

**Stowe VT 100 Speed Limit:** Ms. Gamble gave a brief explanation of the engineering study based on the town's request to establish a 30 mph zone past the West Hill intersection to Brush Hill. She noted that the town has followed up on the tree trimming and street name sign upgrade recommendations made previously. Mr. Safford stated that although the recommended zone is slightly shorter than the town requested, he was satisfied with the result. The Committee voted to establish the 30 mph zone as recommended in the engineering study.

**Wallingford North End Drive Rail Crossing Stop Condition:** Ms. Gamble explained that by state law, the Traffic Committee has the authority to establish stop conditions at rail crossings for safety reasons. The rail diagnostic team recommended stop conditions at these two crossings due to restricted sight distance. Mr. Gardner explained more about the diagnostic team process. The Committee voted to establish stop conditions at the two crossings as requested.

**Statewide Regulation of Trailer Parking at Park and Rides:** Mr Davis explained that there have been instances of campers being parked for the winter in park and rides, and construction trailers being left periodically during the construction season as well as other unattended trailers using the park and rides for temporary storage. This can be an issue at busy park and rides such as Richmond and Waterbury, which overflow with regular commuter use. Mr. Davis worked with AAG McCormick on regulatory language prohibiting uncoupled trailers without written permission from the local DTA.

The Committee discussed pros and cons of this proposed language, which would effectively restrict travelers from leaving a camper for the day while touring, or a car/trailer combination from being parked in adjacent spaces if there was no single space long enough available which could be a problem in areas where park and rides are used as snowmobile trail ride starting points in winter. There was also discussion whether the regulation should be considered for particular park and rides with high usage, or at all park and rides, whether a time limit should be established and how that might be enforced.

The Committee was unable to reach a decision and recommended to Mr. Davis that he continue to work with AAG McCormick on the proposal and to bring it back before the Committee at their next meeting. The Committee voted to table this item.

**Dorset US 7 Speed limit and VT 30 Speed limit and No Parking:** Ms. Gamble gave a brief explanation of the engineering study, and noted that she had spoken to Dorset Town Administrator Rob Gaiotti regarding the recommendations and that Mr. Gaiotti has applied for a permit to install radar speed feedback signs on US 7 to address speed concerns in that segment, and said he understood the recommendation to allow parking on one side of the road near the Dorset Quarry. The Committee voted to accept staff recommendation on these items.

**Additional agenda items:** Ms. Gamble gave a brief explanation of the remaining agenda items, most of which were Certificate updates with no physical changes to the actual regulated zones, simply updates of location descriptions and milepoint references. The Traffic Committee voted to accept the staff recommendations on all remaining items.

*Minutes approved by all Traffic Committee members via e-mail 6/16/17*