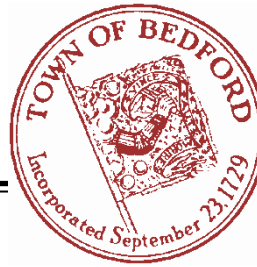


TOWN OF BEDFORD
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



314 THE GREAT ROAD
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

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Date: February 6, 2020

To: David Manugian Public Works Director

From: Jeanette Rebecchi, Transportation Program Manager

Re: Summary of Alcott Neighborhood Traffic Data & Recommended Improvements

Speeds

In the fall of 2019, the Bedford Police Department collected speed and volume data on all roadways in the Alcott Street neighborhood as summarized below. The prima facie speed limit in this neighborhood is 25mph. After reviewing the speed data and cross-referencing the Transportation Advisory Committee’s draft Traffic Calming Policy thresholds, speeding is not of particular concern in this area. However, a request has already been submitted to the Police Department to rotate the radar speed signs onto Old Stagecoach Drive as the street with the highest rate of speed in the area.

85th Percentile Speeds (mph)	
Wagon Wheel Drive	28
Old Stagecoach Road	32
Temple Terrace	27
Alcott Street	28
Gould Road	29

Volumes

Looking at traffic volume patterns, there is a significant PM rush hour traffic pattern heading from east to west, with more vehicles entering the neighborhood via Temple Terrace and exiting via Gould Road during rush hours (4pm – 6pm). This trend is supported anecdotally by neighborhood residents. The ADT (Average Daily Traffic) in the neighborhood ranged from 870 to 2100 during the week, and 290 to 825 on Saturday. Data could not be collected at all locations at the same time due to the limited amount of Police Dept. equipment. ADT numbers were taken from each street’s most heavily trafficked weekday and Saturday.

No Thru Traffic Signage

The request received to prohibit thru traffic to non-residents has been studied by both the DPW and Police Department. Per M.G.L c. 85, § 2, aside from truck exclusions, the Town is not allowed to prohibit access to public ways. The public has a right to travel on municipal roadways, otherwise, the traffic is merely shifted elsewhere. Despite what a select number of Massachusetts communities have

tried, “Resident Only” type signs on public ways are illegal and unenforceable by the Police Department. In residential neighborhoods with higher than expected traffic volumes, treatments should focus on maintaining safe driving behavior and improving pedestrian/cyclist safety.

Snow/Brush Clearance

Neighbors have also expressed concerns regarding snow and brush clearance. Over the summer, DPW staff did come through with a brush cutter to clear back any overhanging vegetation from the sidewalks. DPW also piloted using a sidewalk snow plow in this neighborhood after one snow event. Staff has determined that given the work load with labor and equipment requirements, we are not able to add this area to the sidewalk snow removal program at this time. Staff continues to prioritize snow removal in the vicinity of the four school properties, and commercial/industrial areas, which are the most heavily trafficked areas in town. As expected throughout the community, residents should take the initiative to clear the snow and brush in front of their homes.

Next Steps

The following next steps are suggested:

- At the request of the neighborhood, a safety audit was conducted this fall at the Gould/Springs/Fawn Circle intersection to determine the safest location for a crosswalk. It was determined that the north side has greater visibility. However, two additional curb ramps will need to be installed as per the Americans with Disabilities Act before any crosswalk is painted. Alternatively, the 2015 Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan identified this crossing as a “medium priority” for improvement with a raised intersection and possible Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon. If the neighborhood is interested in this enhanced crossing, submitting a Safe Routes to School grant application should be considered given the proximity to the Lane School and unprogrammed, higher cost. DPW and Health & Human Services staff can work with the neighborhood to apply for the next round of grant funding when available.
- In FY21, funding is available to hire a consultant to conduct sidewalk ramp improvements. Staff can allocate these resources toward the missing or substandard ramps in this neighborhood. Once installed, crosswalks can be painted as appropriate.
- The missing section of Alcott Street sidewalk was not identified as a concern in the aforementioned Master Plan, but could be considered at the neighborhood’s request. After examining the site, a substantial retaining wall would need to be constructed given the significant grade change. DPW staff is in the process of obtaining cost estimates for this work. However, funding is not available in the FY20 budget for design and/or construction.