



City of Beacon

Parking and Traffic Safety Committee

Minutes

April 28, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

Lewis Tompkins Hose
13 South Ave., Beacon NY 12508

➤ Old Business

1. Unsafe Pedestrian Signage - Phillips and Wolcott Ave. & Hillside Dr. and Wolcott Ave.

➤ New Business

1. Bank Street-Tomkins Ave. Intersection
2. Pedestrian Safety crossing at East Main/Spring/ Washington
3. Traffic Safety on Verplank Ave. & Dutchess Terrace
4. Wrong-way Drivers on Leonard Street
5. Signage at Washington Ave. & Helen Ct.

1. Unsafe Pedestrian Signage - Phillips and Wolcott Ave. & Hillside Dr. and Wolcott Ave.

Message from a resident:



I am writing to you concerning the low visibility pedestrian crosswalk signs at the intersection of Phillips St. and Wolcott Ave. (Please see attached photo).

Over the last several months I have noticed that Beacon has placed highly visible pedestrian signs near the new housing on Wolcott Ave. and Memorial Park. The new signage is excellent and it strikes me that this type of signage should be used throughout the City, especially in places where pedestrians are crossing heavily traveled roads like Wolcott Ave. Based on the recent Highland Current article,

The Slowdown Everyone Wants, it seems I am not the only one who is concerned about the safety of our crosswalks.

One of the reasons that my husband and I chose to live in the City of Beacon is because it is in many respects a walkable city. We have noted during milder weather that our neighbors also enjoy walking their dogs or toddlers in strollers. One street that we need to cross in order to reach Main Street is Wolcott Ave at Phillips St. While there are some slow traffic times, we have often experienced the following in attempting to safely cross the street:

- Many drivers seem unfamiliar with the concept that pedestrians have the right of way at crosswalks
- Many drivers exceed the 30 mph speed limit so we don't risk stepping into the crosswalk assuming that they are going to fast to stop in time even if they see us
- And, there are some good citizens who actually stop to let pedestrians cross the street -- we

consider that a win because once one driver stops, drivers from the other direction usually stop as well

Our assumption is that some drivers may be aware that pedestrians could be using the crosswalk at Wolcott and Phillips, but are not clear exactly where the crosswalk is located because it is not strongly marked as indicated in the attached photo. Nor is there any signage to inform drivers to slow down in case people are crossing the street.

As I am sure that the City does not want to see any more traffic fatalities, I request that a serious audit of pedestrian crosswalks that have not been upgraded with more visible signage be conducted not only in my neighborhood, but in other areas as well to ensure that drivers are alerted to the possibility that people may be crossing busy streets.

Solutions could be as simple as adding arrows to clearly point out the crosswalk, paint the sign poles a bright neon yellow to draw attention to the crosswalks, or refresh the crosswalk street markings. Of course, traffic lights would be great and also a way to slow traffic but better signage would be a welcome first step.

I would greatly appreciate a reply advising me of plans that the City has to improve pedestrian safety in Beacon as well as improving the signage at Phillips Street and Wolcott Ave. in the near future.

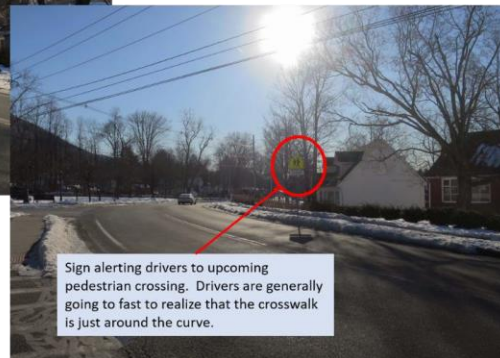
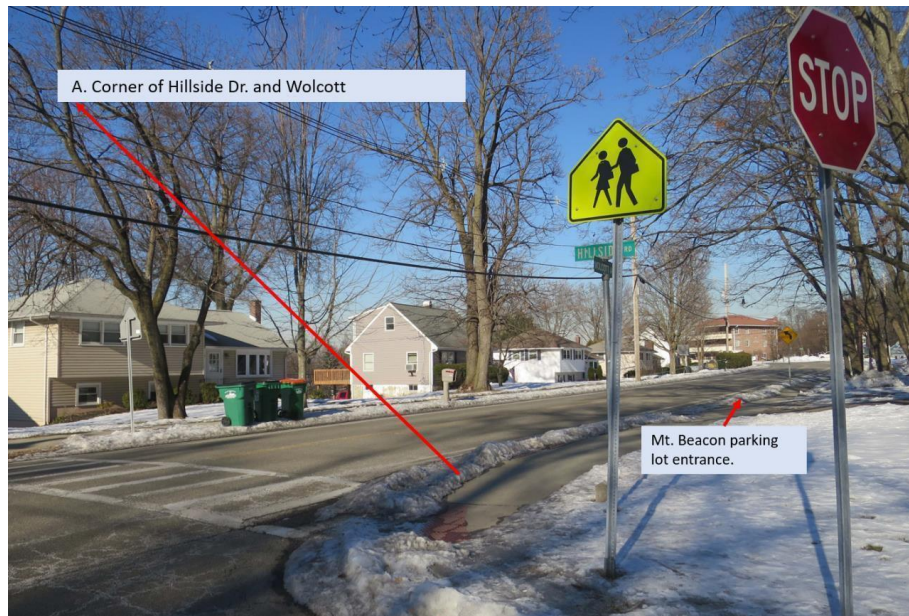
A second message from the same resident:

I took some additional photos of the crosswalk signage at Hillside Dr. and Wolcott which is also in my neighborhood. As I assume you are aware, this is a fairly busy area in warmer weather because of the entrance to the Mt. Beacon parking lot and the presence of many hikers.

Image A - the corner of Hillside Dr. and Wolcott is a school bus stop where students wait for the bus. Their wait also coincides with some early morning rush hour traffic which is often above the speed limit. It would seem that enhancing the visibility of the crosswalk sign would make sense not only for those crossing the street but also to help slow traffic for students congregated on the corner.

Image B - On the opposite side of Wolcott. The concern here is that the oncoming cars are often speeding up the hill. While there is a sign indicating a pedestrian crossing ahead before reaching the top of the hill, the drivers really can't anticipate how close the crosswalk is because of the curve.

Again as I suggested in my first email, it would be good to look at all the crosswalk signage on Wolcott as well as other busy streets that have not been upgraded. Solutions could be as simple as adding arrows to the signs that are located at the crosswalk.



February 3: Michael Manzi will look into installing crosswalk signs that are brighter and to adding reflecting material to the sign-posts. Further, Michael Manzi will continue looking into upgrading crosswalk signs.

February 24: The Highway Department determined that the signs of concern belong to New York State, but did add reflective tape to the posts for such. The item is continued to next meeting to discuss possible contact with DOT or the County for next steps.

March 24: The Highway Superintendent will ask NYS DOT to change signs to be brighter.

April 28: The City is awaiting response from NYS DOT.

New Business

1. Bank Street-Tomkins Ave. Intersection

Message from Councilmember Rhodes, on behalf of a Ward One Resident:

Hello Traffic Safety Committee,

I'm writing on behalf of local residents who have expressed concern about a potentially dangerous intersection at Bank Street and Tompkins Avenue in Ward One. These are residents who often, after dropping off kids at BPAC on West Main Street, will continue to head West and then use Bank Street to Tompkins Avenue to head back to 9D/North Avenue.

A couple of them have shared that as they come up to the top of Bank Street where it intersects Tompkins Avenue, they have had near misses with traffic heading towards 9D along Tompkins. There is currently no stop sign either at the top of Bank Street heading north, nor at the intersection of Bank and Tompkins Avenue heading east (or west). In addition, because Bank Street is coming up a hill, there is not full visibility onto Tompkins until you edge out into Tompkins, which is when the near-misses with cars traveling along Tompkins Avenue have happened.

These residents would like the traffic safety committee meeting to review this intersection, and determine if any stop signs or other improvements or adjustments to traffic flow are warranted. Please let me know if you would benefit from any additional information.

Yours,
Molly Rhodes

April 28: The Police Department will add additional detail to the location. The Committee recommends adding a Stop sign Tompkins Ave. and Bank St., if not in the City Code.

2. Pedestrian Safety crossing at East Main/Spring/ Washington

Message from Councilmember Aymar-Blair, on behalf of a Ward Four Resident:

I'd like to submit to the traffic safety committee a review of pedestrian safety crossing at East Main/Spring/Washington, notably for the droves of children on their way to and from Forrestal school in the mornings and afternoons. I'm happy about the one-way street on Spring but it did not address the concerns that are raised to me so often. We have to do something about this intersection; I believe stop signs and painted crosswalks are a necessity here.

Let me know if you have any questions. I've heard more complaints about this intersection than any other in Ward 4, and I want to stress how unsafe it is for pedestrians.

Have a good weekend!

All the best,
Dan

April 28: Department of Public Works will look into new cross walks as repainting Main Street and will update striping for pedestrian crosswalks at this location, if possible, on three of the four sides.

3. Traffic Safety on verplank Ave. & Dutchess Terrace

Message from Councilmember Rhodes, on behalf of a Ward One Resident:

Here's the email from the Ward One resident (and maybe soon to be Tree Committee Member!) about the intersection of Dutchess Terrace and Verplanck. It's interesting to have this come so shortly after the N. Walnut and Verplanck conversation, and to see the committee's discussion from March around making pedestrians at N. Walnut more visible. (Dutchess Terrace is also shortly after the crest of hill at Cross Street, to its east, so you have the some similar sight line issues.)

Cheers,
Molly

Message from the resident:

I am writing because I am concerned about the safety of the intersection of Verplank Avenue and Dutchess Terrace. This intersection is frequently used by pedestrians crossing from the neighborhood north of Verplank Avenue to access the Main Street area, as well as in the other direction. My daughter and several of my neighbor's children take piano classes out of a private home on Dutchess Terrace north of Verplank Avenue. These children are put at risk every time they walk to their music class.

The reason this intersection is especially dangerous is because it is on a hill and so it is difficult to see traffic coming from the eastern direction on Verplank Avenue. Traffic speeds up because of the hill and this intersection is not visible until a car is dangerously close. I have personally witnessed two car accidents at this location. In both cases I reported the accident so there may be some record of this.

I would like to request a traffic study at this intersection. If the study does not show a need for traffic

calming measures, I would suggest we look at accident reports at this intersection.

The traffic calming measures I would suggest include:

- touch activated flashing light for pedestrians to cross
- brightly painted crosswalk
- pedestrian crossing sign with text on the NYS pedestrian right of way law and fines/penalty for violation
- a speed bump uphill of the intersection (east of Dutchess Terrace on Verplank Avenue)

April 28: the Department of Public Works will revisit conducting a possible Traffic Study which would include Verplank Avenue.

4. Wrong-way Drivers on Leonard Street

Message from a resident:

It's been a while since I last checked in. I just wanted to revisit the situation on Leonard St, as it hasn't improved at all. I've counted 4 cars today that have gone the wrong way down this street (passing a car twice), so it's still an issue. From what I can tell with the notes, the remedy was to install no left turn signs inside of the Lofts at Beacon Falls complex. This was never done, and I don't think would solve anything as there are one-way signs at the exit/entrance of this complex (so the no left hand turn sign is pretty redundant) and while I can't tell where the cars are coming from, I'm assuming it's not from people who live here, who know that it's one way.

There's only one "Do Not Enter" sign on the road before you make the road turns at the end (there are 2 DNE signs there, which is when most people realize they're going the wrong way and some turn around; some do not and continue to the intersection (which has no stop sign to the driver, as they're going the wrong way, so this could cause an issue as well). This photo is from Google Street View roughly 2.5 years ago; the DNE sign is pretty faded at this point, and there's nothing else on this road until you turn. There's no signs leaving the Roundhouse parking lot (which is to the left), or any signs on Amity St. (which is the intersecting street here), other than the DNE sign right on the corner.

Given that the Roundhouse has many people from out of town who don't know the streets, I would speculate having a no left turn leaving this, and another (or even multiple) DNE signs on Leonard St, in addition to have one on Amity St. too (a no right-hand turn sign) would help, There are a couple One Way signs on the road, which they're for people leaving the 2 church parking lots, so anyone driving down the street is probably not going to see them.

Can you please have this issue addressed?



April 28: The Committee recommends updating the faded "Do Not Enter" signage at the above location and recommends adding a "One-Way" sign coming out of the Roundhouse.

5. Signage at Washington Ave. & Helen Ct.

Nice speaking with you today. Below is a history of our hope to get a sign installed near the hazardous intersection at Washington Ave & Helen Ct.

I look forward to your response. Thank you

Attendees: Committee Chair Matthew Dubetsky, Fire Chief Gary VanVoorhis, Police Lieutenant Jason Walden, Planning Board Representative Jill Reynolds, Carolyn Glauda, Carl Rubing, Secretary Collin Milone

Old Business 1. Washington Avenue & Helen Ct.

See the original message from a resident below:

The situation at Washington Ave & Helen Ct which is the entrance/exit for Glendale Estates. It is a hazardous blind spot as drivers coming east on Washington Ave round a bend in the road approaching Helen Ct. where residents exit Glendale Estates onto Washington Ave. There have been several close calls recently and I am hoping to avoid accidents/injuries.....including school busses picking up students! Is it possible to have a sign/flashing light (see picture below) installed to warn drivers of the blind exit round the bend? I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter. Thank you.

September: The Committee recommended installing a Hidden Road sign (MUTCD W2-2R) on the southwest side of Washington Ave. approaching Helen Ct. The Committee also recommended cutting back the brush on Washington Ave. approaching Helen Ct. Collin sent this brush recommendation to the Building and Highway Departments.

August: The Committee discussed sign options and will review this request again at their next meeting

June: Mickey Manzi was not able to attend this meeting. ***He will update the Committee on the cost and feasibility of a flashing sign during the July meeting. He will also work with Matt Dubetsky to determine who owns the bushes near the cemetery.***

May: The Committee did not have time to discuss this. It will appear on the June 24th agenda.

February: Collin will write the recommendation for a flashing sign on Washington Ave in front of 470 approaching the intersection with Helen Ct. Matt Dubetsky will provide the location and sign language. Council will take this up March 29th

January: The Committee recommended installing a sign warning motorists of the upcoming turn and blind spot. Matt will propose which sign is appropriate at the February meeting.

April 28: The Superintendent of Streets researched the cost of a flashing light sign and was informed that such would cost approximately \$14,000. The Department of Public Works will check the foliage alongside the roadway at the above location to make sure properly cleared. The Police Department will increase patrol detail at such location.

6. Concern about Emergency Vehicles and parking at the intersection of W. Church Street and Cross Street.

This concern was raised by a Committee Member during the April 28th meeting. Specifically, the concern is whether or not there was sufficient "no parking" signage to allow for safe firetruck access.

April 28: The Committee recommended measuring at the above location to ensure that there is sufficient room for firetruck and emergency vehicle use and access and to check the code for compliance.

7. East Main Street parking congestion

This concern was raised by a community member in attendance at the April 28th meeting. Specifically, the resident was concerned with parking from hikers which has led to congestion along narrow residential streets in the area.

April 28: The Committee recommended adding a temporary "No Outlet" sign at East Main Street and Laurel Street. The community member will report back in one or two months to determine if such has led to measurable improvement.