



City of Beacon

Parking and Traffic Safety Committee

Minutes

January 23, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

1 Municipal Plaza,

Beacon, NY 12508

➤ Old Business

1. Leonard St. Stop Sign
2. Washington Avenue Safety Concerns
3. Jordan Road and Wolcott Avenue Crossing
4. East Main Street Crossing
5. Tompkins Avenue Crossing
6. Anderson Street Signage
7. Talbot Avenue Speeding and Traffic Concerns
8. Verplanck Avenue and Cross Street Signage
9. 9D Crosswalk Safety Concern

➤ New Business

1. Speeding Issues on Mackin Avenue
2. Helen Court Traffic Mirror
3. Bank Street and Tompkins Avenue Traffic Signal

In attendance: Chief Lucchesi, Matt Dubetsky, Carolyn Bennet-Glauda, David Jensen, Highway Superintendent Michael Manzi, and Lt. Confield

Old Business

1. Leonard St. Stop Sign

The following agenda item was submitted for discussion by the Beacon Police Department:

Visibility is extremely difficult when turning from Leonard St. onto East Main St. particularly when trying to see past Durkin's. The store, the parking lot and the grade mean that you really only see oncoming traffic at the last minute. I think that a stop sign for northbound traffic at the intersection of East Main St. and Leonard St. would probably alleviate this issue.

June 27, 2024: Due to timing, this item will trail to the July meeting.

July 25, 2024: The Committee supported a stop sign being placed in the area of concern, but noted concerns of considering where a future crosswalk may be placed. Placement must balance visibility of the sign itself with that consideration. A planner or engineer may be consulted for exact placement, and committee members will visit the area before the August meeting to evaluate further. Police Department will look into the accident history of the area, as well.

August 22, 2024: This item will trail to the September meeting.

September 26, 2024: This item will trail to the October meeting, but the Committee reiterated the concept of a stop sign to be added near the mailbox at Durkins. Highway and Police Department staff will visit the location again before progressing the conversation further.

December 12, 2024: The Police Department visited the intersection in question to review possible locations for a stop sign. In doing so, it was noted that delivery trucks obscure visibility further. The Committee reiterated the need for planning/engineer design support on this matter. This item will trail for further discussion to the January 2025 meeting.

January 23, 2025: The Committee continued discussion of a potential stop sign at the corner of Durkins nearby to the storm grate. The Committee noted that there is no good way to add a crosswalk without a more comprehensive redesign of the intersection.

Before the next meeting, the City will investigate whether parking at Durkins is legal, particularly at the ends. This item will trail to discuss.

2. Washington Avenue Safety Concerns

The following emails were received:

- a) The undersigned, a group of Ward 3 residents living in the area of Washington Avenue

and Tillott Street, are writing to request a traffic safety evaluation.

Drivers entering and leaving Beacon along the Washington Avenue corridor drive at speeds far exceeding the speed limit. Heavy trucks also use the corridor at very high speeds that are not appropriate for a residential area. Traffic is particularly lawless at night, with cars streaking by at highway speeds.

The corner of Washington and Tillott is home to a school bus stop, and elementary school-aged children cross Washington Avenue frequently to walk to and from JV Forrestal School. We have witnessed 3 accidents at this intersection and have lost 2 pets to the traffic.

We live in Beacon because it is a livable, walkable, and family-friendly community. We appreciate your support in keeping it that way by protecting the safety of residents through enforcing the law. Thank you for your consideration.

b) To members of the Beacon Traffic Safety Committee:

Building on the concerns expressed in the letter above, I agree and stress that urgent action is needed to address the pressing safety issues on Washington Ave.

Constant Hazard: Particularly concerning is that the most dangerous activity occurs on nights and weekends along Washington Ave, amplifying the risk during low visibility at night and when children are outside experiencing life on weekends when they are not in school. Heavy trucks, cars, motorcyclists, and dirt bikes frequently use Washington Ave as an acceleration point, creating dangerous conditions for pedestrians, including at the exact moment I write this (6:34PM Sunday, June 2, 2024).

Fear for the Safety of Children, Those with Mobility Challenges, and Pets: The intersection of Washington and Tillot is a crucial point for children's safety, serving as a school bus stop and a crossing point for elementary school-aged children walking to and from JV Forrestal School. In the vicinity between Tillot and Grove, approximately eight families, including those with school-aged and infant children, reside. As a parent myself, I share the deep concern about the safety of our children, especially given the high-speed traffic on Washington Ave. Additionally, a high number of pets reside at these homes including dogs that are being walked, and cats that explore the outdoors.

Property Damage: Reckless drivers have caused significant damage to parked cars on Washington Ave, resulting in financial and time burdens for affected residents. One recent incident at 95 Washington Ave required the resident to spend \$2000 on replacing their side mirror after a hit-and-run, consuming multiple days and hours of their time in addition to the great financial burden and safety hazard of being without a side mirror while waiting for the repair (parts and scheduling).

Disrupted Peace: The noise generated by speeding vehicles and cyclists on Washington Ave is so loud that it disrupts residents' peace to the extent of waking them up from sleep. This constant disturbance affects the tranquility of the neighborhood, significantly impacting residents' quality of life.

Lack of Enforcement: Despite repeated complaints from residents, there's a noticeable lack of effective enforcement measures by local authorities to address the issue of speeding vehicles on Washington Ave.

Thank you for promptly addressing the traffic safety concerns outlined in the letter. Your swift attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

July 25, 2024: Several residents from the neighborhood in question attended the meeting and shared their experiences living in such. The Committee acknowledged that young children live along these streets and that a bus stop is located along such, as well. Further, they noted that there is lots of on-street parking usage along the same stretch. Residents reported that some people park on the sidewalk itself to avoid getting sideswiped by oncoming traffic.

The Committee discussed whether an additional stop sign may be considered along this stretch as Washington Avenue transitions to more residential, and the discussion will be continued at the Committee's August meeting. The Police Department will look into accident history in the area.

August 22, 2024: This item will trail to the September meeting.

September 26, 2024: a resident attended to reiterate concerns regarding this topic, and the Committee discussed whether Grove or Tillot Streets would be better for a potential stop sign. The Committee also discussed whether Washington is a designated truck route or not (under Section 211-13.1, it is not). Lastly the following options were discussed: stop sign, speed tables/humps (Fire Department was against this option), speed signs, and increased police enforcement.

The Committee concluded this discussion by requesting increased speed enforcement in the area at different times of day (particularly around school pick-up and drop-off) and to see if it is possible to rotate a portable speed sign to the neighborhood. Discussions as to potential stop signs will trail to future meetings.

December 12, 2024: Police Department has increased enforcement in the area and noted that the stop sign coming towards town on Tillot Street would likely be the preferred location.

January 23, 2025: the Committee recommended a stop sign to be added at Tillot Street, making the intersection a four-way stop. The rationale for such was ongoing speed concerns, the nearby school, and the transition to denser residential areas as driving along Washington further into the City.

3. Jordan Road and Wolcott Avenue Crossing

The following email was received:

When Wolcott Ave was repaved last year, a crosswalk was painted between Jordan Rd & Wolcott across from Forrestal Heights. This was fabulous because there are many families that live in my neighborhood and children regularly cross the busy road. I walk across the crosswalk daily with my 1-year-old son in a stroller and have noticed that cars rarely stop for the crosswalk because there is no signage to let them know that they are approaching a crosswalk.

I noticed that this crosswalk has actually come up before on your agenda related to children crossing here to catch the bus. The most recent update was that the City was going to reach out to the School District to see if they can start picking up children in the neighborhood, but that would not solve the problem because many students cross the street from Forrestal Heights to meet the bus and quite a few late elementary and middle school students from my neighborhood walk or ride their bikes to school and need to be able to safely cross as well. An easy and helpful solution would be crosswalk signs like the ones that are present at other areas along Wolcott (like at the crosswalks across from the Lofts near Main St and further down Wolcott across from St. Lukes & St. Andrews church). Thank you so much for considering signage in this area.

August 22, 2024: The members of the Committee who were present heard from present residents regarding concerns that prior discussions regarding buses stopping in the development won't solve problems, as students from the other side of Wolcott would still need to cross.

The Committee discussed that perhaps signage which indicated a crosswalk was present at this intersection could be installed prior to the September meeting. They suggested discussing whether 'cross walk ahead' signage may also be appropriate. The Secretary to the Committee will look into the cost of lighted crosswalk signage prior to the September meeting, as well.

Lastly, the present Committee members noted that, given the high costs of the lighted crosswalk signage, it may be the sort of item which would need be discussed during the upcoming 2025 City of Beacon Budget process. Present Committee members suggested to residents that they speak with their City Council representatives to that end.

September 2024 update: An individual who attended the August meeting regarding this issue asked the Committee to weigh in on proper budget process for gradual adding of lighted crosswalk signage. For instance, adding a standing budget line for 1-2 new a year, rather than just responsive to requests in a given year.

September 26, 2024: The Committee recommended the following strategy to signage improvements throughout the City: firstly, to develop a more holistic plan and list of areas in need of signage improvements, and to then use such to develop a budget plan for

improvements over time.

December 12, 2024: The Committee determined to remove this item from the agenda going forward.

January 2025 update: a committee member noted that that they have an update to discuss further, and the item will remain on the agenda.

January 23, 2025: The Committee discussed whether the City has more crosswalk signage that are similar to those along Main Street – those being brighter and better designed. The Highway Department will swap out the older signs. The Committee also discussed whether this would be a good candidate for an additional crossing guard location – perhaps shifting over from a lesser used crossing. The Police Department will look into this matter further to ascertain whether moving would be possible or advisable.

4. East Main Street Crossing

The following email was received:

My concern regards the safety of students who walk to J.V. Forestal Elementary School who need to cross E. Main Street to get to Liberty Street. East Main is a busy street, and there is no obvious safe place to cross. (There is also the Hudson Hills Montessori School on Liberty Street, so I imagine there are families walking to that school as well.) Would the city be willing to put a crosswalk in on E. Main Street?

September 26, 2024: this item will trail to the October meeting so that the Committee may check what crosswalks currently exist at the intersection in question.

December 12, 2024: This item will trail to the January 2025 meeting for further discussion.

This item was merged with another email received:

I would like to propose a three-way stop side, painted crosswalks & yellow pedestrian signage at the intersection of East Main St. and Liberty St. to improve safety of pedestrians of JV Forestal Elementary, St. Joachim School, St Joachim Church, Beacon's First presbyterian church, Cooper's restaurant patrons and other pedestrians accessing Main St. A stop sign at this location will also make the fountain square intersection

(Leonard St. and East Main St.) safer for pedestrians and traffic near Durkin's Grocery, laundromat, visitors viewing the creek from the narrow bridge sidewalk and visitors staying at the roundhouse venue. The down slope going west on East Main st. naturally increases speed in combination with the bend in the road and site line being blocked by Durkin's grocery add to the danger.

I would also like to add a cross walk on East Main street connecting the corner of Durkin's grocery to the sidewalk peninsula that juts out with the pull in parking (as pictured in Main St. Access committee report page 11).

December 12, 2024: The Committee noted that they have an ongoing discussion about crosswalks at this intersection. This will trail and merge with the existing agenda item in the January 2025 agenda.

January 23, 2025: As noted above, this item was deemed substantially similar to agenda item no. 1 going forward.

5. Anderson Street Signage

The following email was received:

I am writing again today concerning the need for signage on Anderson St. that is the back property portion of school J.V. Forrestal. This is not the first time I am asking for 'safety' signage for the students and parents that walk to the school on the Anderson St. side; next to home 44 Anderson St. The concern is that motorists are UNAWARE that this area is the backyard of the school and signage would alert them to slow it down; speeding is prevalent in that area.

This area is very heavily trafficked morning, afternoons and basically all days. When it snows that particular area is all about sleigh riding, after school children run up and down the hill to the playground that is on the bottom of the property that is closest to Anderson St. Bottom line is, some kind of school safety signage is needed. Please look into this.

December 12, 2024: The Committee reviewed the area of concern and noted that they cannot add a school zone sign, but also noted that perhaps a 'children at play' sign could be added approaching. The Committee will follow up with the resident to ask for further information regarding where students walk, other than for sledding.

January 23, 2025: This item will trail to the February 2025 agenda, pending further input from the reporting party.

6. Talbot Avenue Speeding and Traffic Concerns

I'm writing to share my concerns regarding traffic and speeding on Talbot Avenue for the committee's consideration, hoping that they can be addressed in the December agenda.

I have lived on Talbot Avenue since 2005, and over the past few years, I've noticed a significant increase in traffic, especially during peak commuter hours. Many drivers appear to be using Talbot Avenue to bypass the heavy traffic on Route 9D or to avoid the traffic light on Verplank Avenue, particularly when trains arrive at Beacon Station. I understand that the line from the station to the bridge can be long, but this has led to a greater volume of cars on Talbot Avenue, with many cutting through from Main Street. Although traffic volume has decreased somewhat

during non-commuter times, speeding remains a persistent problem.

The increased traffic has led to more instances of reckless driving. Speeding vehicles make it dangerous to cross the street, and there have been several incidents of drivers hitting parked cars, crashing into our garbage cans, and passing on the right as we attempt to turn into our driveways. This has been problematic not only for us, but also for families on the other side of the street.

Talbot Avenue is a residential street, home to many families with children and pets. I am deeply concerned about their safety, as well as the safety of long-standing residents. While we appreciate the growth and changes Beacon has seen in recent years, the negative impact of this increased traffic is affecting our neighborhood.

I would be grateful if the city could review this situation and consider possible solutions to improve safety for our residents.

The following additional email was received:

I meant to add one more concern to my concern. I believe there is a proposal to build a storage facility off of Route 9D at the entrance to 84 East. I am unsure of the exact status of this proposal, but I understand that because trucks and cars will not be able to turn right (northbound) into its entrance, it has been suggested that customers use Verplank Avenue, turn onto Dutchess Terrace, and then use Rock Hill Road to get back onto Route 9D to make a right turn into the storage facility.

However, I am not convinced that people will follow this route when Talbot Avenue is the first left they can take to access Route 9D. I do not believe using any of our residential streets in this way is advisable, and I worry it will only exacerbate the existing traffic problems on Talbot Avenue.

December 12, 2024: The Committee recommended increased police enforcement in the area in question and noted that the City administration is working with NYS DOT to alleviate congestion along 9D – particularly at Verplanck and up towards the bridge. This item will trail for further discussion to the January 2025 meeting.

January 23, 2025: The Committee noted that all streets in this area of the City are used as cut-throughs. This item will be removed from the agenda moving forward.

7. Verplanck Avenue and Cross Street Signage

The following email was received:

I'm a mom who walks her kids to school at South Avenue Elementary every morning and I've been astounded daily at the ineffectiveness at the current signage that exists at the crosswalk

at the intersection of Verplanck and Cross Street. I would estimate less than 10% of cars stop at this crosswalk to let us pass. Even school buses do not stop. I am happy to supply video evidence of this. There needs to be something better than this put into place. Our neighborhood is full of children that walk to school and this is a huge safety hazard.

December 12, 2024: The Committee reiterated its view that Verplanck requires a more holistic review of crosswalk needs and prioritization. The Committee will check if there are cross-walk ahead signs for further discussion at the January 2025 meeting.

January 23, 2025: The Committee confirmed that that there is no cross-walk ahead signage at this location, but determined that the area is adequate without such given the visibility approaching the crossing is good.

8. 9D Crosswalk Safety Concern

The following email was received:

I am a Beacon resident, writing to address the unsafe crosswalks along 9D/Wolcott Ave on the east side of Beacon, closer to the school and Mount Beacon.

I noticed many Fishkill crosswalks have a light-up sign, forcing cars to acknowledge pedestrians crossing. This would be appropriate for our crosswalks, considering the rate at which many drivers speed down Wolcott.

While I acknowledge there's a crossing guard during the school morning and end-of-day, this is still a dangerous area for any pedestrian, and we risk a fatal incident occurring as the crosswalks stand now. I, myself, have had close calls — and I've seen others experience the same.

With so many families in the area wanting to walk into town or just down the street to their neighbors, I consider this a worthwhile investment for our town, if not lifesaving.

December 12, 2024: The Committee will investigate whether there is existing cross-walk ahead signage approaching the location in question. The Committee also noted the presence of the permanent speed-reader sign, which has helped. This item will trail for further discussion at the January of 2025 meeting.

The Committee also sought clarification as to whether there will be budgeting for lighted crosswalk signage in 2025.

January 23, 2025: The City will follow up with the resident to gain clarity on which intersection in particular; the Committee further noted that the Police Department has been in the area, and that there are crosswalks and signage in the area of concern.

New Business

1. Speeding Issues on Mackin Avenue

A student from Beacon High School has submitted a short presentation for consideration regarding speeding along Mackin Avenue. Said presentation will be appended to the agenda for the Committee's review.

January 23, 2025: The Committee heard the presentation and issued the following findings:

- Recommended rotating a portable speed reader signage to the area as drivers are going downhill.
- Speed is a problem throughout the City, but noted that the area in question is used as a cut-through.
- Asked the presenter to follow-up regarding how effective the speed reader sign is in slowing traffic down.

2. Helen Court Traffic Mirror

The following email was received:

I wanted to inquire whether the city or residents of Helen Ct might install a traffic mirror? Cars fly up the bend on Washington Ave towards Fishkill? I wanted to see if a traffic mirror is feasible to enable the residents to turn onto Washington Ave from Helen Ct safely? Thank you.

January 23, 2025: the Committee declined to recommend traffic mirrors, as they have noted the past that they are ineffective and cause other safety issues of their own. The Committee further noted that the prior mirror at this intersection was on private property. Lastly, the Committee noted existing 'hidden drive' signage and a stop sign in the area. This item will be removed from the agenda moving forward.

3. Bank Street and Tompkins Avenue Traffic Signal

I hope this letter finds you well! I'm reaching out to ask the city to consider installing a stop sign at the intersection of Bank Street and Tompkins Avenue. Right now, there are no traffic signals at this spot, and it's unsafe for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

I recently moved to the area, and upon exploring my new neighborhood almost ended up in a T-bone style collision as a car came over the blind hill on Tompkins Ave as I was making a right turn off of Bank St also onto Tompkins Ave.

Please let me know if there is a process for submission beyond this email. Also, please feel free to reach out to me if you need any more information or want to discuss this further. Thanks so much for your consideration!

January 23, 2025: The Committee noted that Tompkins is a private roadway right up to the intersection. The City will research whether the Committee previously recommended an additional stop sign at Bank Street and Tompkins, but also noted that under the law, traffic is already supposed to stop at a T-intersection.

Next meeting: February 27, 2025