



Town of Hardwick  
Hardwick Planning Commission  
P.O. Box 523  
Hardwick, Vermont 05843  
phone: (802) 472-1686  
e-mail: [zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.org](mailto:zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.org)

October 15, 2020

To: Eric Remick, Hardwick Select Board Chair

Fr: David Gross, Hardwick Planning Commission Chair

Re: Implementation of Phase I Recommendations

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of the Hardwick Planning Commission and the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force, regarding the ongoing implementation of the Phase I Recommendations to the Hardwick Select Board. Firstly, all members of the Planning Commission and the Task Force recognize that the function of the Commission/Task Force is to research and analyze information regarding pedestrian & traffic safety, and then to formulate a list of recommendation for the Select Board to accept, modify, or reject as the Board sees fit. Secondly, the Commission/Task Force was very pleased that the Select Board opted to accept all of our Phase I recommendations and we have begun moving on to develop a list of Phase II Recommendations.

However, as the Town has begun to implement the Phase I recommendations, we on the Planning Commission and the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force have made and discussed the following observations, which we would like to share with the Select Board. Starting with the most positive, the Commission/Task Force is very pleased with the design and placement of the fence bordering the Diner parking lot. We look forward to learning if it acts as a deterrent to pedestrians climbing the slope and jaywalking through the "Blinking Light" intersection. Likewise, the Stop Wait Wave painted signage at the entrances to crosswalks has been generally well received by the public. Unfortunately, 3 of the 12 signs have begun to fade (yellow paint) or are being obscured by sediment. We understand that the Town Manager is aware of this issue. The Commission/Task Force feels that these recommended crosswalk signs might require some additional upkeep that was not expected in order to maintain their effectiveness. We also understand that the Handicap Parking spot by the Post Office driveway entrance has been moved and that traffic cones are to be placed to indicate that the old spot is no longer to be used for parking. Likewise, we note that two flashing crosswalk signs have been installed, but unfortunately at two separate crosswalks. It was the Commission and the Task Force's understanding that these signs are designed to work in pairs at the same crosswalk and are much less visible, and thus effective, when not in pairs. Additionally, one flashing crosswalk sign was installed at the crossing between the Diner and Yummy Wok. This was not one of the two crosswalks recommended by the Commission/Task Force and approved by the Select Board. The second recommended crosswalk was between the Swinging Bridge and the Co-op.

Town Manager's Office  
Town Clerk's Office  
Town Highway Department

Shaun Fielder  
Alberta A. Miller  
Tom Fadden

(802) 472-6120  
(802) 472-5971  
(802) 472-6029



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Finally, there are the series of recommendations which have seen little or no action to implement. The Commission/Task Force has been informed that the last date that paint can be applied to the road surface has passed, but remain disappointed that efforts were not taken sooner to add high visibility colors to the crosswalks and to paint out the identified parking spaces adjacent to the crosswalks, an extremely important modification to improve pedestrian visibility. Likewise, no concrete planter or barrier of any type has been placed over the parking spaces between the two crosswalks in front of the Clip Joint.



The Commission/Task Force has yet to hear of any plan to organize and add Public Parking signage to the “parking lot” next to the Clip Joint. As part of our Phase II discussions, it was put forward that perhaps the parking space closest to the sidewalk could be reserved for Loading/Unloading purposes only; the space allocated to permit a UPS-size truck ease of access. This space could also be used by local producers delivering to the Co-op, thus freeing up parking spaces on Main Street. Also as part of our Phase II work, the Planning Commission did a Walkability Study (AARP) of Church Street and Maple Street. We discovered that the speed limit sign on Maple Street has disappeared, and thus it appears when approaching from the east that the 35 MPH speed limit on Slapp Hill still applies to all of Maple Street. We understand that the Police Chief has noted a similar lack of speed limit signage in the Village center which affects his department’s enforcement efforts.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to discuss our observations regarding the implementation of the Phase I Recommendations. We look forward to seeing more progress on improving pedestrian and traffic safety in Hardwick as we work on our Phase II Recommendations.

Sincerely,

David Gross, Chair

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