



AARP Community Walk Audit location:

West Church Street, Hardwick

Date: 9/21/21 Started at 11:00 am and completed at Noon

Posted Speed Limit: 25 mph

A suggested rate of 20 mph is also posted.

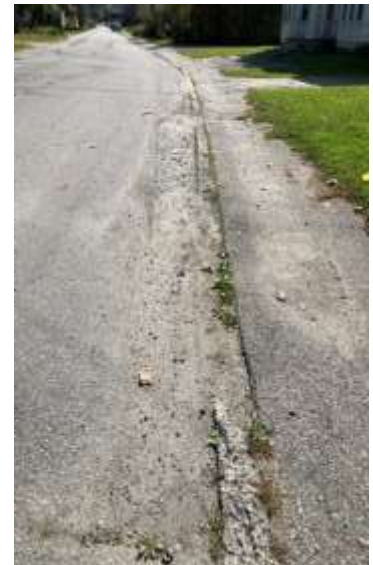
Total Number of Vehicle Lanes: 2

Two-Way Street

A sidewalk exists on south side of the street.

Issues Noted on Audit:

- 1) The sidewalk has curbs but often the curb is crumbling and/or does not match the elevation of the sidewalk (usually too low). The north side does not have a sidewalk and, therefore, does not have a curb to separate pedestrians from the road.
- 2) The sidewalk has multiple obstacles. The sidewalk is cracked, broken and storm drains are either within the actual sidewalk or have aspects which make travel difficult. Multiple cars and trucks park on the sidewalk (reducing the width available). The sidewalk is overgrown with vegetation both in the pedestrian travel lane and next to the sidewalk from the abutting properties.



- 3) The sidewalk is continuous – no segments are missing. However, the sidewalk has a variety of angles and elevations which make walking difficult and virtually impossible to be utilized by a wheelchair or other form of mobility assistance.



4) The sidewalk is not complete – the section randomly ends at the corner and does not have any indication that the sidewalk is ending.

5) The sidewalks are barely wide enough for two people to walk side by side (4 ½ feet in most sections). The sidewalks are definitely not wide enough for two people to use while social distancing. Road needs to be utilized if 6 feet apart is sought.

6) There are no indicators so that users with vision impairments will know when the path is ending.



7) The street does not have a designated bicycle lane but with the completion of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (which runs parallel to West Church Street), there may be an increase of bike usage which necessitates more bike options.

8) No crosswalks exist at the intersection at the beginning of West Church Street and there are no additional crosswalks on West Church Street. There is a path which is utilized by the students at Hazen Union (see photo to right) and students were observed walking on the north side of the street. This side does not have a sidewalk and is used as the travel lane by both directions of traffic. A crosswalk to the sidewalk is recommended. The expansion of the public library may increase traffic at the intersection of Church and North Main Street. A crosswalk in this location is also recommended. In addition, the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail may create a further need for a safe crossing on West Church Street.



Hazen Walking Path

- 9) The sidewalks have vegetation growing between the curb and in the gutters. Drainage does not appear to be adequate for increased capacity rain events.



- 10) Several motorists did not appear to be following the posted speed limit. Speed was reduced to venture past parked cars – one lane only available to traffic. After the segment with this obstruction, vehicles picked up speed quickly.

- 11) Parking in general is difficult to navigate. Many vehicles were observed stopping to allow oncoming traffic to pass in an attempt to navigate the roadway. The road width of 22-23 feet does not allow for parked vehicles and two lanes of traffic. At this time, however, the parked cars act as traffic calming devices. (See #10)



- 12) The stop sign adjacent to the Jeudevine Library is located before the intersection and is not always easy to observe. West Church Street does not have any signage alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians. Over the course of an hour, 10+ pedestrians were observed. The street serves as a main corridor for children who are commuting to the high school. High traffic counts occurred throughout the time frame of the audit.

The location could be improved by trash bins near the Library, sidewalk repairs, and enforcement of speed limits. A thorough examination of possible approaches to safety should occur. Possible improvements could include changing the street to a one-way street and installing traffic calming speed “humps.”

The safe walkability of the area is **poor**.

The overall appeal of the area as a place to walk is **poor**.



West Church Street

Hardwick, Vermont