

Historic and Existing Parking Conditions on South Main Street



From Lower Cherry Street to Alpine Heights, Hardwick
Date: 5/28/24 and 9/13/24

Posted Speed Limit: 25 mph

**The speed is posted prior to entering the area from the west and from the east. The signs are located where the state highway ends. Traveling west on Route 15, the sign is next the former Inn by the River. Traveling east on Route 14, the sign is next to Buffalo Street. Traveling east on Route 15, the sign is next to O'Reilly Auto Parts – directly before the 3-way intersection.*

Total Number of Vehicle Lanes: 2

Two-Way Street

No sidewalk on the west side from Lower Cherry Street to Alpine Heights

270 South Main Street in 1985 - Image courtesy of the Granite Street Historic District Inventory.

Historic Perspective:

- The west side of South Main Street had a sidewalk as recently as 1985.
- The lack of curb cuts on South Main Street has been a consistent condition since at least 1985.



Images courtesy of the Granite Street Historic District Inventory from 1985



Image courtesy of the Granite Street Historic District Inventory from 1985

- Several South Main Street properties continue to have a similar parking situations today in 2024 as they did in 1985



270 South Main Street in 1985 - Image courtesy of the Granite Street Historic District Inventory from 1985.



270 South Main Street in 2024 - Image courtesy of the Town Manager's office.



Image of 426 South Main Street is courtesy of the Granite Street Historic District Inventory.

- 426 South Main Street parking situation has been altered due to an increase in housing units and tenants in the property. In 1985, the parking was completely behind the structure. Today, tenants also park next to the building on South Main Street.

- The Town of Hardwick has not issued written curb cut permits for the last ten years. Earlier permits may have been issued, but copies have not been located by the current Zoning Administrator.

Current Conditions:

- The west sidewalk ends at Lower Cherry Street . No separation from the traffic is provided. Over the span of 10 minutes, 4-10 heavy and/or large trucks traveled west through the downtown and were precariously close to the pedestrians on the side. Drivers honked at the Planning Commission members as they walked along the west side of South Main Street on May 2024.
- The west sidewalk beyond Upper Cherry is nonexistent. Tenants and owners park in the path of pedestrian or bicycle access on the west side of South Main Street.



After Lower Cherry Street, the west sidewalk of South Main Street is nonexistent.



Parking on South Main Street in May 2024



- South Main Street does not have a designated bicycle lane which becomes problematic with the amount of large truck traffic. The Traffic and Pedestrian Safety study previously recommended adding bike decals to the traveled lane to make drivers aware that they may be sharing the road with bicycle traffic. With the completion of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, there may be an increase of bike usage which will necessitate more bike options. New State statutes (2024) require vehicular traffic to provide four feet clearance when passing any bikers in the traveled lane.
- Drainage does not appear to be adequate for increased capacity rain events. Water drains off of the east side and collects or erodes on the west side of South Main Street.
- The State Fire Marshall reviewed the area in question with the Zoning Administrator on September 13, 2024. State rules require all exits and egress to be free of impediments. None of the properties on South Main Street were in violation of this rule. Vehicles can be parked next to structures as long as they do not block the egress of the building.



Intersection of South Main Street and Farr Street – after a minimal rain event.

Recommendations for next steps:

- The State Fire Marshall recommended working with the Police Chief and the Town Manager’s office to examine the possibility of installing a green bike zone on the west side of South Main Street. Installation may accommodate the need for the four feet clearance of bikers and may also indicate where vehicle parking needs to be adjusted at single family and multi-family dwellings (Fall 2024).
- Vehicles that are parked in the line of sight of drivers need to be adjusted by the owner(s) of the structure. The Zoning Administrator will work with owners to see that this safety issue is addressed (Fall 2024).
- A storm water review and installation of better drainage needs to be addressed prior to any design of a sidewalk. Possible funding sources should be examined so that access management on the west side of South Main Street can be addressed in the future (2025 onward).
- The Town has begun to issue written curb cut permits and should continue this practice (2024 and ongoing).

Map of the South Main Street location from Lower Cherry Street to Alpine Heights.

