

**Public Safety Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
March 15, 2023  
6:00 PM  
Council Chambers**

**Members Present**

Councilor Peter Lachapelle, Chair  
Councilor Alexander de Geofroy  
Councilor Skip Gilman  
Councilor Dana Berlin

**Members Absent**

Councilor Amy Malone

**Others Present**

Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer  
Gina Golden-Silvestro, GIS/AM Technician  
Deputy Chief Jason Thomas, PD  
Dave Smith, 588 Salmon Falls Road  
Martin Hamel, 584 Salmon Falls Road

**Minutes**

Councilor Lachapelle brought the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**1. Approve Minutes from Public Safety Meeting**

*Councilor Gilman MOVED to approve the minutes from February 15, 2023. Councilor Berlin seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by a unanimous voice vote.*

**2. Public Input**

No public input, the members of the public present at the meeting were there to speak on specific agenda items.

**3. Salmon Falls Road Speed Limit Issue and Electronic Sign Placement (kept in committee)**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue. David Smith of 588 Salmon Falls Road was present to talk about the speed limit and the electronic sign on Salmon Falls Road. He stated that there are now 33 names on the petition form: people who live in the neighborhood and on Stonewall Drive. Mr. Smith said that the speed limit by Tara Estates on Salmon Falls Road are two different speed limits depending what direction you are traveling. Mr. Smith said there is no other street that has a 25 mph speed limit 2000 feet from a stop sign. Councilor Gilman said it should be left 25 mph for the time being because there have been complaints with residents in this area regarding speed. Councilor Lachapelle said that the person who asked for the illuminating signs said that they are not working. Councilor Berlin said what he remembers is that he thought the sign was supposed to be a removable sign and it is more of a stationary sign that can't be moved. He said he doesn't think it makes sense to just take it down to put it in storage; the Committee should find a different area in Rochester that this sign is better suited for. Mr. Bezanson said he was asked to look to see if there were other areas that the sign could be placed on Salmon Falls Road and said it would be

difficult to find an area where it wouldn't affect someone on Salmon Falls Road. Mr. Bezanson said DPW looked into options for the sign to reduce impacts to neighbors, but shields are not available for this type of sign. DPW may be able to look further into reprogramming the sign to be off during certain times, but that seems to diminish the potential effectiveness of the sign. He said they looked at the cost to move the sign which would be approximately \$1,500 to \$2,500 plus the DPW crew and equipment time to excavate and relocate the sign base. Mr. Bezanson said he really doesn't have a recommendation at this point. Councilor Lachapelle said he would be in favor to have the speed limit back up to 35 mph. ***Councilor Berlin MOVED to recommend to full Council to change the speed limit on Salmon Falls Road coming from Maine to 35 mph to be uniform with the speed limit in the other direction. Councilor de Geofroy seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.***

Councilor de Geofroy asked if DPW thought there was a better place for the electronic sign other than Salmon Falls Road. Deputy Chief Thomas said he will ask at the Police Department if they know there are some areas that could benefit from this sign, he said there is some areas on Whitehall Road that the sign might be able to be placed. Deputy Chief Thomas and DPW will work to find an area for the electronic sign and will get back to the Committee.

#### **4. Flashing Lights and Raised Table Policy Discussion**

Councilor Lachapelle summarize the issue. Councilor Berlin drafted a Raised Speed Table Policy and the Committee discussed it. The raised speed table guidelines Mr. Berlin drafted are as follows:

##### **Raised Speed Table Guidelines**

1. Speed limit on street must be 25 MPH or below, *or*, location be within a school zone
2. Street must not be a dead-end (*excluding school zones*)
3. Street or street segments must be no shorter than 500 feet in length (segment defined as an area of the same street between consecutive intersections. (*excluding school zones*))
4. Speed Table must be no closer than 200 feet from a stop sign or intersection
5. Speed Table must be no closer than 75 feet from a residential or commercial driveway (*excluding school zones*)
6. AADT must be above 2000 (if data available) (*excluding school zones*)  
<https://nhdot.public.ms2soft.com/tcds/tsearch.asp?loc=Nhdot&mod=TCDS>
7. Speed Table must include a crosswalk (at an existing crosswalk or the ability to add a crosswalk with no alterations to the surrounding sidewalk infrastructure)
8. Speed Tables are not permitted in the following zoning districts (*excluding school zones*):
  - a. Agricultural
  - b. Highway Commercial
  - c. General Industrial
  - d. Airport Special

- e. Recycling Industrial
- f. Office Commercial

- 9. Public hearing must be scheduled if 1-8 are met, prior to a formal council vote
- 10. IF APPROVED: Speed Table design and implementation must comply with all State and Federal regulations (DPW issue)

Councilor Lachapelle thanked Councilor Berlin for drafting the guidelines and said he wants to bring this to the Public Works & Buildings Committee and to the Codes and Ordinances Committee; and, also wants the Legal Department to review before it is considered for an ordinance. Councilor de Geofroy also thanked Councilor Berlin and asked if he could distribute an editable MS Word version of the document. **(This was kept in committee for further review)**

**5. Hemlock/Lowell Streets-Missing Stop Signs (kept in committee)**

Councilor Lachapelle stated he does not recall a “stop” sign in this location. Mr. Bezanson stated that DPW has no record of a “stop” sign at this location. ***Councilor de Geofroy MOVED to recommend to full Council to install a “stop” sign at the intersection of Hemlock/Lowell Streets. Councilor Berlin seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.***

**6. Other**

**Quarry Drive-Speed Limit Sign**

Mr. Bezanson said there was an email request that came in from a resident that said the area is like a raceway; the email also stated that the Police do a good job patrolling the area. The resident is requesting an additional 30 mph speed limit sign on Lowell headed toward Tebbetts going up the hill near the Catholic Church. Mr. Bezanson said he would like data from the speed trailer before a decision is made. Deputy Chief Thomas will put this item on the list for the speed trailer.

**Ledgeview Drive Gunfire**

Councilor Lachapelle said he sent the City Manager an email that he had received regarding the gunfire on Ledgeview Drive. Councilor Lachapelle said the gunfire was actually coming from a safe place at the Mitchell Hill Dairy Farm on Oak Street firing into a hill, so there were no safety violations. Deputy Chief Thomas said that the only violation that they are still investigating would be that they may be trespassing.

**Winter Street**

Councilor Lachapelle had a conversation with Councilor Hamman regarding vehicles that are not stopping in either direction near the entrance to the one-way connection between Rockingham Electrical Supply and Walgreens; and, a “stop” sign has been requested. Councilor Lachapelle said it is private property. Councilor Berlin said he travels this area every day and said no one should be driving fast in this area he drives about 5 mph. Councilor Lachapelle asked if they should approach Rockingham Electric to place a “stop” sign. Councilor Lachapelle asked Deputy Chief if there were any issues in the area; Deputy Chief Thomas said he did not know there was an issue in this area. No action taken.

**Downtown Parking**

Councilor Lachapelle said he got a call from a gentleman about downtown parking; the delivery trucks are parking in the way and mail trucks parking on the crosswalks. Deputy Chief Thomas said they should not stop on a crosswalk. Councilor Lachapelle said they really can't do anything because the downtown businesses have to receive their goods. Councilor de Geofroy said that the Planning Board is hosting a parking review poster session next Wednesday, March 22, 2023 and recommends that the concerned resident attend to voice their opinion. Mr. Bezanson said that the rehabilitation project for the Union Street Municipal Parking Lot will include an area for delivery vehicles to park and unload.

**Councilor Lachapelle ADJOURNED the meeting at 6:51 PM.**

The minutes were respectfully submitted by Laura J. McDormand, Admin and Utility Billing Supervisor

# PETITION TO THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SAFETY COMMISSION FOR THE REMOVAL OF ELECTRONIC SPEED SIGN AND CHANGE TO SPEED LIMITS ON SALMON FALLS RD

This petition seeks to address several traffic signage and speed limit changes along Salmon Falls Rd from Portland Ave to the Somersworth town line. It is our opinion and observation that the recent changes to the speed limit and electronic signage poses safety issues as well as infringing upon the rights of the residents living within the parameters of the aforementioned roadway. The following specifically addresses those issues.

- 1) Remove the electronic sign that was placed in November directly in front of 584 Salmon Falls Rd. The sign directly infringes on the owners' property rights due to the obtrusive nature of the sign as well as the flashing nature of the sign. This is also highly visible to 588 Salmon Falls Rd  
The electronic sign also poses a safety hazard as vehicles brake heavily directly before the sign which have almost caused several near rear end accidents.
- 2) Reinstitute the 35 MPH speed limit as the 25 MPH limit is not applicable to the road type and is causing traffic tie ups and unsafe conditions. Salmon Falls Rd is not a neighborhood. There are no sidewalks, school zones, or business zones. The purpose is to carry traffic from Rochester to points east and west. Based on the nationally recognized 85th percentile rule for establishing speed limits, the speed should be between 35-45 MPH. Due to the reduced speed limit vehicles are now passing on the double solid.
- 3) Raise the posted speed limit to 40 MPH from the corner after Tara Estates up to the Somersworth city line. Again, this is in accordance with the safe limits of the road as well as within the standard of the 85th percentile rule.
- 4) Change the speed limit sign from the corner of Tara Estates heading west towards Portland Ave to 35 MPH to coincide with the 35 MPH limit traveling east on the exact same stretch of road. It is both confusing and unenforceable.

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|--------------------|---|
| David L. Smith     | 588 SALMON FALLS RD                               |
| Nancy Telle        | 282 Salmon Falls                                  |
| Brian              | 54 Jay Way  |
| Wendy              | 203 E. 1ST AVE                                    |
| ROBERT ARTHUR      | 24 BETTS RD ROCHESTER NH                          |
| MICHAEL            | 21 SALMON FALLS RD                                |
| HARRY              | 103 E. 1ST DR                                     |
| Monique Wood       | Monique Wood 5 Watercress Dr, Rochester, NH 03868 |
| Harry Stephen Wood | Harry Wood 5 Watercress Dr, Rochester, NH 03868   |
| Sandra Mc Turner   | ANITA TURNER 103 E. 1ST DR                        |
| Sandra Thomas      | 533 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H 03868           |
| Gary Cooper        | " " " " " "                                       |

Martin Hamel 584 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H.  
Claire Hamel 584 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H.  
Jennifer Holmes 4 Cross Rd. Rochester N.H.  
Robert Herson 591 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H.  
Janette Buch 344 Rollins Rd Rollinsford N.H.  
Danielle Cormier 580 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H.  
Cindy Tyson 580 Salmon Falls Rd Rochester N.H.  
Bruce Mandeville 577 - - -  
George Brown 563 Salmon Falls Rd  
Alma J. Sanborn 563 Salmon Falls Rd  
Steve 557 Salmon Falls Rd  
Steve 557 Salmon Falls Rd  
Steve 557 Salmon Falls Rd  
William Brown 18 Seasons Lane Rochester  
Francisco Lugo 594 Salmon Falls Rd  
Susan Bickford 10 Old Oak Rd  
Charles D. Bickford 10 Old Oak Road  
Dann Kundra 570 Salmon Falls Rd  
Stacy Kundra 570 Salmon Falls Rd  
Candy Roy 588 Salmon Falls Rd

## Raised Speed Table Policy

### Preamble

This policy is designed to establish procedures and guidelines for the implementation of raised speed tables within the city of Rochester. Requests for raised speed tables must meet all criteria detailed within this policy *and* approved by the city council before implementation. Please note: while a request might meet the criteria within this policy – it is to be used only as an initial guideline. As such, each individual request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### Raised Speed Table Guidelines

1. Speed limit on street must be 25 MPH or below, *or*, location be within a school zone
2. Street must not be a dead-end (*Excluding school zones*)
3. Street or street segments must be no shorter than 500 feet in length (segment defined as an area of the same street between consecutive intersections. (*Excluding school zones*))
4. Speed table must be no closer than 200 feet from a stop sign or intersection
5. Speed table must be no closer than 75 feet from a residential or commercial driveway (*Excluding school zones*)
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<https://nhdot.public.ms2soft.com/tcds/tsearch.asp?loc=Nhdot&mod=TCDS>
7. Speed Table must include a crosswalk (at an existing crosswalk or the ability to add a crosswalk with no alterations to the surrounding sidewalk infrastructure)
8. Speed Tables are not permitted in the following zoning districts (*Excluding school zones*):
  - a. Agricultural
  - b. Highway commercial
  - c. General industrial
  - d. Airport Special
  - e. Recycling industrial
  - f. Office commercial
9. Public hearing must be scheduled if 1-8 are met, prior to a formal council vote
10. IF APPROVED: speed table design and implementation must comply with all state and federal regulations (DPW issue)

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I would like to see this more than a policy or guideline. I believe this is best suited as an ordinance which includes the above guidelines – so that it **MUST** be followed.

I believe the ordinance should be structured the following:

1. Application received by public safety or brought up by committee
  2. Automatic trigger to a public hearing if all guidelines are met (next available)
  3. Automatic refer back to public safety after public hearing
  4. Motion at committee to send or not
  5. Formal vote by council
- \*Ordinance must include something similar to preamble to specify decision is not solely based on criteria.