

# CITY OF MARLBOROUGH MEETING POSTING

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2024 JAN 11 PM 2:44

Meeting Name: Traffic Commission

Date: January 17, 2024

Time: 10:00 am

Location: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall – Memorial Hall

Agenda Items to be addressed:

**1) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

- a) Review draft from 11-29-23

**2) NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Continued Discussion: Request to DELAY removal of Northern Stop Sign at Intersection of Clinton St. and Auburn St.
- b) Request for Crosswalk Sign at the Corner of Devens St. and Washington St.
- c) Discussion of possibility of making Weed Street one-way (westbound only) between Court Street and the west side of the City Hall rear plaza.

**3) OLD BUSINESS**

- a) Mt. Pleasant Street Traffic Concerns
- b) Crescent Street Parking Issues
- c) Commercial Vehicle Parking Issues

THE LISTING OF TOPICS THAT THE CHAIR REASONABLY ANTICIPATES WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING IS NOT INTENDED AS A GUARANTEE OF THE TOPICS THAT WILL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED. NOT ALL TOPICS LISTED MAY IN FACT BE DISCUSSED, AND OTHER TOPICS NOT LISTED MAY ALSO BE BROUGHT UP FOR DISCUSSION TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.



**CITY OF MARLBOROUGH  
OFFICE OF TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
140 MAIN STREET  
MARLBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS 01752**

## **DRAFT**

### **Traffic Commission Minutes**

The Regular Meeting of the Traffic Commission was held on November 29, 2023, at 10:00 am. (The meeting was also recorded and is available to view online at the City of Marlborough's website ([www.marlborough-ma.gov](http://www.marlborough-ma.gov)). Members present: Chairman - Police Chief David Giorgi, Fire Chief Kevin Breen, Interim DPW Commissioner Ted Scott and City Clerk Steve Kerrigan. Also present: City Engineer Tom DiPersio, Officer Andrew Larose from the MPD Traffic Services Unit and City Councilor Sean Navin, City Councilor Mark Oram and City Councilor Samantha Pearlman. Also present local residents: Dave and Beth Cormier from Old Charter Road, Glenn Davis and Sergei Beliaev from Davis Street, Harold Dunn from Clinton Street, David Kirkpatrick from Crescent Street and Elyse Heis, Jennifer Oliveira, Cassia Marinho and James Joyce from Auburn Street.

Minutes taken by Karen Lambert, MPD - Public Safety Administrative Assistant.

Chief Giorgi started recording the meeting at 10:01 a.m. and began by welcoming everyone and making introductions.

#### **1- Minutes**

Review of the minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of October 25, 2023.

VOTE TO APPROVE. All in Favor - Accept and Place on File.

#### **2 - New Business**

**2a) Request to DELAY removal of Northern Stop Sign at Intersection of Clinton St. and Auburn St.**

Chief Giorgi received emails from local resident, Elyse Heise, regarding this issue. He reviewed that at the last meeting the stop signs on Clinton Street were discussed and the fact that they are not warranted stop signs. An engineering study was presented which determined that they did not meet the warrants for a stop sign and the Traffic Commission voted to remove the unwarranted stop signs. He received the emails from Ms. Heise in response to this decision and pulled up her emails for the discussion. Several residents from the Clinton Street and Auburn Street area were in attendance for the discussion. Chief Giorgi deferred to them to speak their concerns.

Ms. Heise asked if a line-of-sight study had been performed. Chief Giorgi referred this to Tom DiPersio, City Engineer. Mr. DiPersio gave some background and advised that he is not a member of the Traffic Commission but does provide studies and reviews issues and makes recommendations. He explained that warrants are determined by the Federal Highway Commission. They are established so that no matter where a driver goes, traffic signs mean the same thing. They follow the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Stop signs mostly have to do with traffic counts and travel onto main roads but also pedestrian traffic and allowing people to be able to cross a road. What they try not to do is have stop signs where they are not expected because this can also be unsafe. It can provide a false sense of safety that cars will stop when they actually may not, when pulling out.

Sight distance is not one of the warrants, but it is a factor that can be considered to make sure that cars on a main road will stop. The issue with sight distance involves the fence on the corner. The actual line of sight is fine. The fence does not meet city code. Sight is limited by the fence, and you have to move up further to see oncoming traffic. Ms. Heise said that with a smaller size car you can't see cars coming until you are very far out into the intersection. It was discussed that maybe when the fence went up, the stop sign was already there. The fence would be an issue for Code Enforcement. Residents are concerned that if the stop signs are scheduled to come down tomorrow, the fence is still there, and is something that would take longer to address.

Harold Dunn, who currently lives at 41 Clinton Street, grew up at 24 Clinton Street. He is concerned with the safety of the entire intersection. When he was born there, Clinton Street was a dead end. Officer Larose brought up a photo of the area for reference. Mr. Dunn knows that the stop sign is not supposed to get traffic to slow down but it does. He can sit in his living room and can see the intersection morning, noon, and night. There are also at least 3 school buses that stop here. It is also a cut through for busses, fire and police vehicles and others. The Traffic Commission doesn't sit there day and night. At the bottom of his driveway to the curb across the street is 19 feet. It's the narrowest part of Clinton Street. When he backs out of his driveway, he crosses the entire street. He also sees cars coming and they do slow down at the stop sign. At the top of the hill, you can't see cars at all even though the road is wider. There is a need to slow people down. He said that in the 80's, he lived at 48 Clinton Street and 2 cars went speeding onto his lawn and one went through his fence. Another family had a child who got hit by a car.

Glenn Davis, resident of Davis Street, said that he was at the meeting when it was decided that the stop signs would be put in. They were specifically installed to slow

traffic, and they work. 99% of cars drive through, but they do slow down. He said that before the stop signs were put in, cars flew through the area. He also agrees that the sight line is an issue. He doesn't see why they just can't be left there for now.

Ms. Heise said that she moved in in 2014 but it sounds like it was more dangerous before with kids hit, dogs hit, and fences hit. She thinks it is irresponsible to take the sign down. She asked about speed lumps that are designed to slow cars. If this stop sign is taken down, they need speed lumps. Chief Giorgi advised that the Traffic Commission has discussed speed humps before, most recently the requests were from Church Street. They wanted speed humps and stop signs to slow people down, however, stop signs are not warranted in this area either. Residents know the stop sign is not warranted but they also know it is slowing people down. Why can't we just leave it there.

Steve Kerrigan, City Clerk, said that the same situation existed on Bigelow Street and Beach Street and Clinton Street. Unfortunately, stop signs are not to be used as traffic calming devices. Residents asked when the engineering study was done? The stop signs have been there for 25 years. The stop signs went up and people stopped using Clinton Street as a cut through. They feel the data is faulty as a traffic study done now with the stop signs shows different results then with no stop signs. Lawsuits will come if a child is injured or killed.

The question for the Police Department is, are the stop signs enforceable? They are not. So, if a ticket is issued it will be dismissed in court. Continued discussion followed about the 3 bus stops, a cut through street and visibility. The residents are talking about a safety issue. Ms. Heise said that something needs to be done quickly. Tedd Scott, from the DPW, said that speed humps don't work here in the winter. There is no way they can be used with snow plowing. Traffic counts relate to the side street and traffic entering the main road not about the traffic coming down the main road. Manufacturers are trying to sell a product but it's not as straightforward as they make it sound.

Dave Cormier, from Older Charter Road, said that he was somewhat instrumental with Councilor Oram to get the stop signs put up. All rules were followed, they had a neighborhood meeting which included the Police Department, Fire Department and Engineering. At that time, 500+ vehicles were traveling on the road. Now it appears from reading Traffic Commission minutes that someone brought this area to the City's attention and that the stop signs are illegal. The stop signs have been there for 25 years and have had a positive impact on speeding. In 1998 there was no posted speed limit and no traffic control. By the time cars got to the northern end of Clinton Street they were traveling so fast that he lost his fence and hedges etc. It was the decision of the Traffic Commission at that time that something needed to be done. They talked about many things, but 3-way stop signs were determined to be the most cost effective and best answer. Traffic that does come through Clinton Street, that are not residents, are flying. When folks obey the stop signs, they do work. There is no curbing except near his house because of the design of the road. Cars can and will hit the curb but stay off lawns. If you can't write tickets to violators, then what methods can be used so you can cite motorists for speeding through the neighborhood?

Chief Giorgi explained how the speed study was conducted, how the electronic speed signs work and how they collect data. Mr. Cormier said he would invite anyone to come to his driveway to see for themselves. School buses also fly down the hill on the opposite

side because of the hook in the road. There's a ½ mile stretch from Route 20 where it meets Old Charter Rd. where there are no speed limit signs at all. There is one thickly settled sign that is buried in the trees. Before the signs are taken down, residents want to know what the solution is for speed control. As a group, speed issues need to be addressed. Ms. Heise said that she has talked to several urban planners and there is no such thing as an illegal stop sign. She said the MUTCD provides guidelines, but city planners can have jurisdiction to put up signs wherever they deem necessary.

Beth Cormier, from Old Charter Road, said the problem is still there but no one's lawns are being damaged and having cars come up onto their property. When her kids were young, they never let them play in the front lawn because of speeding cars. She feels it is safer with the stop sign when kids are waiting for the bus. Kids run and play tag and they do step into the street. Ms. Heise again said the stop signs were put up for a reason.

Councilor Navin said he understands that the Traffic Commission is trying to create uniformity across the city. He used to have family on Bigelow Street. He said that Clinton Street has more bends and is more of a closed off neighborhood. He also cuts through here every day to go to work. He is not alone and sees others doing this as well. He feels that neighborhoods are impacted more with volume when it is used as a cut through street. Stop signs are the easiest way to address it. In his regular job he sees requests for speed bumps all the time. We know the Traffic Unit doesn't have enough officers. If the fence is out of code and the stop signs are not warranted, instead of taking them down, can we at least keep both for a while until we can figure something else out? Kids on their bikes are not stopping. Neighborhood are turning over with young families moving in.

*(Note: Chief Giorgi was called from the meeting at this time for an emergency police matter.)*

Councilor Oram said that he concurs with Councilor Navin, but he doesn't use GPS in Marlborough. If he did, it sounds like it would be sending him down side routes. He has also worked with constituents and the DPW and police on these issues. He asked where is a letter he can read that says the signs are mandated to come down? Steve Kerrigan said that the former DPW Commissioner had requested that the Traffic Commission look at this issue across the City. Councilor Oram said it needs to be held off until there is another way to address the speed issue. Safety is the most important thing to consider. The stop signs need to stay until there is a mandate to take them down. He said that he drives a small car and when he comes out of Lakeshore Drive, he prays he won't get hit. He suggests that we look at what other towns have done. Framingham has long speed bumps that work. Ashland has rubber ones that do have to be taken up in the winter. We need to reconsider until we have another option. Traffic counts need to be done. It's the same on Mt. Pleasant Street, it's a traffic nightmare. He wants to see a study done now, while the signs are up, so we can see the increase when the signs are down.

Councilor Pearlman said that she appreciates all the comments and discussion. With the speed which cars enter and exit from Route 20, it only takes one accident. She is very concerned and feels that we need a citywide approach to traffic control and speed. She understands that it is impossible for the police to be in all places. She has an urban planning background and said that we need to be thoughtful and pilot new things. She recognizes how personal this is. There are cars that try to get around buses. Children

running into the street when a parent tries to grab a young child. She would recommend not removing the stop signs now. When the snow comes, visibility will be even worse. She also noted that Bigelow Street and Church Street are much straighter roads. She is asking the Traffic Commission to be thoughtful with what is done. Do we have a legal opinion from the city solicitor? The fact that 3 City Councilors are here speaks volumes.

Mr. Cormier also added that the stop signs have been there since 1998, what harm is there in leaving them there? Ms. Heise would like to see a history of accidents and a visibility study. She wants to know if there were more accidents before. Ms. Cormier again added that before the stop signs, they had cars totaled and their bushes and lawn damaged. That hasn't happened since the signs were installed. She is also asking if the signs can stay up until a speed study is completed.

Chief Breen made a motion to keep the stop signs up for now. All agreed.

**Steve Kerrigan had to abruptly adjourn the meeting at 10:55 due a Public Safety Emergency involving the Police Department.**

*The remainder of the agenda items will be addressed at the next meeting.*

**2b) Request for Crosswalk Sign at the corner of Devens St. and Washington St.**

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to

**2c) Discussion of possibility of making Weed Street one-way (westbound only) between Court Street and the west side of the City Hall rear plaza.**

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to

**3-Old Business**

**3a) Mt. Pleasant Street Traffic Concerns**

**Update:**

**3b) Crescent Street Parking Issues**

**Update:**

**3d) Commercial Vehicle Parking Issues**

**Update:**

Chief Giorgi asked if anyone had any further issues they would like to discuss? None noted.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert  
Public Safety Administrative Assistant  
Marlborough Police Department

**List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:**

-City of Marlborough Meeting Posting for the Traffic Commission Meeting on November 29, 2023, including meeting agenda.

-Draft of Traffic Commission Minutes from Wednesday, October 25, 2023.

-Email from Elyse Heise to Chief Giorgi, dated 11/5/23, Re: URGENT – Delay Removal of NORTHERN Stop Sign at Intersection of Clinton and Auburn Street.

-Email from Councilor Dumais to Chief Giorgi, dated 11/14/23, re: Crosswalk Corner of Devens St. and Washington St. – original email from Slava, dated 11/11/23, including (including photo).

-Email from Tom DiPersio to Chief Giorgi, dated 11/22/23, re: Traffic Commission Item (discussion of possibility of making Weed Street one-way (westbound only) between Court Street and the west side of the City Hall rear plaza.

**Additional Handouts or Displayed on Screen at Meeting**

-Stop Sign Petition signed by 21 residents of Auburn Street and Clinton Street

**Karen Lambert**

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**From:** Elyse Heise <elyserothman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 5, 2023 1:18 PM  
**To:** David Giorgi  
**Cc:** David Williams; Samantha Perlman; Christian@christianformayor.com; campaign@samanthaperlman.org; Patricia Bernard; Theodore Scott; Thomas DiPersio; Ashley Miller; Cassia; james.wellesleymedia.org  
**Subject:** URGENT - Delay Removal of NORTHERN Stop Sign at Intersection of Clinton and Auburn Street

Chief Giorgi and all others to whom this may concern,

Please review the linked videos of the view to the north from Auburn Street at the Clinton intersection, where there is currently a stop sign due to be removed:

Video 1:

<https://youtu.be/MdP4S64mPBU?si=ZrxB4oV20nPX5e71>

Video 2:

<https://youtu.be/41mQteuUxo?si=FpwxxHizKSGUGuVL>

As you can see this BRIGHT RED CAR wasn't visible until it was almost directly in front of the stop sign, even when the car on Auburn has pulled a few inches into the intersection the car approaching from Clinton cannot be seen until it would be too late.

This is a serious visibility issue here, the city will be exposing itself to liability as numerous accidents are likely to occur. There is a safety issue for both pedestrians and the cars going through this intersection.

This SPECIFIC stop sign MUST remain past 11/20 until the visibly and safety issues at play here can be resolved.

I will be at the 11/29 meeting along with some of my neighbors to discuss what we can do to make this corner safer.

Elyse Heise  
 16 Auburn St.

On Wed, Nov 1, 2023 at 11:08 AM David Giorgi <[dgiorgi@marlborough-ma.gov](mailto:dgiorgi@marlborough-ma.gov)> wrote:

Good Morning Ms. Heise,

Thank you for forwarding me your concerns about the removal of the stop signs in your neighborhood and I can appreciate your frustration. However, the removal of the stop signs was not made arbitrarily or senselessly. Instead, when the issue was brought to the Traffic Commission in April of 2023, the former DPW Commissioner tasked the Engineering Department with conducting a research study to see if the stop signs at Clinton St./Auburn St., as well as Clinton St./Old Charter Rd., and Beach St./Clover Hill St. met the warrants or provisions to remain at their current



location. As a point of reference, in 2022 the Traffic Commission also addressed a similar situation on Bigelow St. where several stop signs had been installed many years ago even though they did not meet the provisions of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices(MUTCD) Section 2B.07 Multi-Way Stop Applications. Similar to the research for Bigelow St. and the intersecting streets, the report presented to the Traffic Commission in the July 2023 meeting advised that the current stop signs at Clinton St./Auburn St., Clinton St./Old Charter Rd., and Beach St./Clover Hill St., did not meet the provisions needed to remain in their current locations. I have attached a copy of the research work completed by the Engineering Department as well as the minutes of the July 2023 Traffic Commission meeting where the issue was discussed. Unfortunately, the stop signs should not remain at their current locations and therefore the Commission voted to remove them, but not before notifying the ward city councilors and installing the warning signs that the stop signs would soon be coming down. The Traffic Commission took the same action when the stop signs were removed on Bigelow St. which was also met with frustration by some of the residents in that area. However, stop signs cannot be placed on streets as a calming measure to slow down vehicle traffic.

In recent Traffic Commission meetings, we met with residents of Church St. who were upset about the volume and speed of vehicles which travel on their street. One possible solution which was raised by a resident was to install stop signs at every, or every other, intersecting street in order to slow down traffic. Unfortunately, again, stop signs are not intended to be installed as a way to slow down vehicle traffic. Therefore, the Traffic Commission members did not approve this recommendation. Similarly, if we cannot install stop signs where they are not warranted, we also cannot allow them to remain in locations where they are not warranted. As the engineering study concluded, the current signs on Clinton St./Auburn St. do not meet the requirements and will be removed.

The Traffic Commission meets at 10:00am on the last Wednesday of every month in Memorial Hall at City Hall. If you would like to attend a meeting and speak about your concerns, you are certainly welcome to attend.

Thank you,

David A. Giorgi

Chief of Police

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**From:** Elyse Heise  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 1, 2023 9:09 AM  
**To:** David Giorgi \_\_\_\_\_; David Williams \_\_\_\_\_; Samantha Perlman <[atlarge\\_1@marlborough-ma.gov](mailto:atlarge_1@marlborough-ma.gov)>; [Christian@christianformayor.com](mailto:Christian@christianformayor.com); [campaign@samanthaperlman.org](mailto:campaign@samanthaperlman.org)  
**Subject:** Stop Signs to be removed at DANGEROUS intersection of Clinton and Auburn

Chief Giorgi,

I am furious that without my knowledge and without consulting myself and my neighbors, you and your traffic

committee took it upon yourselves to arbitrarily remove two stop signs at a DANGEROUS intersection where young children frequently play, and catch the school bus every day.

I realize this may not seem to the town as a high traffic area, but there is more in play here than just the amount of cars going through.

1. This is a very thickly settled area with a lot of children who play in and around the street. Two new families just moved into houses on either side of this intersection just this week. These stop signs keep us safe. Children cross this intersection all the time to play with their friends who live across the street. Kids regularly ride their bikes up and down Auburn Street sometimes barely coming to stop at the stop sign on our end.
2. This intersection is a school bus stop for the Jaworek Elementary School. Now that these stop signs are due to be removed will the police department be posting school guards to maintain the safety of our children. Seems to me the stop signs will be more cost effective and less of a strain on police and school personnel.
3. Clinton St, slopes steeply downward right after this interaction. It is a BLIND HILL for anything past a few feet. CARS trying to turn there will not be able to see cars coming from the opposite direction soon enough if they are speeding down the road, which they will be able to do without the stop sign.
4. Our THICKLY SETTLED area will become a route 20 cut-through. Without the stop signs, cars will use Clinton street as a quick detour to Stevens as they would be able to go as fast as they want. This will cause the street to become a HIGH TRAFFIC AREA, making the lack of stop signs even more dangerous.

It does not matter how many cars go through this intersection. What matters is that they stop. It only takes one car to hit a child.

These stop signs were voted to be taken down without consulting any one in the neighborhood and without considering the slope of the road, visibility, or any other issues besides the amount of cars that went through.

I am also sending a copy of this letter to the city comptroller and to both candidates for mayors. As the LIABILITY COSTS to the city will no doubt substantially increase as a result of the numerous accidents that will no doubt occur.

**Please regard this letter as notice to THE CITY of the DANGEROUS SITUATION created by your removal of these stop signs.**

I hope and trust that you will reconsider this senseless decision, and for the sake of the health and welfare of the neighborhood leave the stop signs where they are.

Elyse Heise

16 Auburn St

917-815-5565

**Karen Lambert**

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**From:** Christian Dumais  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** David Giorgi  
**Subject:** Fwd: Crosswalk Sign Corner Of Devens St and Washington St

Hello Chief,

Hope things are well with you!!

I have this email below, can this issue can be added to the traffic commission agenda?

I unfortunately, will not make it to the traffic commission meeting for November.

If you would like to discuss this before, I would be more than happy to do so.

Best,  
Christian

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Christian Dumais  
Ward 3 City Councilor  
Marlborough

Cell: 781-983-7901

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Slava  
**Date:** November 11, 2023 at 3:25:36 PM EST  
**To:** Christian Dumais <ward\_3@marlborough-ma.gov>  
**Subject:** Crosswalk Sign Corner Of Devens St and Washington St

Good Afternoon Christian Hope you're having a wonderful day , ( WARD 3 )

I wanted to know if you could add this to the traffic Meeting this month or next to possible add to the corner of Devens St and Washington St

Last couple months We Spoke About this The bus stop right in front of are property and kids do cross the street but cars do not pay attention to there stop sign that comes out of the bus and still pass it And that's never good and wanted to know if you could possibly add one of these sign right in front of the school

I noticed there all at the opposite end of Washington St but not at the front of the school just curious, why that is ?

If one of these could please be put up for the neighborhood and at the Washington school or corner of Devens would be greatly appreciated

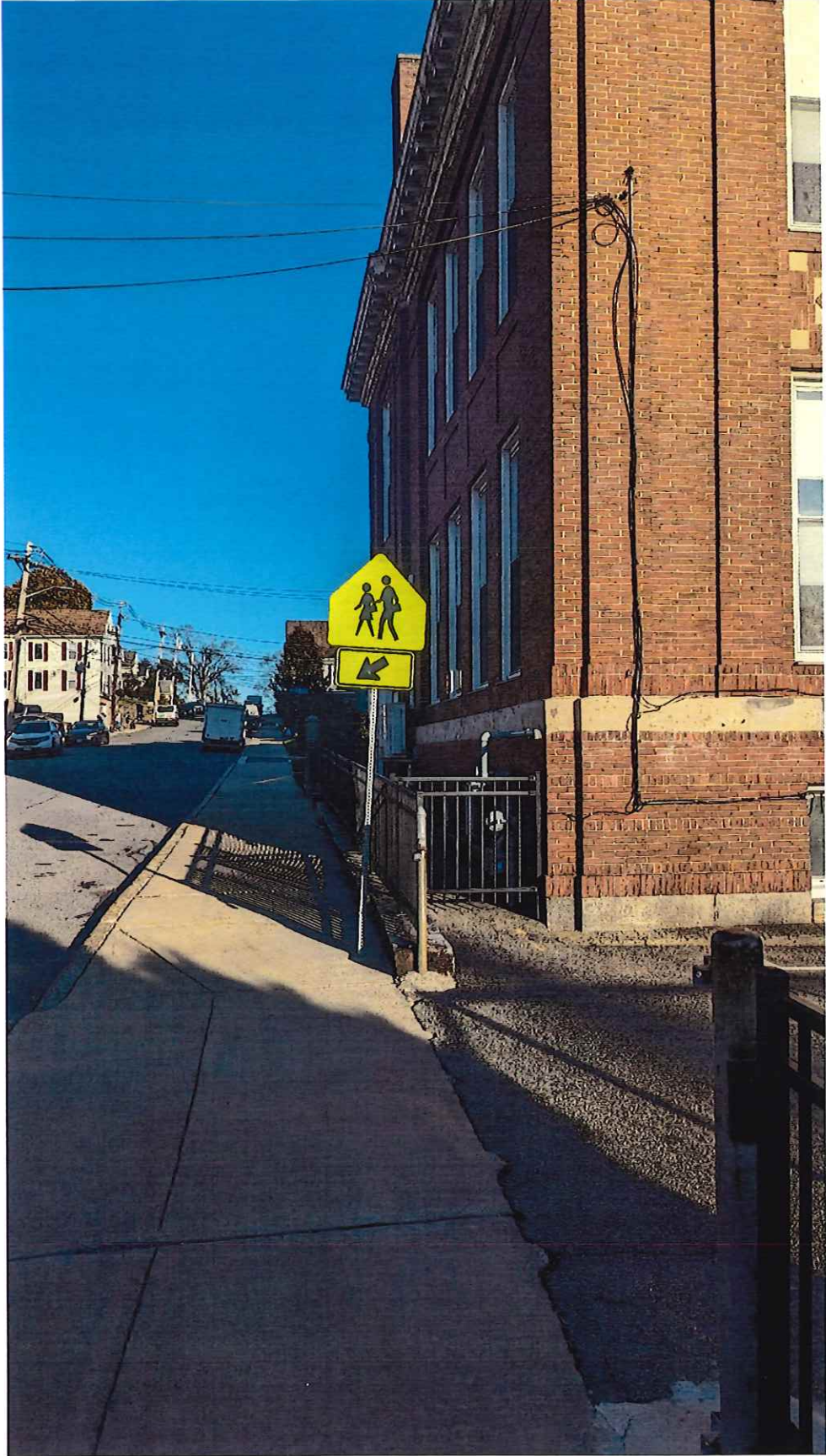
I spoke to someone at the school and they agreed there should be something put up for the safety of the school and the residents and know it's hard to get any answers to make it happen

We agree a speed limit sign needs to be done or cross Walk for the bus stop

You can forward this to the following folks that would have to look at this to make this possible

Appreciate it  
Ward 3 Resident

Thanks,  
Slava



**Karen Lambert**

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**From:** Thomas DiPersio  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 22, 2023 11:16 AM  
**To:** David Giorgi; Karen Lambert  
**Cc:** Ashley Miller  
**Subject:** traffic commission item

Hi Chief and Karen,

Can we add an item to the agenda for next week: discussion of possibility of making Weed Street one-way (westbound only) between Court Street and the west side of the City Hall rear plaza.

If that's ok, we can send you a sketch for the packet on Monday.

Happy thanksgiving!

**Thomas DiPersio, Jr., PE, PLS**

City Engineer  
Department of Public Works  
135 Neil Street  
Marlborough, MA 01752  
Phone:(508)624-6910x33200

