

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of the April 17, 2001 Meeting

1. **CALL TO ORDER** by Vice Chairman Shawn N. Jasper
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2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Selectman Rhona Charbonneau
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3. **ATTENDANCE**

Selectmen: Shawn N. Jasper, Rhona Charbonneau, Ann Seabury & Terry Stewart

Staff/Others: Paul D. Sharon, Town Administrator; Priscilla Boisvert, Executive Assistant; Sean T. Sullivan, Director of Community Development; Kevin Burns, Road Agent; Richard Gendron, Chief of Police; Frank Carpentino, Fire Chief; Mike Gospodarek, Town Engineer; Carol Murray, Assistant Commissioner; Hiram Morrill, District Engineer; Lyle "Butch" Knowlton, Director of Operations; Lenny Smith; George Hall; Rick Maddox; Coleman Kelly; Howard Dilworth, Jr; Jean Serino; Ann, TEL; Pierre, SUN

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4. **Discussions with NH DOT re. Route 102/West Road Intersection**

Vice Chairman Jasper invited the State officials (Carol Murray, Assistant Commissioner, Hiram Morrill, District Five Maintenance Engineer and Lyle "Butch" Knowlton, Director of Operations and Former Traffic Engineer, with consultant design experience) to come forward and everyone was introduced.

Vice Chairman Jasper said the Board does consider 102/West Road intersection a high priority, with the increase in traffic and accidents there. In light of the developments with Tracy Lane, they felt that it was important to discuss that section of the corridor with State officials. Ms. Murray said that 102 is not done growing yet and there is no question that West Road is the current crisis. It is in the 10-Year Plan for 2008, but she's not sure it can wait that long. They stopped there on the way to tonight's meeting so they could look at it, and just the thought of trucks pulling out and heading up that grade is of concern. There is no question but what that has got to be done before Tracy Lane, but Tracy Lane, right at the crest, is the next West Road waiting to happen. It is a combined Town and State problem. There is a possibility of doing some interim improvements at West Road.

Mr. Morrill said the Safety Surveillance Team has met with Town officials. The Highway Design people are looking at possible short term solutions that are somewhat smaller than the full-blown, 10-Year Plan. He hasn't seen the designs yet, but will probably be talking about truck lanes, turning lanes and those kinds of things. Once he has the plans, they can look at possible short-term solutions. Ms. Murray thought that might be the way to go—a short term fix until the 10-Year project comes on line. The full blown project is quite expensive, which will have to be contracted out, involving a lot of ledge work, utility relocation and a lot of earth removal. Their district forces could probably do the short-term work and that's what they could look at. That can be done on a 1/3 – 2/3 basis and, at the same time, address Tracy Lane. They can work cheap, but effective, which gives the biggest bang for the buck. They can come back with a proposal to do West Road that will improve the safety there and will try to schedule that as quickly as possible, and follow up with Tracy Lane.

Vice Chairman Jasper said the Town does have monies available through the corridor accounts to assist in that, and they recognize they have a responsibility to do that. Mr. Sharon asked what the elements to a short term solution would be. Ms. Murray said Hiram will get that plan from the Highway Design people, but there would probably be some turn lanes, maybe take back the banks a little further and cut down some trees to get some width there.

Chairman Jasper said what prompted all of this was Tracy Lane and asked where that project was. Ms. Murray said Tracy Lane is borderline when those two sites go forward. There is the site distance issue as you come over the crest. They did not issue drive permits as they should have over the years, which is why she is willing to pay 2/3rds of that project. Those permits should have all gone to the Town. If those two lots go forward, the money that the Town will collect might pay their 1/3rd share, if they do it with their own forces. She understands that West Road is the worst intersection, so they could do interim improvements at West Road first, then follow with Tracy Lane, then the ultimate 10-Year Plan project at West Road. Vice Chairman Jasper said if the turning lane at Tracy Lane goes in instead of something being done at West Road, a lot of people will be asking a lot of questions. He's sure the State saw the petition that was presented to the Board last fall, signed by all of the people who are concerned about that intersection. Ms. Murray said the Chief of Police would be the first one asking them why they were doing that. She thought her suggestion was an approach that makes sense to the Town and it would cost them only 1/3rd. They will get the plans from Highway Design and will coordinate with the Town Administrator. They can follow up with Tracy Lane, which could be done this summer; or certainly by next year. Hiram would be the contact person.

Mr. Sharon asked about the cost of the project. Mr. Morrill didn't know. They need to talk about what is the best fix and then they can estimate the cost. Ms. Murray didn't think it would be that costly, whereas the ultimate West Road fix will be a \$1-\$2 million project and why it has to stay in the 10-Year Plan. Vice Chairman Jasper asked if it would be funded 100% by the State if it stayed in the 10-Year

Plan. Ms. Murray said it would be State and Federal dollars. She thinks it is a wise investment to do the smaller project now.

Selectman Charbonneau asked about putting in a temporary light. Ms. Murray didn't like the sight distance. Mr. Morrill agreed, saying sometimes signals create more problems. Vice Chairman Jasper said without turning lanes, it might be more of a problem. Selectman Charbonneau described a near-accident she had at that intersection. Selectman Seabury said even a temporary light prevents people from trying to dash out in front of traffic, or even a flashing signal saying a traffic light is ahead. A temporary light worked well on Lowell Road, with more and more traffic coming out of the industrial park. Eastern Propane is generating a lot of traffic, which was never anticipated. She lives off 111 and, before they got a light, she was afraid to try to come out onto that road. It was a very dangerous. She knows that people will whine and cry about all of the traffic lights, that Hudson is no longer rural. Ms. Murray said that might be so, but when it is an intersection they frequent, they want to see a signal.

Selectman Charbonneau thought a sign could be installed at the top of the hill, stating Dangerous Intersection. Mr. Morrill said that, traditionally, is not effective. Ms. Murray said if someone is familiar with an area, people already know the warning signs are there for a reason. Mr. Morrill said that even applies to an interactive sign. They have no real effect. The reports they have gotten from the Chief of Police states that speed is not an issue. It's visibility and movement. Selectman Stewart talked about the 10-wheelers pulling out, having to shift gears. Selectman Charbonneau said it's not the trucks involved in accidents, it's cars. Selectman Seabury said that's because the trucks are bigger. Ms. Murray said people sitting at an intersection will take chances because they get impatient.

There being no further questions or comments from the Selectmen, Vice Chairman Jasper opened the floor to staff and Planning Board members. Mr. Hall asked a question, but his voice was too soft to be picked up by the recorder. Ms. Murray stated they don't have the full recommendations back from the Highway or Traffic Bureau. They will look at whether or not a temporary light will create more problems than it will solve. Just to put in a light without extra width won't work. Mr. Smith's comments were not discernable, either. Ms. Murray said the ledge is a big issue, so securing the easement is important. Mr. Smith said 'they' said 'they' would grant that. She asked when he thought he would know. Mr. Smith said they haven't finished the sub. An unidentified speaker in the audience answered, but it was not discernable. Mr. Gospodarek's remarks were not discernable.

Mr. Sharon said three months ago, the Town met with State officials about the West Road intersection. He was encouraged by what he was hearing tonight, as opposed to the other meeting. He asked about installing a temporary, span-line signal. Mr. Morrill said he'd rather not, not without a truck lane to provide an escape route for someone who can't stop in the winter, or someone losing traction trying to get across the road.

(Start Tape 1, Second Side)

Ms. Murray said they were talking about using State funds, Town funds and developer funds and do a project next year that is maybe more than a short term fix. Vice Chairman Jasper said that would certainly be a lot better than waiting seven years. There were more comments from the audience that were not discernable. Mr. Smith said it bothers him to think of the Allard agreement. At that time, there was an agreement with the State. They had a number of shared lots and when the traffic exceeded that, which it apparently now has, the burden would fall on Allard. However, they didn't like a signal there because it was too near the top of the hill. He thought a left turn lane would resolve part of that, but the burden should fall onto Allard, or whomever it was sold to. He didn't know if the State had anything on that in writing. Mr. Morrill said the State issued a driveway permit based on some estimates, which have been exceeded, but that was a long time ago and they've got nothing to allow them to go back to Allard on. Mr. Smith said only if he, at that time, exceeded that, then he would be subject to further conditions onto 102. Mr. Morrill said only if he still owned the land. Mr. Smith said if he sold it, it would go with the land. Ms. Murray asked who should be punished at this point. Mr. Smith said the one making the profit—the developer of the project. Ms. Murray agreed, but there's no way to go back. Secondary developments, after you've issued the drive permit, are tough issues. Each thing is a learning experience, so they make adjustments. They think they have taken care of it, and then they get burned with something else.

George Hall talked about the three-lot subdivision, but his remarks were not discernable. He talked about an agreement with the whole thing, not piecemeal. Ms. Murray said they've got most of the contract planned on the West Road that shows everything that is required, so they can attach an estimate to that, and then Hiram can get in touch with Paul. If there's a way to combine State money, Town money and developer contribution and do the ultimate project instead of waiting for the 10-Year Plan, that's the right thing to do. If they can't make that happen, they will do the interim improvements.

Vice Chairman Jasper said this wasn't a public hearing, per se, but would recognize Jean Serino, who had her hand raised. Ms. Serino said she was there because she read in the paper that this intersection was going to be discussed. She lives on Robinson Road and uses that intersection all the time and was involved in a couple of near-accidents. She implored them to put in a full stop light. She has waited for a full five minutes, trying to get out onto 102 and sometimes the sun blinds you so you can't see anything. It would even be hard to see a signal. The Planning Board should say that they can't put in an industrial park. Route 102 used to be very beautiful. Vice Chairman Jasper said that was a Planning Board discussion. Ms. Murray said she knows the Town has had discussions with the NRPC about looking at that corridor and the State will be funding a 102 corridor study, in cooperation with the Town. A very good proposal was put forward,

adding that Andrew Singelakis is a very good director. They have done 15 corridor studies in the last two years. They are wonderful tools because a lot of things get talked about like the strong link between transportation and land use.

Mr. Maddox was recognized, who spoke on the Tracy Lane development, but his comments were not picked up by the recorder clearly. Ms. Murray said that lien goes back to the original developer and that is where it should have started. By letting the original developer "off the hook" he made his profit without contributing toward the ultimate solution to the problem. That last few lots that are developed are kind of a last man in and say you're the straw that broke the camel's back, therefore you have to pay the entire amount. Unfortunately, it's water over the dam.

Ms. Murray said to summarize, they are going to get the preliminary plan that was almost contract-quality and an estimate to Hiram, who would get that to Paul. If there is a way they can do three different pocket projects, she would like to see that go forward rather than wait until 2008. If they can't, they will look at interim improvements at West Road and then they will follow up with Tracy Lane, which the State can do at 2/3rds of the cost. They will deal with the West Road situation, with the understanding Tracy Lane will follow.

Vice Chairman thanked the State officials and department heads for attending.

5. Other Business

Selectman Seabury maybe the Fire Chief wanted to stay because she had a question. She understands Selectman Jasper is going to do some interviewing this week. Selectman Jasper said no, he wasn't going to interview anyone, but he preferred talking to her in private, after the meeting.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Jasper adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Recorded and Transcribed by Priscilla Boisvert
Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

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Chairman E. Lorraine Madison

Rhona Charbonneau

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