

**Mendon on the Move**  
**Route 4 Safety and Access Sub-Committee**  
**September 23, 2021**

**Members:** Carolyn McBain, Jessica Quesnel, Hannah Abrams, Greg Smith, Fred Bagley

**Mendon businesses interviewed:** Allen Engineering, Mendon Mountain Orchard, VISTA, Little Lambs Pre-School, DePalo's Coffee, Sugar and Spice, Mendon Mini-Golf, Mendon Gift and Flower Shop

**Additional input from:** Devon Neary – RRPC; Phil Douglas – Mendon town constable; Ken Putnam -The Bus; Jeanne Collins – RNESU; Lt. Robert Giolito – DMV; Brian Sanderson - VTrans Mendon; Joe Kelly – VTrans Barre; Jeff Blanchard - VTrans Barre; Katherine Otto – VTrans Barre

**Topics considered:**

**Speed Limit in Village District:**

Unanimous agreement among business owners and committee members that the speed limit from Town Line Road to Medway Road should be reduced to 35-40 mph

**Slowing traffic entering the Village District from the east:**

- a) Can the two speed limit signs (45 mph) just up hill and just downhill from the two flashing yellow lights for Meadow Lake Drive be consolidated into a single electronic speed reduction sign indicating both the Mendon Village District and Meadow Lake Drive intersection with its many businesses are just around the corner?
- b) Is there a role for fixed radar-controlled feedback signage at the eastern entrance to the Village District?
- c) Could there be joint retail business signage (DePalo's coffee shop, Mendon Orchard, Mendon mini-golf, Sugar and Spice, etc) at the eastern approach to the Village District, even if that sign were within the clear zone (there is land outside the clear zone just downhill from Medway Road that is wide enough to support such a sign.)

### **Problematic Rte 4 intersections:**

- a) Old Turnpike Road – wide intersection newly paved by Town 2021. Vehicles park on gravel (uphill) portion of intersection. Compounded further by being the only access to a state historical marker. Just downhill. *This is also a scheduled bus stop – see attached.*
- b) Meadow Lake Drive – despite two flashing yellow lights and warning signage, cars slide off the road making a right turn downhill and strike wooden fence or land in Sugar and Spice parking lot. Is there room for a right-hand turn lane in front of Alpine Pipeline pump house? (VTrans retains the old ROW from 1950s alignment – see below.)
- c) Journey's End – Abrupt right turn coming downhill, and a blind corner going uphill. There is a warning sign, but it does not identify the road by name. Can such a sign be added? Is there room for a right turn lane coming downhill?

### **Right of Ways (ROWs):**

VTrans controls three old ROWs left over from Rte 4 relocations in the 1950s: 1) behind Snow Angel Tavern (Barber's Loop), 2) in front Village District and 3) east of the Meadow Lake Drive intersection. These historic but unused ROWs, which are owned by the local property owners, limit those property owners and their businesses from fully utilizing their property (e.g. signage for Mendon Mini-golf and parking for Snow Angel.)

### **Additional issues:**

- a) Merge lane in front of Allen Pools is short and leads to confusion. Additionally, it merges opposite to the two uphill lanes immediately downhill from Town Line Road intersection and likewise merges opposite to the two uphill lanes approaching Sherburne Pass. Solution: can the merge lane in front of Allen Pools be extended in either direction? Can the three merge sections (in Mendon and Rutland Town/Killington) be consistent, leading to less confusion?
- b) Consolidate two or more curb cuts – examples are Mendon Mountain Orchards in front of vacant red building, Kirbach Chiropractic office (practice currently closed), Tyrol Motel (derelict), Flannels Restaurant (two orange cones blocking one curb cut), Pico Mountain Commons,

- Cabin Row (3 curb cuts for seven structures), derelict red house and green house in Village District, the “blind” driveway to the white house east of the church’s parking lot (could it be connected to the frontage road for the church utilizing the old ROW)
- c) Activate electronic signage on uphill lane across from Medway Road. It has been there for three years and has yet to be turned on.
  - d) Can regular scheduled stopping places for The Bus be signed? (*Note: The Rutland - Killington bus has scheduled stops at Town Line Road, Mendon Mountain Orchards, Mendon Mountain View Lodge. The Killington-Rutland bus stops at Pico Mountain Commons, Old Turnpike Road, Meadow Lake Drive and the Best Western.*) Can the signs be put close enough to the travelled portion of the Rte 4 corridor to be visible, both to The Bus staff and other drivers? Likewise, is there room for a bus shelter on any of the most frequented stopping place (e.g. Old Turnpike intersection)?
  - e) Allow DePalo’s Coffee Shop to put signage at either end of their property, even if in the clear zone and rather than right at the store on the road, to notify drivers earlier and reduce cars stopping abruptly and backing up on Rte 4.
  - f) “Watch for Turning traffic” signage to serve Allen Pools (3-4 tractor trailers per week backing across three lanes of traffic)
  - g) Can signs be posted ¼ mile above and below the new curb-cut for the Green Mountain National Forest HQ (across from Woodward Road) for which there is neither a downhill right hand turn lane nor flashing yellow light planned.
  - h) Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (RNESU) has experienced cars passing their busses on Rte 4 when their flashing red lights were on. Can policing be increased during pick-up and drop-off times?
  - i) Can the “No Parking signs” (four downhill, three uphill) at Meadow Lake Drive intersection be reduced?

## Recommendations:

1. Identify portions of Rte 4 with safety issues that impact economic vitality (e.g. signage in clear zones or ROWs) and aesthetics (No Parking signs etc)
2. Apply for a Municipal Planning Grant to perform a scoping study for a Rte 4 corridor master plan
3. Ask Selectboard to request VTrans Traffic Committee review lowering speed limit in Village District. This can be done independently of other proposals or studies; it is likely to be denied initially but would put VTrans on notice that speed limits are a major issue.