

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1981

Present: Chairman John E. Murray, Anne W. Donald, and William J. Cossart.

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, the special meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Murray.

Dudley Road Traffic Safety

Present: Highway Surveyor Robert A. Noyes, Safety Officer William Carroll, Town Engineer James V. Merloni, Fire Chief Josiah F. Frost, and approximately 40-50 abutters of Dudley Road area.

Chairman Murray welcomed residents from the Dudley Road area for a discussion on possible courses of action which might be taken to reduce the number of traffic accidents on Dudley Road and introduced the Town officials present.

Executive Secretary Richard E. Thompson stated that the meeting had been precipitated by inquiries of Dudley Road residents, and abutters to the area had been notified of tonight's meeting to receive their recommendations for solution of the traffic safety problems. Mr. Thompson further reported that reports had been received from the Fire Chief, dated January 27, 1981, the Highway Surveyor, dated January 28, 1981, the Police Chief, dated January 28, 1981, and the Town Engineer, dated February 2, 1981, which would be made available upon request.

Town Engineer James V. Merloni provided the following background information: 1) the average width of Dudley Road is 18½', the narrowest section being 17' and the widest 21'; 2) the pavement is good; 3) there are nineteen trees and six poles within two to three feet of the pavement edge; and 4) there are some specific sight distance problems caused by trees, curves and bankings. He cautioned that removal of trees, etc. may encourage higher speeds.

Highway Surveyor Robert A. Noyes noted two areas of poorest sight distance as mentioned in his report - between house numbers 71 and 79 and in front of house number 25.

Safety Officer William B. Carroll reported that statistics from the years 1975 - 1980 record 60 accidents (22 at the Nobscot Road intersection, 36 at Route 20 intersection) having taken place on Dudley Road, fifteen people injured, and no fatalities.

During discussion residents suggested the following solutions:

a) Make the road one-way, more preferring in the direction of Route 20 to Nobscot Road.

b) Install speed bumps - considered by Highway Surveyor and Town Engineer too dangerous and creating liability for the town.

c) Make the road a dead-end road.

d) Create a dead-end with two cul-de-sacs in middle of road - favored by many, but opposed by Fire Chief.

e) Lower speed limit - Officer Carroll pointed out that State Department of Public Works approval would be required, which might be difficult.

f) Inquiries were also made as to placement of a traffic light at Nobscot Road and Route 20 and also at the intersection of Dudley Road and Nobscot Road if Dudley Road were one-way, and the construction of a walkway.

g) Frequent use of radar/ticketing of speeders - Officer Carroll explained that the road was hazardous for stopping vehicles and also that the radar must be used to cover the entire town.

Other comments made were:

a) Removal of trees or making road one-way would bring about an increase in driver speed. While a few residents felt removal of trees and poles would make the road safer, a majority expressed their opinion they would like the road to remain as it is and be kept as a residential road and not made into a thoroughfare.

b) The intersection of Dudley Road and Nobscot Road was hazardous due to a particular bump in Nobscot Road.

Selectmen Anne Donald suggested that the direction of one-way traffic be changed each day to run opposite to commuting traffic.

Mr. Stephen Rich, 71 Dudley Road, submitted photographs to the Board depicting poor sight distance in relation to his driveway, stating that a one-way street would make this problem more severe and suggesting a speed limit of 20-25 miles per hour.

Frederick Roth of Boston Edison Company requested that, if a decision is made to relocate utility poles, a street acceptance plan be provided first to eliminate a possible second relocation.

Highway Surveyor Robert Noyes stated that his department is currently taking traffic counts, and data from travel in a northwest direction toward Route 20 shows a count per hour of 180 vehicles at 7 a.m. and 170 vehicles at 5 p.m.

Selectman Donald noted that the location of the commercial vehicle limitation sign at Route 20 should be changed so that it can be more easily seen, as mentioned by the Police Chief in his report.

At the conclusion of discussion, Town Engineer James Merloni expressed his opinion that the simplest, most viable solution appeared to be creating a dead-end with two cul-de-sacs in the middle of Dudley Road. This however, would involve land takings from several residents to provide for a minimum 45' turning radius.

A poll of the residents in attendance indicated preference for solutions as follows:

- Dead-end at Nobscot Road: Approximately 11 in favor
- Dead-end at Route 20: Approximately 2 in favor
- Dead-end in middle: Approximately 20 in favor
- One-way Route 20 to Nobscot: Approximately 2 in favor
- One-way Nobscot to Route 20: None

Chairman Murray thanked everyone for attending and stated that the suggestions made would be taken under consideration following receipt of further detail and recommendations from the Highway Surveyor and Town Engineer. He further stated that the Police Department would be asked to be as diligent as possible in controlling speeders.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Attest:

Richard E. Thompson
Executive Secretary-Clerk