

Informational Meeting on Safety Improvements to Routes 12 and 119 in Fitzwilliam

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation is concerned about the safety of the intersection of Routes 12 and 119 in Fitzwilliam. As many of you know, over the past 6 years they have held a number of public meetings in Fitzwilliam to gather local information about this intersection and to present for public comment proposals for improving the safety of this intersection. Michael Dugas, the Chief of Preliminary Design at the NHDOT Bureau of Highway Design, will be coming to Fitzwilliam in August for another Informational Meeting. The date of this meeting will be announced later in July.

Mike will be presenting a plan for slowing traffic on Route 12 through the Route 119 intersection by the construction of safety islands. A number of other safety related issues concerning Routes 12 and 119 will also be discussed at this meeting.

In order for the informational meeting to be as productive as possible it is important that citizens and town boards and officials be informed of the basics of what is going to be presented and discussed at that meeting. If you have that information, you will be able to think about the issues involved ahead of time and provide pertinent comment and criticism both before and at the meeting. This document discusses the items to be covered at the informational meeting.

Please read the material below and let me know if you have any comments or questions about the proposals described below. I will relay this information to the DOT so they will be able to address your concerns at the informational meeting. My e-mail address is: fbequaert@gmail.com I'll also be forwarding the information to the Selectmen's Office so they will be aware of your concerns. If you wish to talk with me about these matters, my phone number is 585-3448.

Items Relating to Safety at the Intersection of Routes 12 and 119

1. Safety Islands on Route 12

To view a map of the proposed modifications to Route 12, click on :

http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/fitzwilliam16211/documents/16211_altr5_09242013.pdf

(If you are reading this document at the Fitzwilliam Library, a printout of this map is included)

Comment by Michael Dugas: The speed reduction islands are curbed traffic islands meant to deflect the path of vehicles approaching the Route 12 / Route 119 intersection, thus causing them to slow down. The islands have been placed to be reasonably close to the intersection, but not block any side streets or driveways. Unfortunately, this resulted in the southerly island being a little further from the intersection than I'd like. Along the stretch of Route 12 between the speed reduction islands we'd propose to take some of the width from the wide shoulders to provide a two-way left turn lane. This lane would provide a refuge for drivers turning left into driveways, and would change the appearance of Route 12 near the intersection to remind through traffic that this stretch of highway is different from the rural (high-speed) stretches to the north and south.

DOT has, in the past, proposed a number of other alternatives to the Safety Islands including a number of rotary configurations at the Route 12/119 intersection. To review these alternatives and the reactions of Fitzwilliam residents to these proposals, go to <http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/fitzwilliam16211/> and look under "Working Group Meeting, September 24, 2013"

2. Moving the beginning of the 35 mph speed zone to north of the intersection of Lower Troy Rd with Route 12.

A. Currently the 35 mph speed sign is located 1320 feet north of the intersection with Route 119. A warning sign (“35 mph ahead”) is located roughly 1000 feet before that sign. Traffic approaching and passing these signs is on a long down slope. Measurements by the SWRPC show that 99% of the vehicles passing the 35 mph sign were travelling above 35 mph. 74% of the vehicles passed the sign at speeds greater than 45 mph.

B. The junction of Route 12 and Lower Troy Rd. is a busy one with a business (Auto Repair) located right at the intersection, a factory building (currently not in use) east of Route 12 and a second road (Gap Mt. Road) entering on the east side of Route 12.

3. Put a traffic light at the junction of Routes 12 and 119.

Such a light would probably reduce the chances of accidents at this junction but would slow through traffic on Route 12. It would also make possible a safe crosswalk for pedestrians. While a traffic light might not reduce the speed of vehicles on Route 12, it could go a long way towards reducing the number and severity of accidents at this intersection.

4. Modify or remove the “No Right Turn” and “Do Not Enter” signs on the south entrance to Mr. Mikes Store and Gas Station.

These signs are consistently ignored by drivers. Enforcing them would require significant police resources on an ongoing basis and would probably result in alienated local residents. There is a solid safety reason for the “No Right Turn” sign as it reduces the number of vehicles making the dangerous left turn from Route 119 westbound onto Route 12 South or the equally dangerous crossing of Route 12.

Again, contact me with any comments or questions about this document. And please plan to attend the informational meeting in August.

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