



SELECTBOARD
TOWN OF NORTHFIELD

www.northfieldma.gov
69 MAIN STREET
NORTHFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01360-1017

P: (413) 498-2901
F: (413) 498-5103

Peter Cavicchi, District Highway Director
Highway District 2 Office
811 North King Street
Northampton, MA 01060

August 24, 2020

Dear Director Cavicchi,

As the Selectboard for the Town of Northfield, we are writing to express our concerns over the recent controversy with crosswalk signs in the Town of Northfield. After several years of having our signs removed from crosswalks at critical locations on Route 10 in Northfield, and after a great outcry from our residents at their continued removal, our Police Department put in an application with your department to approve the placement of these signs. Subsequently it was discovered that there had been a previously approved application in 2011. We hope you will take steps to ensure that future employees for the District are familiar with this approval so that we can avoid this situation from occurring again.

If you are at all familiar with Routes 10/63 as they travel through Northfield to the New Hampshire border, you will know that the road, Main Street, goes right through the center of our town. Main Street contains many residences and businesses (like the Northfield Creamie); the Moody Center; Thomas Aquinas College, a bank and the Post Office; as well as almost all the Town's official buildings - the Town Hall (containing the Police Department), Fire Station, Ambulance Station, Northfield Elementary School, and Dickinson Memorial Library.

Unlike many state highways Routes 10/63 in Northfield have many pedestrians and pedestrian crossings and has a long history of pedestrian concerns--as evidenced by the December 2, 2011 letter approving the placement of the pedestrian crossing signs. Traffic on this road is driving at speeds (except where posted in front of the school) between 35mph and 40mph. That is quite fast for such a heavily populated area with the amount of local traffic and pedestrians utilizing the road.

Continuing concern about traffic on downtown Route 10/63 in Northfield is further evidenced by the Town's recently approved Complete Streets Prioritization Plan which lists as the first and one of the most critical concerns, "Main Street Pedestrian Crossing Safety." This plan was approved by MassDOT this spring, and though it allowed the Town to apply for some Complete Streets grant funding in this last round, the request could not include improvements to these crossings as they are under MassDOT jurisdiction. If you review the plan you will see that it includes suggestions to consider the installation of flashing pedestrian crossing warning signs (RRFB) on Main Street (Route 10/63) at Maple Street and Moody Street.



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In light of the most recent issues and the historic concerns regarding pedestrians crossing Main Street (Routes 10/63), we urge you to consider the projects described in Northfield's Prioritization Plan for implementation by MassDOT.

We would be happy to discuss the matter at any time convenient to you. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Alexander R. Meisner, Chair

Heath F. Cummings

Barbara Jacque
Northfield Selectboard

Cc: FRCOG Transportation Planning Department
Senator Jo Comerford
Representative Paul Mark