



Town of West Newbury
381 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985
Tel. 978-363-1100, ext. 115 Fax 978-363-1826
selectmen@wnewbury.org

February 1, 2021

Jonathan L. Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Administrator
10 Park Plaza
Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Gulliver,

The West Newbury Board of Selectmen has requested that the town contact MassDOT to request crosswalk improvements at two locations in town. We have recently and in the past been approached by parents and educators regarding the safety of these two crosswalk locations. Both crossings are located on Main Street / Route 113 and are located in front of schools.

As you are aware, Route 113 is under the jurisdiction of the state. The town only plows a limited section of sidewalks on Route 113, while all other operations are the sole responsibility of the state.

We have two schools in our town. The Page School located at 694 Main Street / Route 113 which educates preschool to sixth grade and the Pentucket Regional High School located at 22 Main Street / Route 113 which educates ninth to 12th grade. The High School is immediately adjacent to the Middle School (serving 7th and 8th grades), located just over the town line in Groveland, and the two buildings comprise a campus complex. A brand new Pentucket Middle/High School is now under construction at this site, and once complete will replace the two existing schools.

There is a main crosswalk at both the Page School and the Pentucket Regional School Campus with ADA compliant handicap access ramps which were installed a few years ago, and 12-inch wide thermoplastic crosswalks which are maintained on a yearly basis by MassDOT. Both crossing locations are located on our highest vehicle volume and highest vehicle speed roadway in West Newbury. The morning sun glare at the Page School, which is located at the crest of a hill, and the multiple driveway placements at both schools add additional crossing challenges.

It also must be mentioned that the Page School crosswalk connects to the Town-owned Pipestave Recreational Facility, which contains many athletic fields, miles of walking paths and our popular equestrian facilities.

We have had many pedestrians versus vehicle close calls and some actual crashes over the years. Recently, a student was struck this past November at the Pentucket Regional School Campus crosswalk.

In November of last year, the town conducted a site visit at these locations with town officials, a resident, and Lenny Mirra our State Representative. Representative Mirra suggested we contact MassDOT to request the installation of solar powered pedestal mounted Rapid Flasher Beacons (RFB) at both school crossing locations. These crosswalk safety devices have been approved by MassDOT and have been used on MassDOT jurisdictional roadways around the state and from our research have received very positive support from these communities.

We have contacted the MassDOT traffic signal contractor Pine Ridge Technologies (PRT) to gain a better understanding of the operation of these devices and believe they would meet the pedestrian safety crossing concerns of the town. The estimate they submitted was almost \$38,000 including equipment and installation. There may be some minor site work required at an additional cost, however that work would solely be at the discretion of MassDOT per construction standards.

The town has very limited Chapter 90 and town funds and we use 100% of these funds for the paving of our 46 linear miles of town roads. As a result, the Board of Selectmen respectfully request that MassDOT fund and install these pedestrian crossing RFB's at these two school locations in the Town of West Newbury. The town would be willing to accept ownership and future maintenance of this equipment after final state acceptance.

If you have any questions, concerns or would like to meet on-site to review our request, our DPW Director, Wayne Amaral would welcome the opportunity to discuss this pedestrian safety improvement proposal in greater detail with a MassDOT representative.

Wayne can be contacted by phone at 978-992-8915 or e-mail at DPWDirector@WNewbury.org. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angus Jennings".

Angus Jennings
Town Manager

cc:

Lenny Mirra, State Representative

Bruce Tarr, State Senator

Daniel Fielding, MassDOT Legislative Liaison

John Ramano, MassDOT Municipal Affairs Liaison

Paul Stedman, MassDOT District 4 - Highway Director

West Newbury Board of Selectmen

Wayne Amaral, West Newbury DPW Director

Jeff Durand, West Newbury Police Chief

Pentucket School Committee

Justin Bartholomew, Superintendent, Pentucket Regional School District