



CONSENT 8/29/05-17

**TOWN OF ACTON**  
472 Main Street  
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720  
Telephone (978) 264-9628  
Fax (978) 264-9630

**Bruce M. Stamski, P.E.**  
Town Engineer/Director of Public Works

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August 12, 2005

**Board of Selectmen**  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

**Re: Recommendation for Advisory Traffic Signs**  
**Squirrel Hill Road/Arlington Street/Notre Dame Road**

Dear Board Members:

As you are aware this office earlier this year recommended a stop sign be installed stopping traffic on Notre Dame as it enters into the intersection with Squirrel Hill Road and Arlington Street. You amended the Traffic Rules and Orders on June 20, 2005. This stop sign is now in place. We also agreed with the neighbors present at the hearing to look into other measures to improve the safety in the area.

During the last week of June we set up our traffic counters at two locations to collect speed and volume of traffic data. We collected data on the new section of Squirrel Hill Road above the intersection with Notre Dame and on Arlington Street below the intersection with Notre Dame.

During the study period there was an average of 200 vehicles per day using the new section of Squirrel Hill above Notre Dame and 280 vehicles per day on Arlington Street below Notre Dame. The other 80 vehicles per day turned in and out of Notre Dame. From this data we can deduce that the traffic on Arlington Street has increased from 80 to 280 vehicles per day. While 200 new cars per day is not a large burden to the roadway network, it is significant in this area. Arlington Street immediately below the study area has two rather sharp turns and the neighborhood is not accustomed to the new level of traffic.

Massachusetts Speed Zoning Law makes the assumption that 85 % of drivers are prudent and drive at a safe speed. Most speed limits are set via this standard.

The 85 percentile speeds recorded at these locations were as follows:

Squirrel Hill going downhill = 30 mph  
Squirrel Hill going uphill = 27 mph

Arlington St. going downhill = 29 mph  
Arlington St going uphill = 28 mph

**This summer, The Municipal Properties Department and Highway Department made special efforts to remove tree limbs, brush and debris within the Right of Way to improve the sight distance on Arlington Street. This was done after our traffic counts.**

**We asked members of the Police Department, Planning Department, Engineering Department and Building Department to drive the study area and record the speed at which they felt comfortable and in control of their vehicles. This was done after the clearing work by Municipal Properties staff. This provided data from a mix of vehicle types. All participants were within 1 or 2 mph of 25 mph.**

**Given the steep grades in the area which increase stopping distances, the curves in the road which limit sight distances and the influx of new traffic to the area, it is my engineering judgment that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds recorded are slightly high for this short section of road. I recommend the following advisory signs and speed plates be installed.**

**HILL SIGN WITH A 25 MPH SPEED PLATE to be installed on Squirrel Hill Road approximately 25 feet north of the intersection with Marian Road warning drivers of the steep down grade ahead.**

**CURVE SIGN WITH A 25 MPH SPEED PLATE to be installed on Arlington Street approximately 150 feet north of the intersection with Notre Dame Road warning drivers of the curves ahead as they drive toward Summer Street.**

**CURVE SIGN WITH A 25 MPH SPEED PLATE to be installed on Arlington Street opposite the intersection with Kingman warning drivers of the curves ahead as they drive toward Squirrel Hill Road on Arlington Street.**

**We will continue to monitor the traffic in this area to determine the effectiveness of the new signage. To date Squirrel Hill Road has not been accepted as a Town Road. Once the road is accepted, we will request the Selectmen to amend the Traffic Rules and Orders to add a STOP SIGN stopping traffic on Marian Road as it enters Squirrel Hill Road.**

**Sincerely,**



**Bruce M. Stamski, P. E.  
Town Engineer/ Director of Public Works**

**cc  
Forest Glen Neighborhood Association**

