

CITY OF BARRE
PUBLIC BODY MEETING MINUTES

Committee/board/task force: Transportation & Public Works Committee

Date of meeting: Thursday, 8/21/2025 at 4:30pm **Location of meeting:** City Hall Council Chamber

Members in attendance: Art Bombardier, Steve Mackenzie, Jayme Bauer, Kenneth Bauer;

Members absent: None. *Ken had to leave at 5:05pm for a work-related matter.

Others in attendance: **Brain Baker DPW Director**
Cpl Jacob Frey, Traffic Safety Officer
Beth Hilgartner, Council Liaison
Joanne Reynolds,

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 4:33 pm
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** None.
3. **Public Comment:** Joanne and CPL Frey were present for continuing agenda item "Hill Street Speed Reduction Strategies".
4. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the July 17, 2025, meeting were approved with the following minor adjustment: The Habitat House is on Hill Street.
5. **Continuing Agenda item:** Hill Street Speed Reduction Strategies

Discussion

Joanne noted that the speed cart slowed traffic down and cars are going faster now that it has been removed. Brian said that there are guidelines for certain traffic calming measures and the percentage of cars going over the speed limit doesn't meet those guidelines. The speed cart captures the number of cars and the speed with which they are travelling.

CPL Frey said that there is a legitimate problem on Hill Street by Nelson and Woodland. He added that there is not a good place to put a speed cart or for a police car to set in this area.

Ken stated that he and Jayme gathered over 50 signatures on a petition that stated that traffic calming is sorely needed on Merchant Street and measures used to date

are not working. He added that 100% of people they were able to reach signed the petition. Ken and Jayme are happy to share the petition with the committee, City Manager and City Council.

Joanne said that Hill Street is the 8th most travelled street in Barre City and has more traffic than Mountain Road in Stowe. She added that Merchant Street is the 12th most traveled. Brian responded that Hill Street and Merchant Street are categorized as Class 2 highways based on traffic counts and that the city receives state funding for their maintenance.

Beth observed that one side of Hill is yellow curb (not allowed to park there) and asked if parking could be made legal on both sides of the street. Steve replied that the yellow curb is the only barrier to parking; there's no legal designation. He added that striping can help create a visual narrowing of the street. Joanne said that Hill Street from Camp Street to Nelson Street is 44 feet wide. Steve agreed that the pavement doesn't narrow much. It was measured by the Lincoln House parking lot.

Steve recommended that Hill Street be used as a trial demonstration project to see what incremental measures could successfully slow traffic. He added that he does not recommend stop signs for this. Measures could include:

- Narrow the street visually with striping.
- Install speed bumps.
- Install flashing speed signs.

Steve asked Brian if the city could reserve a flashing sign for Hill Street, probably for corner of Nelson Street. Brian said that he could reserve one with permission from the City Manager but they would need to figure out the best location.

Ken said that he has observed bigger speed bumps in other communities. Steve said they are probably speed tables and Barre City has 4 of them by the elementary school. CPL Frey noted that the city can't install one that prevents drivers from going the legal speed limit. Beth stated that in Hanover speed tables have been installed on streets being used as cut throughs and the speed limit is maintained at 25 MPH.

Brian asked how speed tables impact drainage and wants to review pros and cons and if the traffic data shows that their installation is warranted. Steve responded that there are times that the city needs to be responsive to its citizens. He added that if there wasn't funding in the capital budget, perhaps speed tables could be funded through Special Projects Funding (reserved ARPA funds). Brian said that it would need to go through City Council and the City Manager for approval.

Steve re-emphasized that part of the goal of the proposed demonstration was to try different measures and see what works.

Art asked about winter maintenance and added that he thought speed tables would be easier to maintain than speed bumps.

Beth said that she didn't want to lose the striping in the demonstration; striping is low cost to install and maintain. Brian replied that his team is struggling to keep up with

current striping work. Beth suggested getting it done once and see if it makes a difference. She added that there have been 2 serious accidents at her corner on Hill Street and she is worried about children getting injured. Joanne stated that cars had taken out 3 telephone poles and hit Beth's house in the last 5 years.

Steve said that striping where Hill Street is 44 foot wide should be helpful, especially from Nelson Street to Camp Street. Art added that parking spots are 10 feet wide on State Street in Montpelier by the Capital, creating a 10-12-12-10 street configuration.

Joanne observed that residents know that parking works to calm traffic and that striping is worth a try.

Steve asked Brian if he could accept a recommendation for striping and a traffic table. Brian said he would be amenable to purchasing one or two removable speed bumps:

- One between Nelson and Patterson streets; And/Or
- One between Nelson and Camp streets.

Art asked if the city could use sawhorses to funnel traffic going up and down the hill. Brian responded that the sawhorses the city owns are technically illegal; they can fly around if hit by a car. Beth asked about approved ones and Brian said that legal sawhorses are weighted on the bottom.

Brian said he would have a crew out by end of summer if the recommended street calming demonstration was approved by City Council and the City Manager.

6. New Agenda Items: DPW Director Update on Street Paving Program

- Merchant's Row is complete.
- Quarry Street has been added to this year's paving contract.
- Berlin Street and Allen Street have base course of pavement.
- Pike to be on-site September 8 to grind Prospect and Quarry Street. Remainder of paving to be completed after that.

7. Public Works Director Report/Update

The report is attached to the minutes. The following are a few highlights and discussion:

- 35 fire hydrants are out of service; however, the city has replaced or repaired 25-30 hydrants.
- **Water main flushing-** The mains that were flushed last year are going a lot faster. Annual flushing is making a difference.
- **US Route 302 Transmission Main-** The city has \$2.24 Million in Congressional Designated Spending and \$560,000 in DWSRF loans. However, the project cost is \$5.6 Million, and the city does not have the match.
- **Cobble Hill Water Main-** FEMA is contributing \$100,000 of the \$400,000 cost. However, FEMA will not allow for improvements; it must be built to pre-flood conditions.
- **Headworks Project-** The Rural Development loan being pursued is only 2%

interest and the project is in final design phase.

- **Dagmont Avenue Culvert-** The city has a \$65,000 grant from the state, but the project cost estimate is \$120,000. The city is going back to the state for more funding.
- **Gunner Brook Reclamation-** It's a \$250,000 project. The bank continues to erode and funds will be used to stabilize the bank and widen the brook to its original size.

Steve asked if the city could do part of the 302 Transmission Main with the funding and Brian said that the project couldn't realistically be split up. The city is looking at alternative projects for the funding.

Joanne told Brian that she appreciates the hard work his team is doing and the city should be more proactive about getting the word out about Public Works' accomplishments.

8. Round Table

Jayne asked if at least one more speed bump could be installed on Merchant Street. Brian said he was amenable if approved by City Council and the City Manager.

Action items (use additional sheets as necessary):

1) Motion

Motion made and seconded (to recommend to the City Manager and City Council to implement a speed control demonstration project in the Hill Street neighborhood (Nelson to Camp Street), consisting of the following elements:

1. Installation of a solar powered Speed Control Sign in the westbound direction in the vicinity of the Hill/Nelson Streets intersection
2. Installation of two (2) speed bumps on Hill Street – one between Nelson and Paterson Streets, and one between Paterson and Camp Streets
3. Visual "narrowing" of the Hill Street width from 10-12-12-10 between Nelson and Camp Streets by:
 - a. Diagonal striping on the westbound (downhill) side
 - b. Parking space striping on the eastbound (uphill) side

Technical and implementation details to be determined by the Director of Public Works

Mover/Second: Jayne made the motion for approval and Kenneth seconded the motion.

Result of vote (how many yes, how many no, pass, didn't pass): Motion passed unanimously

2) Motion: Install one or more additional speed bumps on Merchant Street this summer/fall.

Mover/Second: Beth made the motion for approval and Jayme seconded the motion.

Result of vote (how many yes, how many no, pass, didn't pass): Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned: 5:45 p.m.

Next meeting date/time/location (if known): City Council Chamber; 4:30 pm, Thursday, September 18, 2025

Person filing Minutes:

Jayme Bauer