

TAC Discussion : Town Special Speed Regulations

- Background behind Speed regulations in Town
- Driving factors for TAC's current request
- Discussion of the purpose of our working group and identify missing information/questions
- Pick a working group and discuss next steps

Town Manager / SB Request

TAC Referral - Special Speed Regulations

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Good morning Laura,

I hope you are well. If at all possible, I was hoping TAC would be able to prioritize taking up the attached matter at its upcoming February meeting.

In brief, Arlington has a number of regulatory speed limits that exceed the statutory speed limit in various parts of Town. Instead of approaching this matter in a piece-meal fashion per this specific request for Broadway, as well as last night's request for Park Ave., it seemed prudent to consider the merits of this measure as a whole. TAC previously made a recommendation to the Select Board about the town-wide speed limit. Attached is a compilation of the materials I have gathered.

Two recent issues prompted this referral:

- A request was made by the Broadway Neighbors Coalition to remove the 30 MPH speed limit signs on Broadway and Warren streets.
- A presentation to the SB requested lowering the 35 MPH Speed Limit on Park Avenue

This prompted a larger discussion regarding all the Special Speed Regulations in Arlington exceeding the statutory speed limit of 25 MPH. The new Vulnerable User Law in 2023 made it easier to change Speed regulations.

Prior TAC Recommendations

- In 2017 a TAC working group recommended:
 - Adoption of the 25 MPH Speed Limit (previously 30 MPH).
 - Posting of “Thickly Settled Speed Limit 25 Townwide Unless Otherwise Posted” signs at main roadways entering Arlington
- This was approved by the Select Board and is in place today
- The working group identified two groups of streets that did not fall under the new limit:
 - Roads under State jurisdiction: Route 2 and Mystic Valley Parkway
 - Roads (or parts of roads) that were under Special Speed Regulations (details to follow)

Town-wide Special Speed Regulations

- The table shows the 29 roads / road segments that are covered by Special Speed Regulations (SSRs):
 - 20 MPH at 7 locations
 - 25 MPH at 22 locations
 - 30 MPH at 9 locations
 - > 30 MPH at 5 locations
- Highlighted locations above the Statutory Speed Limit of 25 MPH will be the main focus of our efforts.

Street	Between		Posted Speeds	Date
Appleton St	Frontage Rd	Mass Ave	25	05/11/83
Bow	Lowell St	Forest St	20	11/05/80
Broadway	Somerville Line	Mass Ave	30	07/22/78
Dow Ave	Belmont Line	Appleton St	25	11/05/80
Eastern Ave & Spring Street	Park Circle	Hillsdale	25/20	09/19/79
Forest St	Mass Ave	Summer St	20	01/11/77
Forest St	Summer St	Winchester Line	25	01/11/77
Gardner St	Broadway	Decatur	25	11/05/80
Gray St	Oakland Ave	Pleasant St	30/25/30/25	07/22/78
Hamlet St	Medford St	Beacon St	25	08/02/80
Highland Ave	Frontage Rd	Mass Ave	25	09/19/79
Jason St	Mass Ave	Pleasant View Rd	25/20/25	07/22/78
Lake St	Belmont Line	Mass Ave	25/30	11/05/80
Medford St	Mass Ave	Chestnut St	25	08/02/80
Mountain Ave	Dickson Ave	Washington St	20	09/19/79
N. Union St	Broadway	Decatur	20	09/19/79
Oak Hill Dr	Summer St	Ridge St	25	05/11/83
Park Ave/Park Ave Extension	Frontage Rd	Forest St	25/35/25	01/11/77
Paul Revere Rd	Mass Ave	Appleton St	25/20	07/22/78
Pheasant Ave EB	Overlook Rd	Dickson Ave	20	09/19/79
Ridge St	Route 3	Greenwood Rd	25	11/05/80
River Street	Broadway	Alewife Brook Pkwy	30	11/05/80
Route 2 Frontage Rd EB	Lexington Line	Belmont Line	25/30/40	03/20/77
Route 2 Frontage Rd WB	Pleasant St	Lexington Line	40/25/40/30/40	03/20/77
Route 2A (Summer St)	Mystic St	Beginning of State Hwy	25	11/29/76
Route 3 (Mystic Street)	Route 60	Beginning of State Hwy	25/35	01/11/77
Route 60 NB (Pleasant/Mystic/Medford)	Belmont Line	Mystic Valley Pkwy	30/25/35/25/35/20	01/11/77
Route 60 SB (Medford/Mystic/Pleasant)	Mystic Valley Parkway	Belmont Line	35/25/35/25/30	01/11/77
Wachusett Ave	Park Ave	Wollaston Ave	30/25	Date Incorrect

TAC's Recommendation Should:

- Take a town-wide approach to speed regulations with the following goals:
 - Consolidate the research and work of multiple requests to the Town / TAC
 - Reduce or eliminate driver confusion over changing Speed Limits along a corridor
 - Address safety concerns , particularly on Broadway and Park Ave, that fall under the regulation of an SSR
- Align on the Connect Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan Vision and Goals:
 - “Safe facilities for all Users”
 - “A Pedestrian first, walk –friendly environment”
 - “A low-stress bicycle network”
- Develop a plan within the working group:
 - How can the removal of a SSR be safely accomplished?
 - How will TAC identify locations to remove SSRs?
 - How can the results be measured and evaluated?
 - Apply their approach/philosophy to the individual roadway segments under SSRs.

Discussion Points/ Questions

- What do we hope will happen if a Special Speed Regulation (SSR) is rescinded?
- What are potential drawbacks to rescinding SSRs?
- What information will the working group need?
- Does anything need to be clarified by the Town Manager or Select Board?
- How will we know if rescinding a SSR has improved safety?

- Technical questions:
 - Is there a need to identify state routes (2A, 3, 60, Rt 2 Frontage) for separate consideration?
 - Are there additional sites not identified in 2017 that need special speed regulation?
 - What as the purpose of the different speed regulations?
 - 20 MPH – are these School Zones or Speed Safety Zones?
 - 25 MPH – are they necessary any longer or just historical?
 - 30 and >30 MPH –are these locations under town control? Is there anywhere in town where 30 MPH is justified?

Next Steps

- Who would like to be a part of the working group? (< 4 voting members/advisors per OML)
 - WG Lead: Jim Stubbe
 - Member 1: Scott Smith
 - Member 2: Len Diggins
 - John Alessi
 - Associate Member: Ofer Mazor
- Report progress back to TAC for the March meeting