

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

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Press Release

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Mayor Hedlund Requests Reduction in Speed Limit on Dangerous State Road

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Weymouth, MA – Weymouth Mayor Robert Hedlund has formally requested that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division (MassDOT) review and reduce the speed limit on Park Avenue in Weymouth. The request, submitted to MassDOT Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver, pays particular attention to the stretch of road extending from the Park Avenue Market, located at 46 Park Avenue, to Pleasant Street in Weymouth. This section of Park Avenue is a state road governed by MassDOT and therefore requires state approval of any speed limit reduction.

Park Avenue has been host to a number of pedestrian complaints and traffic incidents which were highlighted by a tragic accident in November of 2018. A 75-year-old Weymouth woman was struck while crossing Park Avenue and later succumbed to her injuries. The Town has received frequent reports about the danger of this location.

"The tragic events that occurred last November as well as other reports about Park Avenue show the danger of this stretch of road," **said Mayor Hedlund.** "The current speed limit along this road jeopardizes pedestrian and driver safety and I ask that the Highway Division consider a speed limit more suitable to this highly trafficked area."

Weymouth Police Chief Richard Grimes has reported that the Police Department is collecting data on crash rates for this section of roadway and agrees it is a problem area in Town.

"The Weymouth Police Department fully supports a reduction in the speed limit for all of the reasons Mayor Hedlund has outlined," **said Chief Grimes.**

The current posted speed limit along the Park Avenue section of road is 40MPH. The corridor contains entrances to two schools including Weymouth High School and St. Francis Xavier School. In addition, the road has two crosswalks that accommodate frequent use by students and pedestrians. Due to the density of the residential neighborhood located along this stretch, pedestrian use - including that by school children - as well as the road's proximity to two schools, the Town is requesting a reduction in speed from 40MPH to 25-30MPH.

The Town of Weymouth has been taking proactive steps to improve pedestrian access, walkability, and transportation safety through the adoption of various programs and policies. The Town participates in MassDOT's Complete Streets Program which provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes including walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles. In addition, Weymouth has implemented town wide streetlight upgrades to install LED lights that will improve visibility for motorists and pedestrians, enhancing safety. Most recently, Weymouth was awarded funding through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security's (EOPSS) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Grant Program. The request to MassDOT for a reduction in the speed limit aligns with the Town's goals to improve motorist and pedestrian safety and reduce related incidents.

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