



TOWN OF SALEM NH

The following is a brief overview of the Ermer Road Intersection history since 2016.

NH-111 is a federal aid eligible Tier 2 state highway under New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) District 5 jurisdiction. Ermer Road crosses NH-111 to form a four-legged intersection which is under the control of NHDOT. After a fatal accident on November 1, 2016, the Board of Selectmen (BOS), at their November 21, 2016, meeting, directed staff to draft a formal request that safety measures including a traffic signal be considered by NHDOT at the intersection. In December of 2016, the Town submitted a request to NHDOT as such, and as result, a Road Safety Audit was recommended first for the intersection. Per the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), an RSA is a formal safety performance examination of an existing or future road, or intersection, by an independent, multidisciplinary team. It qualitatively estimates and reports on potential road safety issues and identifies opportunities for improvements in safety for all road users. The multidisciplinary team included members from NHDOT, Salem Police, Salem Fire, Salem Municipal Services, Rockingham Planning Commission, the engineering consultant, and local residents. NHDOT reported the results of the RSA to the BOS at their November 19, 2018, meeting, in which it noted next steps could include implementation of improvement options none of which were for a signalized intersection. After the July 17, 2019, BOS meeting, the Town again communicated with NHDOT that it was seeking implementation of improvements, including designated turn lanes and reduced speed limits, at the intersection, however, still preferred the signalized intersection.

NHDOT did not communicate or identify any action thereof regarding the Town's request during 2020 and as a result the Town sent a formal request letter in January 2021 to NHDOT, and State of New Hampshire officials (Federal and State), asking for resolution in this matter. NHDOT and the Town engaged in meetings throughout early 2021 and in August of 2021 NHDOT notified the Town that it would commit Highway Safety Improvement Program (federal aid) funding for an intersection project with 90% funding by State and 10% by the Town. The BOS immediately authorized Municipal Services to enter into a Local Public Agency (LPA) Agreement with the NHDOT in August of 2021 to begin the process for intersection improvements. Funding for the project was secured in 2022 by NHDOT and the Town respectively with the LPA agreement completed shortly thereafter including selection of the engineering consultant through the qualifications process which is a requirement. Currently the intersection improvements are in the preliminary engineering stage, including analyzing all data, where it is determined what the extent of the project may be and/or if a traffic signal is warranted. Once those results are finalized, and as part of the process, a public hearing for the project will be held before the Town Council, most likely in the coming months. The project itself is set to be advertised for construction in 2024. In closing the Town has made it clear that a signalized intersection is needed.



Memorandum

To: Roy E. Sorenson, Director
Salem Municipal Services
21 Cross Street, Salem, NH 03079

Date: August 7, 2023

Project #: 52946.00

From: Gregory L. Bakos, P.E.

Re: Ermer Road Intersection Project

The following is a brief project status update as requested.

Work completed to date includes the following:

- Topographic and ROW survey and base plan preparation
- Wetlands delineation
- Traffic counts
- Traffic analysis
- Warrants analysis

The traffic signal warrant analysis indicated that the intersection does not meet volume-based traffic signal warrants.

To qualify for the safety-based warrant the town would have had to implement other safety countermeasures first and if there was still a crash history the signal could be installed.

VHB recommended to NHDOT that VHB's safety team conduct an analysis of potential safety measures to determine whether they would be predicted to make a measurable improvement such that signals would not be required. If the analysis does not predict an improvement, it was agreed that the immediate next step could be a traffic signal.

On August 3rd NHDOT approved VHB's amendment to conduct the safety analysis and the safety team will kick off the effort on August 8th. It is estimated that the analysis will take two to three weeks to complete and document. Once the results are accepted by NHDOT VHB will be in a position to advance the conceptual design and engineering study.