



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Karen Hill, P.E., Transportation Engineer, staff representative for the Traffic Operations Committee

DATE: May 21, 2025

SUBJECT: Response to a referral from City Council requesting review of speeds and commercial/cut through traffic on Sewalls Falls Road and West Parish Road.

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On July 8, 2024, City Council referred a communication from Councilor Kretovic, on behalf of multiple constituents, requesting review of speeds and commercial/cut through traffic on Sewalls Falls Road and West Parish Road.

Sewalls Falls Road

Sewalls Falls Road is a minor collector street with approximately 3,000-4,000 average daily traffic (ADT) and a posted speed limit of 30 mph. It runs north-south, connecting Fisherville Road (US Route 3) and Mountain Road (NH 132). The southern section (area of concern) is home to Beaver Meadow Elementary School and Beaver Meadow Park. On average there is a 10-foot travel way in each direction with 2-foot shoulders. There are school zone flashing beacons present in both directions of travel. A sidewalk exists on the east side from Fisherville Road to Second Street. There is a crosswalk at Second Street/Sylvester Street, the sidewalk then follows the west side of Sewalls Falls to the north.

West Parish Road

West Parish Road is a local street with a posted speed limit of 35 mph. It begins at the Hopkinton town line at its westernmost point and runs easterly to Carter Hill Road before ending at Lake View Drive. The portion of West Parish Road, between the Hopkinton T/L and Carter Hill Road (area of concern), is designated on the City's Commercial Trucking Thruway Status Map as a "No Thru Trucking" route.

Discussion

Sewalls Falls Road

TOC discussed the referral during its August 20, 2024 meeting. The Committee discussed that Sewalls Falls Road is not designated as a "No Thru Trucking" route or a "Designated Street for Truck Use", therefore trucks are allowed during the hours of 7 am and 7 pm, but still within the confines of the City's Ordinance. The Committee agreed to request that Central New Hampshire

Planning Commission (CNHRPC) collect vehicle class data when they perform traffic and speed counts once school is back in session. The item was continued to a future meeting until data could be collected and reviewed.

After reviewing preliminary data at its September 17, 2024 meeting, the Committee had initial discussions about the benefits of posting the roadway due to it being in a school zone, but suggested a conversation with the City Manager since Ordinance 17-6-7 states that “the City Manager is authorized to post “No Trucking” signs.

CNHRPC collected traffic counts in October 2024 which recorded a total of 71 (> 5-axle) trucks over 4 days on Sewalls Falls Road, averaging approximately 18 trucks per day. These trucks were observed during the hours specified above.

After discussions with the City Manager, TOC continued discussions during its May 20, 2025 meeting. The Committee discussed the history of the request and recognized that if Sewalls Falls Road is posted, that all truck traffic travelling north on Route 3 to northern destinations in the City, would need to travel through Penacook Village and the roundabout. The Committee agreed that leaving Sewalls Falls Road as an option would help to balance truck traffic through the Village and Sewalls Fall Road. The Committee confirmed, per the Ordinance that trucks should only be deviating onto Sewalls Falls Road if they have an origin or destination point nearest to Sewalls Falls Road, as it is not specifically a “Designated Street for Truck Use” on the City’s Commercial Trucking Thruway Status Map.

The Committee also acknowledged that the Concord School District will be performing a traffic study for Beaver Meadow School in the Fall of 2025 and agreed that potential safety improvements to the school zone would be better served by those efforts than by restricting the few trucks that travel the route today.

The Committee agreed to monitor the truck traffic and reconsider the request in the future if it is found that trucks are routinely using the street in violation of the City’s ordinance.

Speeds

Concord Police Department (CPD) frequently enforces speeds on Sewalls Falls Road and shared their latest data collection in the form of directed patrols was between 3/21/24-4/4/24. During that time, CPD spent approximately 20 hours performing enforcement in the area of concern, 17 speed warnings were issued and 1 summons for driving 51 mph in a 30 mph zone.

TOC reviewed speed data collected during September 2024 for Sewalls Falls Road between First and Second Streets, as follows:

Direction	Avg (mph)	85 th (mph)
Both	32	37

85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers travel on a road segment.

Avg = Average speed
mph = miles per hour

After reviewing the data, the Committee agreed that speed enforcement on Sewalls Falls Road should continue as Concord Police Department resources allow.

West Parish Road

TOC discussed the referral during its August 20, 2024 meeting. The Committee discussed the need to confirm the roadway segment is properly signed before performing additional enforcement and agreed to continue the item to the next meeting. The Committee continued discussions at its September 17, 2024 after confirming proper signage was in place, Concord Police Department reported on their enforcement efforts. They reported that officers did not observe thru trucking during their added watch. The Committee recommends no additional actions at this time.

Speeds

A speed data report produced from the State's TomTom software during the month of April 2025 on West Parish Road, between the Hopkinton T/L and Carter Hill Road, reported speeds as follows:

Direction	Avg (mph)	85th (mph)
Both	39	43

Continued speed enforcement on West Parish Road will continue as Concord Police Department resources allow.

cc: Traffic Operations Committee

Attachment: Commercial Trucking Thruway Status Map