



DEVAL L. PATRICK, GOVERNOR  
 TIMOTHY P. MURRAY, LT. GOVERNOR  
 JEFFREY B. MULLAN, SECRETARY & CEO  
 LUISA PAIEWONSKY, ADMINISTRATOR

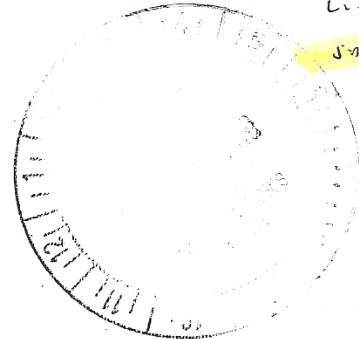


July 6, 2010

Mr. Richard White  
 Town Administrator  
 Town of Dennis  
 P.O. Box 2060  
 Dennis, MA 02660-2060

Mr. James R. Merriam  
 Town Administrator  
 Town of Harwich  
 732 Main Street  
 Harwich, MA 02645

cc. BOS  
 chief mason  
 LUC  
 jml@dot.com



Dear Mr. White and Mr. Merriam:

Thank you for the recent submission regarding your joint request to re-study the existing posted speed limits on Great Western Road in Dennis and Harwich.

Please be aware that after careful study of all the data submitted and follow-up studies conducted by both our District 5 Traffic Engineering section and our Boston Office Speed Control Unit, we are unable to recommend a 35 mile per hour speed limit for the entire length of Great Western Road. There are particular sections of this roadway where the prevailing speeds of motorists are consistently at a level that would result in the vast majority of motorists traveling in violation of a 35 mile per hour speed posting and subsequently subject them to fines and insurance surcharges, which would be unfair to motorists traveling in a reasonable and prudent manner.

It has been proven to us through many studies and years of experience that posting a lower speed has little effect on the speeds motorists choose to travel. It has always been our policy to ensure the maximum safe speed limit under ideal conditions is posted on all roadways in Massachusetts, and as the basic speed law states, it is up to each and every driver to adjust their speeds whenever a special hazard exists with respect to pedestrians or other traffic or adverse weather conditions.

The aforementioned notwithstanding, there are several items to note and subsequent changes and recommendations as a result of the study, which are as follows:

GREAT WESTERN ROAD –DENNIS

- We are recommending the elimination of the 45 and 35 mile per hour speed limits and creating one 40 mile per hour zone. (we will retain the 25 mph zone near the western terminus of Great Western Road). The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds are fairly consistent throughout these sections, and one 40 mile per hour zone will serve to eliminate confusion on the part of the motorist and provide enforcement officials with a consistent speed limit to enforce through the entire area.
- We are recommending that the Town erect a W3-5(25) *Reduced Speed Ahead* warning sign facing westbound traffic in advance of the existing 25 mile per hour speed zone.

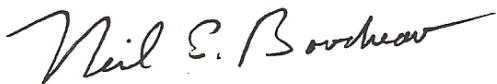
We have attached two copies of Special Speed Regulation 926-B for Great Western Road in Dennis. Please have each copy of this Regulation signed by the Board of Selectmen, attested by the Town Clerk and returned to MassDOT, Traffic Design and Operations, 10 Park Plaza, Room 7210, Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3973, for further processing.

GREAT WESTERN ROAD – HARWICH

- During the field investigation, it was noted that the distances of the existing speed zones were not consistent in each direction. Further investigation into our files and field notes from 1970 (when the original study was conducted) revealed that there is actually a typographical error on Special Speed Regulation number 598, dated January 18, 1971. The distances in the eastbound direction are correct. However the distances of the initial 40 mph zone and the second 40 mph zone in the westbound direction were somehow reversed, and apparently this error went undetected as the roadway is posted in the westbound direction according to the incorrect distances reflected on the Regulation. An amended regulation has been attached, and the signs in the westbound direction should be removed and re-installed to reflect these distances.
- As it was found to be the case with the section of Great Western Road in Dennis, the speed study revealed 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds that are consistent with the existing posted speeds, and we must recommend that they be retained. The updated speed limit signage in the westbound direction will ensure that appropriate speeds are posted on all sections of this roadway.
- Presently, there is a W2-1 *Intersection Warning* sign along with a non-standard sign reading “Dangerous Intersection Ahead” in advance of the intersection of Depot Road in the westbound direction. We are recommending these signs be removed and replaced in both directions by *modified W1-10 Combination Horizontal Alignment/Intersection* signs along with W13-1 *Advisory Speed Plaques* indicating 35 miles per hour. (W1-10 signs should be modified to accurately display the offset intersecting roadways). It is our opinion this treatment will provide motorists of a more accurate description of the conditions in this area and more closely reflects the geometry of the roadway at this intersection.

Attached are two copies of Special Speed Regulation 598-B for Great Western Road in Harwich. Please have each copy of this Regulation signed by the Board of Selectmen, attested by the Town Clerk and returned to MassDOT, Traffic Design and Operations, 10 Park Plaza, Room 7210, Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3973, for further processing.

Sincerely,



Neil Boudreau  
State Traffic Engineer

Cc: Dist. 5 Traffic  
J. Rodricks, Dennis Town Engineer  
J. Borgesi, Harwich Town Engineer  
Chief Michael Whalen, Dennis Police Department  
Chief William Mason, Harwich Police Department



## MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### TOWN OF HARWICH SPECIAL SPEED REGULATION # 598-B

Highway Location: HARWICH  
Authority In Control: TOWN OF HARWICH  
Name of Highway (s): GREAT WESTERN ROAD

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 90, § 18, the following Special Speed Regulation is

Hereby Adopted

by the Board of Selectmen

of the Town of Harwich

Special Speed Regulation number 598, dated January 18, 1971 is hereby amended on Great Western Road by striking out all clauses pertaining to the westbound direction and inserting in place thereof the following revision and addenda:

That the following speed limits are established at which motor vehicles may be operated in the areas described:

#### **GREAT WESTERN ROAD - WESTBOUND**

Beginning at Main Street,  
Thence westerly on Great Western Road  
0.64 miles at 40 miles per hour  
0.64 miles at 35 miles per hour  
0.91 miles at 40 miles per hour ending at the Dennis Town line; the total distance  
being 2.19 miles.



Operation of a motor vehicle at a rate of speed in excess of these limits shall be prima facie evidence that such speed is greater than is reasonable and proper.

The provisions of this regulation shall not, however, abrogate M.G.L. c. 90, § 14

Date of Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
TOWN CLERK

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SPECIAL SPEED REGULATION NO. 598-B

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation does hereby certify that this regulation is consistent with the public interest.

Standard signs must be erected at the beginning of each zone.

REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
DIVISION

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Traffic Engineer

DATE: