

NETCONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



TRAVEL PLAN

June 2016

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NETCONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION

Netcong, a tradition to nurture, inspire, empower, and achieve, by all, for all.

INTRODUCTION

In 2006, Netcong Elementary School completed our first School Travel Plan. After 10 years, there have been many improvements to the walking and bicycling environment to school. Sidewalks were installed along Prospect Street Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon solar lights are installed at the mid-block crossing in front of the school on College Road and the PTA runs walking and bicycling to school events on Walk and Roll Wednesdays and an annual bike rodeo.

This School Travel Plan updates the information compiled in the 2006 Plan. This Plan will highlight safer routes to school, encourage students to become physically fit, and reduce vehicular traffic in the community. Therefore the plan will address both student health and the environment. The Netcong Elementary Board of Education continues to find ways to improve the overall health and safety of the pupils traveling to and from school.

WORKING GROUP

This plan was prepared by the Netcong PTA with support from the Netcong Elementary School Superintendent and administration, the Borough Administrator, the Netcong Police Department, and the Borough Engineer.

GOALS

- To encourage students to walk/cycle to school
- To provide students with the life skills on how to safely walk and bicycle
- To improve the safety of our students as they travel to and from school
- To improve the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to school
- To help lessen the motor vehicle congestion around the school
- To keep children and parents healthy
- To raise awareness of daily health
- To encourage health habits for life
- To play a part in improving the environment

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Netcong Elementary School
26 College Road • Netcong, NJ 07857

GRADE LEVELS: PreK-8

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: 296 2014-15
303 2013-14
315 2012-13

SCHOOL HOURS: 8:15 am - 2:54 pm

Breakfast is offered at 7:45 am and in the classroom



Netcong Elementary School is a small school in a town of approximately 3200 residents located in Morris County, NJ. The school is situated on a hill in the center of the Borough. For a small town a mile square the Borough is surrounded by several major highways including Routes 46, 183, 206, and 80. A NJ Transit commuting rail line also bisects the town. Netcong School is a Choice District and accepts students to the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program.

From 2000 to 2010, Netcong experienced a 25.9% population change, which is much greater than the percent population change of both Morris County and New Jersey. This positive population change is largely attributed to the influx in the Hispanic population, which experienced a 178.8% population change from 2000 to 2010 and continuing with a 40.4% population change from 2010 to 2012. While much of the population increase in Morris County and New Jersey is also attributed to the increase in the Hispanic population, the percent change of the Hispanic population in Netcong is much larger.

Compared with municipalities in the three county area (Morris, Sussex & Warren), Netcong has one of the highest percentages of families living below poverty at 14.2%. Median household income is \$52,280, which is well below the state average of \$70,165. Recent findings from the Community Needs Assessment from Atlantic Healthcare/North Jersey Health Collaborative found one in five adults in Morris County is obese with high rates among low-income children (18.1% obese.)

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of students enrolled in Netcong's K-8 school receive free and reduced meal (FARM) subsidies, one of the highest percentages in the county. Additionally, 21% percent of households in Morris County are considered "ALICE" (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). Per capita income is significantly higher (almost double) for Asian and White individuals than for Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American individuals. While Morris County as a whole is highly educated, with 93% of adults having a high school degree or higher and 50% having a bachelor's degree or higher, those living in Netcong with a high school degree is 86% and bachelor's degree or higher is only 17%.

EXISTING SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to walk or bike to school daily. One Wednesday during almost each month students can walk on their own or join walking school buses and get backpack charms for participation in Netcong Walk and Roll Club events. Each event has a theme like the Turkey Trot in November, Save the Endangered Stinky Sneaker in May, Spare the Air in April and Be a Walk and Roll Star in June. In addition, Netcong Elementary PTA volunteers work with TransOptions TMA, Northern NJ Safe Kids and Marty's Reliable Cycle to support a Bike Rodeo once per year, which include free helmets with helmet fitting, a fix it station for children's bicycles and skills drills for the students. The Netcong Walk and Roll Club and annual bike rodeos have been on going since 2009 and the reason for receiving the NJDOT Safe Routes to School Gold Award in 2015. For more information and event dates, visit, <http://netcongwalkandroll.blogspot.com>

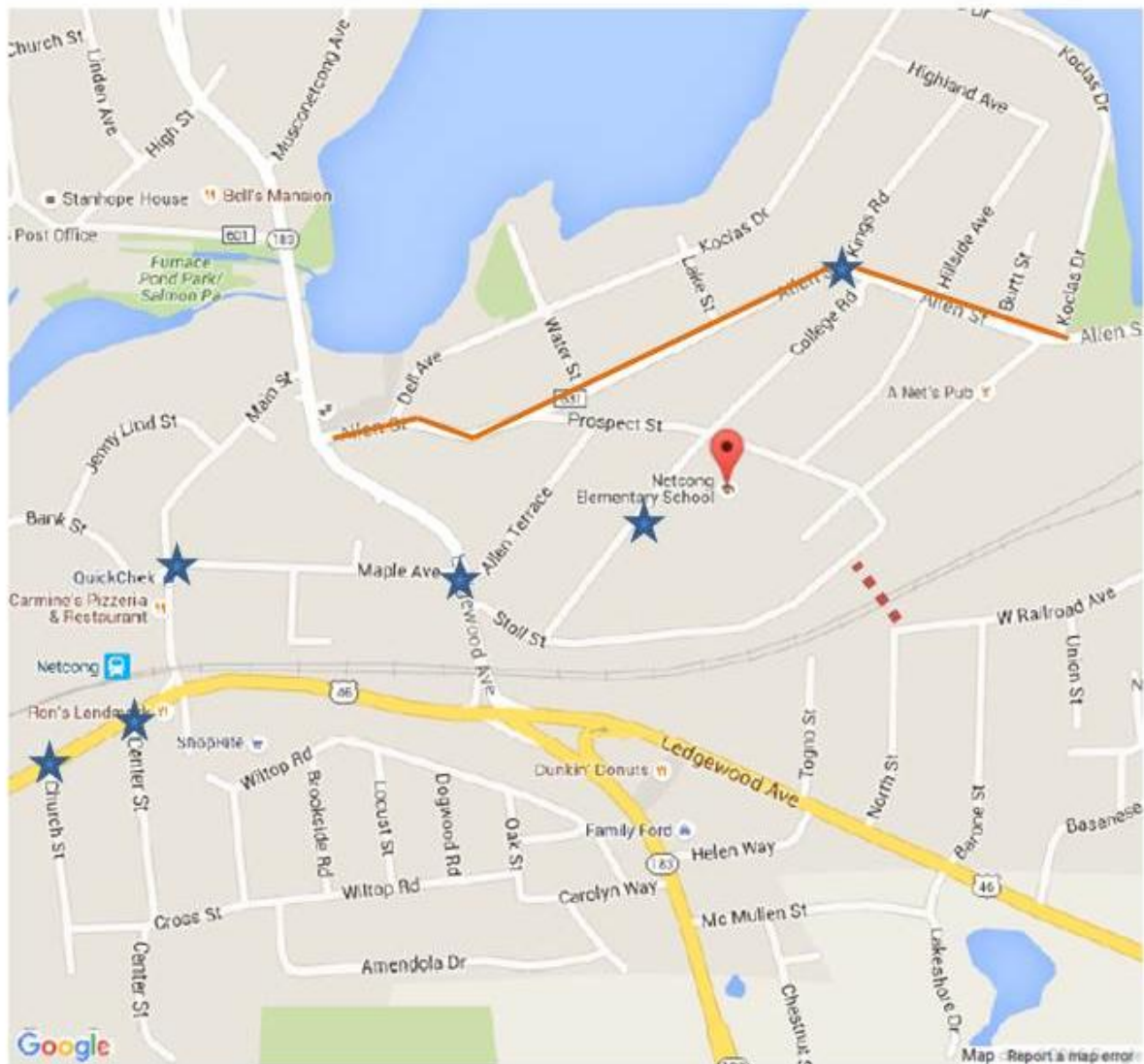
Netcong successfully used \$143,000 of the 2007 NJDOT federal Safe Routes to School funding on the construction of sidewalks along Prospect Street and adding bicycle racks at the school. The project was completed in the summer of 2008, just in time for the 2008-2009 school year. When NJDOT replaced the Rt. 46/Rt.183 traffic circle with a 4-way intersection, Netcong and NJDOT worked together to address connections along a popular walk to school route. Infrastructure improvements included adding pedestrian signal across Rt. 46 at Center and Main Streets and adding paint and striping to the crossing at Rt. 183 and Maple Ave where pedestrians and the crossing guard complained of near misses.

NEIGHBORHOOD MAP



School Neighborhood Map

| |
|------------------------------------|
| Netcong Elementary School |
| 26 College Road, Netcong, NJ 07857 |



★ Crossing Guard Locations — Allen St. Audit

■ ■ ■ ■ Cut-thru on NJ Transit Tracks

EXISTING REGULATIONS





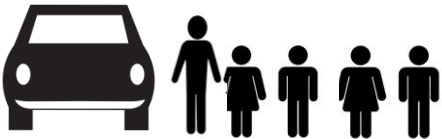

Netcong is a walking District there is no District provided bus service for the students. All the students in the District either walk or bike to school or are passengers in vehicles. A few students use busing provided by a nearby daycare center. The amount of students traveling to and from school causes a great deal of congestion in front of the school. This traffic also causes congestion to the state and county roads that run through the Borough.

In 2009, the ban on bicycling to school was changed to a policy, which allows fourth graders and above to ride bikes to school. At that time new bicycle racks were installed outside the Board of Education building and are frequently used.

Netcong's Council was an early adopter of a Complete Streets policy. The Borough's policy was adopted in 2010 shortly after the NJDOT's award-winning policy was adopted. In 2011, the Complete Streets Coalition named Netcong's policy as one of the top policies in the nation adopted in a small or rural municipality. Netcong is one of 31 designated Transit Villages in NJ. Since receiving state designation in 2005, Netcong has been working to redevelop the area around the train station to increase housing within walking distance of shops, jobs, offices, restaurants and Netcong Elementary School using design standards of transit-oriented development (TOD).

HOW STUDENTS TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

Student Arrival and Departure Travel Tallies have been conducted in 2006 and 2016 using the forms from the National Center for Safe Routes to School. Teachers conducted counts by asking students to raise their hands to indicate how they arrived at school and how they plan to leave the school. Students chose from "walk," bike," "school bus," "family vehicle," "carpool," "transit," and "other." Teachers conducted surveys during the week of December 4, 2006 and the week of May 9, 2016.

| | 2006 | | 2016 | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Arrival | Dismissal | Arrival | Dismissal |
|  School Bus (Private) | <1% | <1% | 3% | 1% |
|  Students are Driven | 63% | 50% | 60% | 50% |
|  Students Walk | 20% | 28% | 33% | 39% |
|  Students Bike | 0% | 0% | 0.7% | 2% |
|  Carpool (> 1 family) | 16% | 19% | 4% | 7% |
|  Transit & Other | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

TRAFFIC SAFETY BARRIERS & OPPORTUNITIES

Several major highways connect to or through Netcong making it very difficult for children to walk or bike to school as many of the routes cross business driveways along the highways. A NJ Transit commuter rail line runs through Netcong near the back of the school. Students often cut across the train tracks to walk to and from school (See Neighborhood Map.)

The roads outside of Netcong School are residential and have sidewalks. Recent improvements on College Road include a pedestrian activated, rectangular rapid flash beacon at the mid-block crossing. Allen Street is county road where there is significant large truck traffic and drivers often speed above the 25 mph limit. Ledgewood Avenue (Route 183) is a state highway that bisects the town where the speed limit is 35 mph. Parents and students complain of near-misses with drivers while crossing Ledgewood Avenue and Allen Street.

The parking lot in the front of the school and the fenced-in area adjacent to the playground on the South side of the building are for staff only. There is parking available in the spaces in the front of the Staff Lot on the side of the building, behind the school adjacent to the Board of Education building and on College Road. On the south side of the building there is also a “drive-through” where parents are to remain in their vehicles and pull up to the fenced in area their children either in or out of the vehicle.

ALLEN STREET WALKABILITY AUDIT 2016



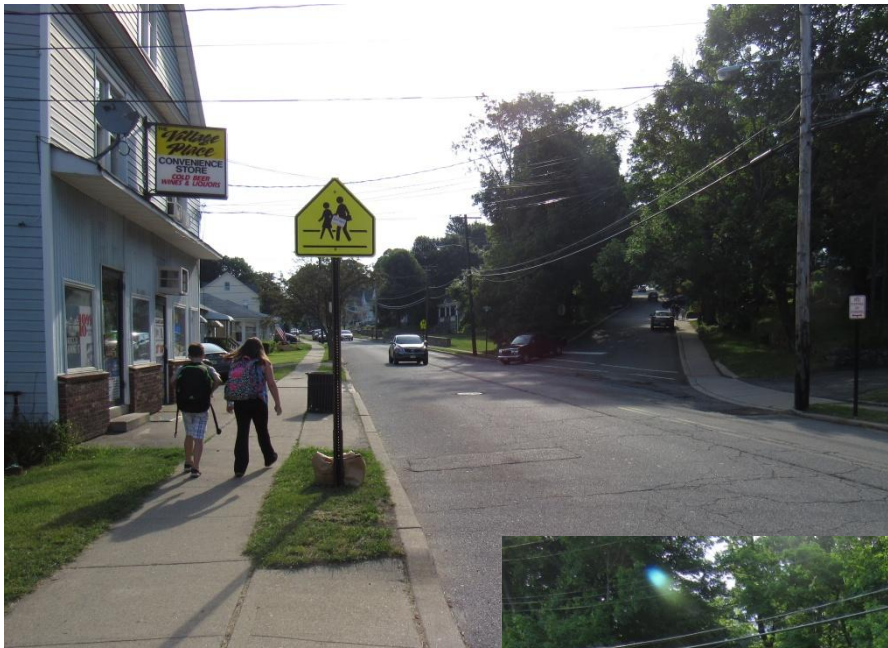
Allen St & Rt. 183/Ledgewood Ave.

The length of the crossing and the wide turning radii make this one of the most difficult crossings in town. Most drivers only slow to make a right-turn from Rt. 183 onto Allen Street. There is a need for a pedestrian countdown signals and high visibility crosswalk striping at this crossing. In addition, either corner bollards that reduce the turning radii or a pedestrian refuge the unprotected crossing distance.



Allen St. & Dell Ave.

ADA compliant curb cuts where the slope of the ramp is not too steep, truncated dome pads and high visibility crosswalk striping



Allen St. & Prospect Ave.

U needs crosswalk & all ADA improvements. @stall flexible bollards shorten crossing distance and prevent drivers from parking within 25ft. of the crosswalk on either side.



Allen St & Water St.

Move crosswalk to corner so it is not mid-block and a driver's view of pedestrians is not blocked by the pole.



Allen St. & Kings Rd.

ADA compliant curb ramps and high visibility crosswalk striping . Add stop and stay stopped in-street crosswalk sign (MUTCD 7B.12)



Allen St. & Stoll St.

Wide curb radii contributes to issues with drivers not slowing to make a stop before turning onto Allen St. #rosswalk striping and curb extensions to tighten the turning radius .



Allen St. at Netcong Boarder

At the Netcong boarder with Roxbury, there is a need to slow driving speeds to obey the 25 mph speed limit, provide bicycle compatible shoulders, and add sidewalk.

IDEAS FOR ADDRESSING TRAFFIC SAFETY CONCERNS

1. Stripe high-visibility, ladder crosswalks & add ADA curb ramps and truncated dome pads where missing.
 - College Rd. & Prospect St.
 - Hillside Ave. & Prospect St.
 - Stoll St. & Prospect St.
 - Allen St. & Prospect St.
 - Move crosswalk across Allen St near Water Ave to the actual intersection
 - Allen St. & Kings Ave. (add stop & stay stopped signs to center median)
 - Allen St. & Stoll St
 - Dell Ave & Water St.
 - Route 183 & Route 46 (crosswalks are already faded)
2. Add high-visibility, ladder stripped painted crosswalks where currently unmarked crosswalks exist.& add ADA curb ramps and truncated dome pads:
 - Allen St & Prospect St. (both legs of intersection)
 - Main St and Rt. 183
3. Install radar feedback signs on each side of the road:
 - Allen St. near Prospect St.
 - Allen St. near Koclas Dr in vicinity of speed limit change to 25 mph
 - Dell Ave near DiRenzo Park
4. Make intersection of Allen St & Rt. 183 permanent “no right turn on red” on all legs. See page 3 of [NJDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Toolbox](#).
5. Add stop and stay stopped in-street crosswalk signs (MUTCD 7B.12)
 - Rt. 183 & Maple Ave.
 - Allen St. & Kings. Ave.
6. Add pedestrian countdown timers and add additional ADA push buttons:
 - Rt. 183 & Allen St.

7. Route 183/Maple Ave/Allen Terrace

- Add pedestrian hybrid beacon (HAWK signal) or Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) warning device to un-signalized intersection.
- Stripe high visibility ladder crosswalks
- Add flexible bollards as curb extensions crossing Rt. 183.
- Add pedestrian lighting approx 10 feet ahead of crosswalk on Rt. 183.
- Add stop and stay stopped in-street crosswalk signs (MUTCD 7B.12)
- Fix flashing warning beacon along Rt. 183

8. Add flexible bollards to delineate no parking area/increase sight distance for crosswalks (daylight crosswalks)

- College Ave mid-block crosswalk in front of school
- Allen St. & Prospect (along with high visibility crosswalk)

Example, [NJDOT School Zone Design Guide](#)

Also see page 4 of [NJDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan](#)

When does "when children are present" apply?

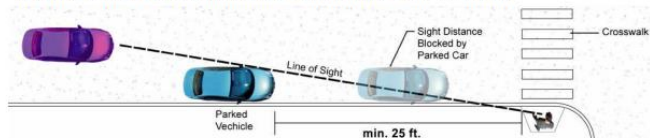
"When children are present" does not apply at all times in a school zone. The Superior Court of New Jersey has determined the lower speed limit in a school zone is only applicable (1) during school hours, but only during recess, when children are clearly visible from the roadway, or (2) when children are going to or leaving school during opening or closing hours of school (State of New Jersey v. Floyd A. Beierle (1999)). The reduced school zone speed limit does not apply outside of these times.

Regardless of the time of day or year, drivers should always be alert and on the lookout for children when driving near schools, parks or other attractions.

What other traffic laws relate to school zones?

Restricting parking in advance of crosswalks and corners improves visibility of the crossing for both drivers and pedestrians. According to N.J.S.A 39:4-138, parking is not permitted:

- within an intersection;
- on a crosswalk;
- within 50 feet of a "stop" sign; or
- within 25 feet of the nearest crosswalk or side line of a street or intersecting highway or within 10 feet of the nearest crosswalk or side line of a street or intersecting highway, if a curb extension or bulb-out has been constructed at that crosswalk.



Recommended Parking Setback for Sight Distance. Image: The RBA Group

Criteria for Safe Speed Limit Design

According to N.J.S.A. 39:4-98, when designating reasonable and safe speed limits for a street under its jurisdiction, as part of an engineering and traffic investigation, a municipality or county shall consider, but not be limited to, the following criteria: crash history; residential density; the presence, or lack, of sidewalks; the prevalence of entry and exit ways for business and commercial establishments; whether school children walk adjacent to the street on their way to and from school; the proximity of recreational or park areas, schools, community residences, family day care homes, child care centers, assisted living facilities or senior communities; and input from the school district and other community representatives.



The City of New Brunswick has begun installing plastic pylons in the no-parking area, a practice called "daylighting." The cost of purchasing and installing the standard-use pylons is minimal and can be done in-house with little delay. Image: VTC

9. Add shared lane marking (sharrows) to Dell Ave. See Section 9C.07 of the 2009 MUTCD or install Bicycles May use Full Lane signs (MUTCD R4-11)

10. Add vertical reflective strip to STOP signs (MUTCD 2A.21)

11. Add sidewalk along Allen Street at Netcong boarder. Fix broken and heaved sidewalk along Allen Street. Add sidewalk on Route 46 to connect to Netcong Heights.

12. Reduce sweeping curb radii that barely require vehicles to slow when making right turns at intersections

- Rt. 183 & Allen St.
- Stoll St. & Allen St.

**For Rt. 183 &
Allen St.**

Example application:



Add pedestrian
countdown timers
& additional ADA
push buttons

Add crosswalk on
Ledgewood Ave

Add pork chop/
pedestrian refuge
island Option A.
paint (ok)
Option B. concrete
with mountable
curbs (best)

Add ergonomic
crosswalk across
Allen St.

WHAT NETCONG SCHOOL IS ALREADY DOING

- The Administration encourages parents and students to use the Crossing Guards.
- The Administration regularly patrols outside before and after school.
- The school encourages healthy ways of traveling to school through participation in the Netcong Walk & Roll Club, posters and assemblies.
- The Administration is in frequent contact with the Borough's Police Department regarding issues with speeding and failure to follow proper pick up and drop off procedures.

WHAT NETCONG SCHOOL CAN DO (Education and Encouragement)

- The Administration will write to the parents to suggest that their children walk, bicycle or carpool as much as possible to and from school.
- The School District will continue to promote monthly Netcong PTA Walk & Roll Club events including International and statewide "Walk to School Day" events.
- The Administration will continue to work with the PTA, Borough Police Department, Northern New Jersey SafeKids and TransOptions to run annual bicycle rodeos.
- The School District will promote walking to school by organizing bicycle and pedestrian lesson plans and education programs.
- The School District will work with Netcong Police Department and leverage school and municipal websites and social media to provide public anti-idling law education to parents, school staff, community members and delivery trucks/commercial vehicles.
- The School District will work with Netcong Police Department and leverage school and municipal websites and social media to provide education on traffic laws including no texting, cell phone use, stop and stay stopped for pedestrians and obeying crossing guards to school staff, parents and community members.
- The School District can circulate the School Travel Plan report.

WHAT NETCONG BOROUGH CAN DO

(Engineering and Enforcement)

- Improve signage for school routes throughout the Borough.
- Continue quality training and placement of the Crossing Guards.
- As needed, work with property owners to improve and repair sidewalks along school routes.
- As needed, reach out to property owners with untrimmed bushes/overgrown trees, which may block drivers' view and make it difficult to see pedestrians.
- Work with Netcong Police Department to enhance enforcement of speeding violations, failure to stop and stay stopped for pedestrians in crosswalks, and parking violations.
- Define and improve crosswalks with more visible striping.
- Restricting parking in advance of crosswalks and corners to improve visibility of the crossing for both drivers and pedestrians by painting the curb yellow and adding plastic pylons in the no-parking area within 25 feet of the crosswalk.
- Continue cooperation between the School District, Police Department and the Borough on events like the annual Bike Rodeo and monthly Walk & Roll.
- Work with the School District and Netcong Police Department and leverage school and municipal websites and social media to provide public anti-idling law education to parents, school staff, community members and delivery trucks/commercial vehicles.
- Work with the School District and Netcong Police Department and leverage school and municipal websites and social media to provide education on traffic laws including no texting, cell phone use, stop and stay stopped for pedestrians and obeying crossing guards to school staff, parents and community members.
- Work with Morris County to make pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along Allen Street.
- Work with NJDOT to explore the feasibility of traffic safety recommendations for Routes 183 and 46.
- The Borough can circulate the School Travel Plan report.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Working with the Police Department the Borough will conduct speed studies prior to and after implementation of infrastructure improvements.
- The School District will conduct the student arrival and departure travel mode survey after infrastructure improvements are made to determine if there are changes to how children travel to and from school.
- Working with the Police Department the Borough will monitor crash data to understand changes over time.
- The School District and Borough will periodically review the actions in the Travel Plan and continue to make improvements.
- The Netcong PTA will continue to monitor the number of students participating in Walk and Roll to school events and the annual Bike Rodeo.