

## **Assessor**

SCAR Hearings – None This Month!

- Over 100 SCAR filings were submitted across the County this year—a number that continues to double annually, largely due to outreach from third-party Tax Abatement companies.
- While taxpayers absolutely have the right to pursue these filings, we strongly encourage residents to speak directly with the Assessor's Office first. A personal conversation can often resolve concerns more efficiently and accurately.
- The Tax Abatement company currently sending mailers statewide does not verify the validity of claims, lacks local knowledge of our area, and does not provide taxpayers the opportunity to submit supporting documentation or photos.
- If you believe you have a legitimate claim, please visit our office. We welcome the chance to review your property inventory together and accept any relevant photos or materials.

Around the Office

- In addition to our regular administrative duties, we have been actively working in the field, verifying property data, capturing updated photos, and reviewing agricultural usage.
- Fieldwork related to permits will resume shortly.

Property Alert Incident

- This month, our office received a call from a property owner who had been contacted by a local realtor. The realtor had been approached by an individual attempting to list the owner's property—without the owner's knowledge or consent. While there is no action our office can take in such cases, we want to make property owners aware that these incidents do occur. Unfortunately, we are limited in our ability to intervene, but we encourage residents to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the appropriate authorities.

## **Building Department**

No report

## **Business & Economic Development**

No report

## **CAC, Climate Smart & Environmental Management**

**CAC:**

**Drinking Water Source Protection Plan (DWSP2)** -- The CAC tested several resident's wells at the end of July and will go out again to test in September - please

reach out if you want your water tested. Testing is 100% voluntary. You will be kept on the list and will keep getting contacted for your availability. Along with the testing, we are interested in information on any concerns, like things that have been buried or dumped uphill/upstream from wells. On social media, we have read about many issues that residents bring up about water - PLEASE REACH OUT TO US AND WE CAN LIKELY HELP. Knowledge is power. Many common issues are easily remediated. Please e-mail [nlcac.munves@gmail.com](mailto:nlcac.munves@gmail.com) to get on the water testing list or to share concerns. We are figuring out how we can get more funds for testing for 2026 and beyond.

We were very well received at the recent County Environmental Management Council meeting in Hudson where folks wanted to learn about the DWSP2 and water testing.

**DWSP2 Related Resolution to Prevent or Stop Spread of Wastewater Sludge with PFAS** -- The CAC is drafting a resolution for September for the Town Board to stop the application of sewage sludge from wastewater treatment plants onto farmland and other open spaces. Sludge can cause soil and groundwater contamination (including and especially PFAS contamination). Working with Environmental Advocates of NY, this is part of a push for a moratorium supporting statewide action to stop the application of sludge. New Lebanon Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling and the CAC have been at the forefront of pushing for lower acceptable PFAS levels in drinking water in NYS and will continue to do what we can to try and limit PFAS use and contamination in the environment.

**Trees for Tribs** -- The plants are doing very well and volunteers are making sure everything is well staked. We are starting to take tubes off of shrubs but tree tubes will remain at least for another year. We have come up with a novel way to stake and steady the trees using parts of tubes which will save a lot of money on other types of staking. We budgeted for and are purchasing some additional wooden stakes. If anyone sees tubes bent and trees down please reach out to the Town Clerk or contact [nlcac.munves@gmail.com](mailto:nlcac.munves@gmail.com)

**Shatford Park Streambank Erosion Mitigation** -- The project is too small for DEC to come in to remediate. We need someone to look at the project, get permission or permit to work in the stream, and find a way to prevent more erosion. This year has been a low water year so erosion has been lower, but the banks of the stream are dangerous in many places.

**Joint BEDC and Conservation Advisory Council Wastewater Feasibility Study** -- We anticipate the Feasibility Study will be ready to share this summer. We did not achieve our survey return goals on household characteristics which will affect how much funding we might get. This will be clarified when the study comes in.

**Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress** -- We look forward to the Aug 26 Community Meeting and completing our task of looking at all the strategies/sites that we discussed during the May 22 meeting and then carefully whittling them down.

**Program for Summer Campers** -- The campers and friends who showed up on July 25 to the Community Center loved the Bird program. Thanks Sharon Audubon!

**Open Space Inventory** -- Thanks to the Town Board who acted quickly at the July meeting to assist us in applying for a grant to digitize the OSI. Due to several factors immediately following the TB meeting we decided to postpone this grant effort. We are working on linking some already available digital maps of the area onto the Town Website and will be pursuing more funding and work on the OSI in the coming months.

**CAC and NLPlanning Board** -- The CAC is working with the Planning Board on the private Tilden Project and are reviewing the newly submitted and revised SEQR and Aquatic Resource Delineation Report and more.

The New Lebanon CAC is: Co-Chairs Bill O'Neill and Peg Munves, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker, Bob Gilson and Donald Lamonaca

**CSC:**

We would like to thank CSC advisor Marc Anthonisen and SUNY Binghamton student Morgan Brenner for their presentation at this meeting on their results of their benchmarking study of energy use at the Town Hall and Town Garage. Benchmarking is a critical part of tracking energy usage.

And I'd also like to thank Marc for helping me prepare the application (42 pages!) for NYSERDA's Building Cleaner Communities Competition. Our goal was to apply for a grant that would allow us to put heat pumps in the court house and meeting hall side of Town Hall using the existing ducted system. This would make meetings a lot quieter especially for those sitting in the back of the room. The project would add more solar panels to the roof and a battery backup for when the grid was down. Even if we don't win the competition, we can submit this project when NYSERDA reinstates its Clean Energy Communities program later this year.

The CSC is proposing that the Town Board approve a Level 2 charger at the Community Center using the leftover funds that we have from our \$250,000 grant. The cost to the town for a Level 3 fast charger after state incentives is over \$100,000!

This month the Bike Tune Up Day at the Community Center will be Aug 21 from 3:00pm-5pm.

**EMC:**

No report

## **Fire, Law Enforcement & Emergency**

Fire Calls and Activities - July 2025

1. 7/1/2025 wires down 4 people .48min
2. 7/3/2025 Alarm Activation 1 person .03min
3. 7/12/2025 Drill 3 people 9hrs

4. 7/12/2025 Alarm Activation 8 people 3.28hr

5. 7/14/2025 Drill 8 people 16hrs

6. 7/21/2025 Outdoor odor 4 people 1.32hr

7. 7/21/2025 Drill 7 people 9.5hrs

8. 7/25/2025 Alarm Activation 3 people .51hr

38 people 40.12 hrs

Wires Down-1

Outdoor odor-1

Alarm activation – 3

5 alarms

Drills – 3

## **Highway**

No report

## **Historian & LVHS**

**Historian:**

No report

**LVHS:**

No report

## **Justice Court**

No report

## **Library**

No report

## **Buildings, Parks & Recreation**

**Buildings:**

No report

**Parks:**

No report

**Recreation Commission:**

No report

## **Seniors**

The County Board of supervisors accepted the senior survey submitted by the OFA and plans to start distribution in September with completion planned for October. Once the data has been compiled the Town will be sent a copy of the data. The goal is to upgrade our services for those over the age of 60 to meet the needs of the population.

Farmers Market coupons have arrived here in town, the local Farmers Market is accepting the coupons and doubling them on any allowable purchase.

The annual County Senior picnic is scheduled for Sept. 10 at the Chatham Fairgrounds. Any senior living in Columbia County may attend, call 518-828-4258 prior to 8/29 to register. ~~The picnic includes music and games and County vendors including the~~ Department of Health who offers 2025 fluogen vaccine, just bring your insurance card.

The bus transportation from Chatham to Hudson has started and has some ridership. See the article in the town newsletter for pickup and drop off sites and days the bus comes to Chatham.

The County reported that the Housing development organization is offering grants that can help landlords and property owners to turn vacant rental units or homes into affordable housing. Contact [RUPCO.org/vrp](http://RUPCO.org/vrp) for information.

## **Traffic Safety**

See attached reference sheets for the speed sign data for both Winslow Road and Old Post Road at the end of this report.

County Rt 5 had new shoulders placed and will be resurfaced in August, all County roads will have new pavement markings placed starting in July.

The Highway superintendent was emailed a copy of the meeting minutes.

## **Zoning Re-write Committee Update**

No report

## **Community Center/Free Store Update**

Here is the breakdown of the Community Center's numbers for July 2025

Free Store 999  
Game Room sign-ins 258  
1 Senior Meeting 67  
Yoga 110 (5 sessions)  
Jam Session 12  
Bike Repair 7  
Private Party 125 (\$100)  
JULY TOTAL 1578

What's new?

We have a new Community Fridge that was given to us by Columbia Kitchen and they will be providing free meals (20 to start) weekly for anyone who needs them. Our first delivery was on Tuesday July 29 and all of the meals were taken by Thursday. A few local farmers have dropped off some produce as well.

The game room has a new to us ping pong table that we switched out with one of our old ones. We intend to keep all 4 (2 are tucked away) for Thursday Night Ping Pong coming this Fall.

Yoga is seeing more and more people each week with class sizes ranging from 20-28. It's starting to get tight in there. We've had a couple of guest instructors come in to mix things up and everyone who attends says how grateful they are that we were able to bring this to the community. I'd like to once again thank our instructors, Jonah Millett, Katie Medders and Hannah Goodnow for giving us their time and expertise.

Submitted by Alissa Ross  
CC Coordinator

### **Clarifying the Purpose of the New Lebanon FREE Store**

*From Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling*

There has been some recent misunderstanding about the purpose of the New Lebanon Free Store, and I'd like to take a moment to clarify its mission, especially as questions have been raised about whether access should be limited only to those who are "in need."

The Free Store was founded nine years ago, during my time as Town Clerk, as part of the Clean Energy Communities program. It was created as a **reduce, reuse, recycle** initiative, an environmental effort designed to keep useful items out of the landfill and in circulation. It is not, and was never intended to be, a charity program.

The idea is simple and powerful: **give what you can, take what you need, no questions asked.** Whether someone chooses to "shop" the Free Store out of financial necessity, environmental values, personal belief in sharing economies, or just for fun, everyone is welcome. And by making everything free, we remove stigma, create a sense of community, and reduce waste all at once.

This model works, so well, in fact, that the **Town of Chatham has recently launched their own Free Store** inspired by ours in New Lebanon. This movement is growing, and for good reason. It reflects modern thinking about sustainability, dignity, and community care.

Attempts to create a system that screens or assesses whether someone "needs" access to the Free Store not only **miss the point**, they **risk undoing what makes it work.** Imposing income-based qualifications would undermine the inclusive, environmentally focused mission we've built together over nearly a decade.

Historically, free stores are not a new idea. They originated as part of grassroots movements aimed at reducing waste, fostering equality, and challenging the culture of consumerism. They've always been open to all, rooted in mutual aid and environmental stewardship, not charity or judgment.

So let me be clear:

- **The Free Store is not a thrift store.**
- **The Free Store is not only for those in financial need.**
- **The Free Store is a sustainability project and a community resource.**

---

We currently receive more donations than we can display, and there's always something for everyone. So please, **come by, donate what you can, take what you can use, and be part of a beautiful, dignified, waste-free community tradition.**

Let's protect what makes the Free Store special: it's free, it's open to all, and it works.

## **Shaker Preservation Committee**

No report

## **County Update**

No report

## **Landfill Closure**

The following is a summary of the activities associated with the closure of the Former Town of New

Lebanon Landfill through July 31, 2025.

- Construction contract executed with Wm. J Keller & Sons on June 30, 2025 after receipt of insurance certificates and bonds.
- A formal Notice to Proceed was issued on July 9, 2025.
- Contractor commenced mobilization of equipment on July 8, 2025 and commenced clearing activities on July 9, 2025.
- Clearing and grubbing of stumps is complete for the construction footprint.
- Perimeter erosion control infrastructure has been installed.
- Stumps were ground up with a tub grinder and all chips have been removed from the site except those that had comingled waste within them. Those chips containing waste material will be left on site and utilized as fill material in the landfill footprint.
- Four truck loads of tires have been removed from the site for disposal at an off-site facility.

At least two additional truck loads will be removed next week.

- The relocation of waste to establish the closure grades and reduce the landfill footprint has commenced.
- Construction is expected to be completed in late October.
- Construction hours are expected to be Monday through Friday, 7:00 to 5:00 pm.

# Count by Speed Range Report

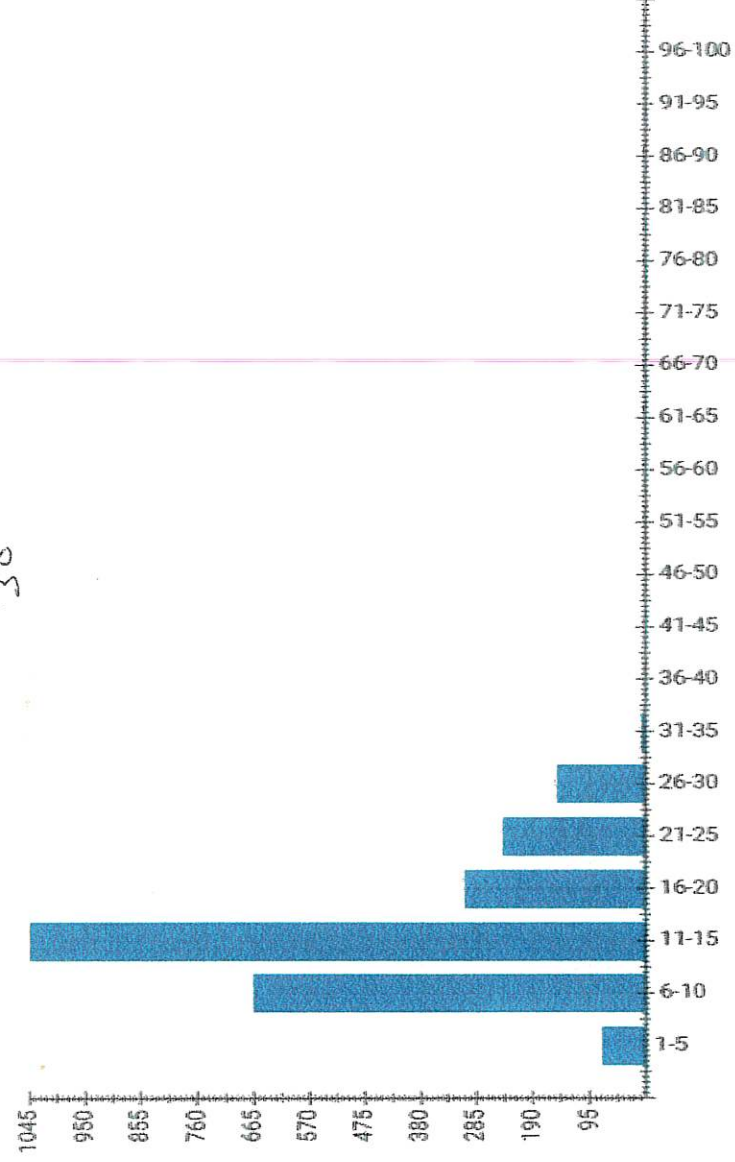
Report period: 2025-06-24 to 2025-07-09

Location: Winslow Road  
Address: 75, Winslow Road

*Sign active*  
*posted speed 30*

Count By Speed Range

| Speed (mph) | Count |
|-------------|-------|
| 1-5         | 73    |
| 6-10        | 866   |
| 11-15       | 1045  |
| 16-20       | 305   |
| 21-25       | 240   |
| 26-30       | 148   |
| 31-35       | 5     |
| 36-40       | 1     |
| 41-45       | 0     |
| 46-50       | 0     |
| 51-55       | 0     |
| 56-60       | 0     |
| 61-65       | 0     |
| 66-70       | 0     |
| 71-75       | 0     |
| 76-80       | 0     |
| 81-85       | 0     |
| 86-90       | 0     |
| 91-95       | 0     |
| 96-100      | 0     |
| Total       | 2181  |



■ COUNT

# Count by Speed Range Report

Report period: 2025-07-09 to 2025-07-16

Stealth -

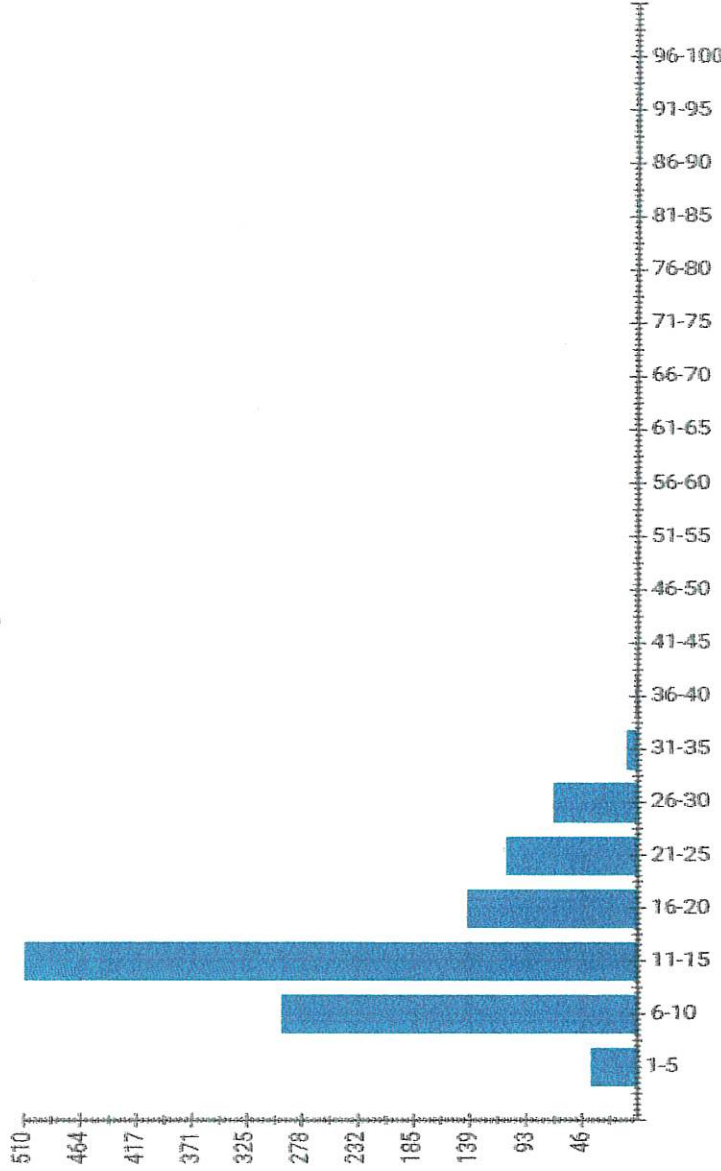
Location: Winslow Road

Address: 75, Winslow Road

Posted  
Speed  
30

Count By Speed Range

| Speed (mph) | Count |
|-------------|-------|
| 1-5         | 38    |
| 6-10        | 306   |
| 11-15       | 510   |
| 16-20       | 141   |
| 21-25       | 109   |
| 26-30       | 71    |
| 31-35       | 10    |
| 36-40       | 1     |
| 41-45       | 0     |
| 46-50       | 0     |
| 51-55       | 0     |
| 56-60       | 0     |
| 61-65       | 0     |
| 66-70       | 0     |
| 71-75       | 0     |
| 76-80       | 0     |
| 81-85       | 0     |
| 86-90       | 0     |
| 91-95       | 0     |
| 96-100      | 0     |
| Total       | 1177  |



# Count by Speed Range Report

Sta 14

Location: 140 Old Post Road

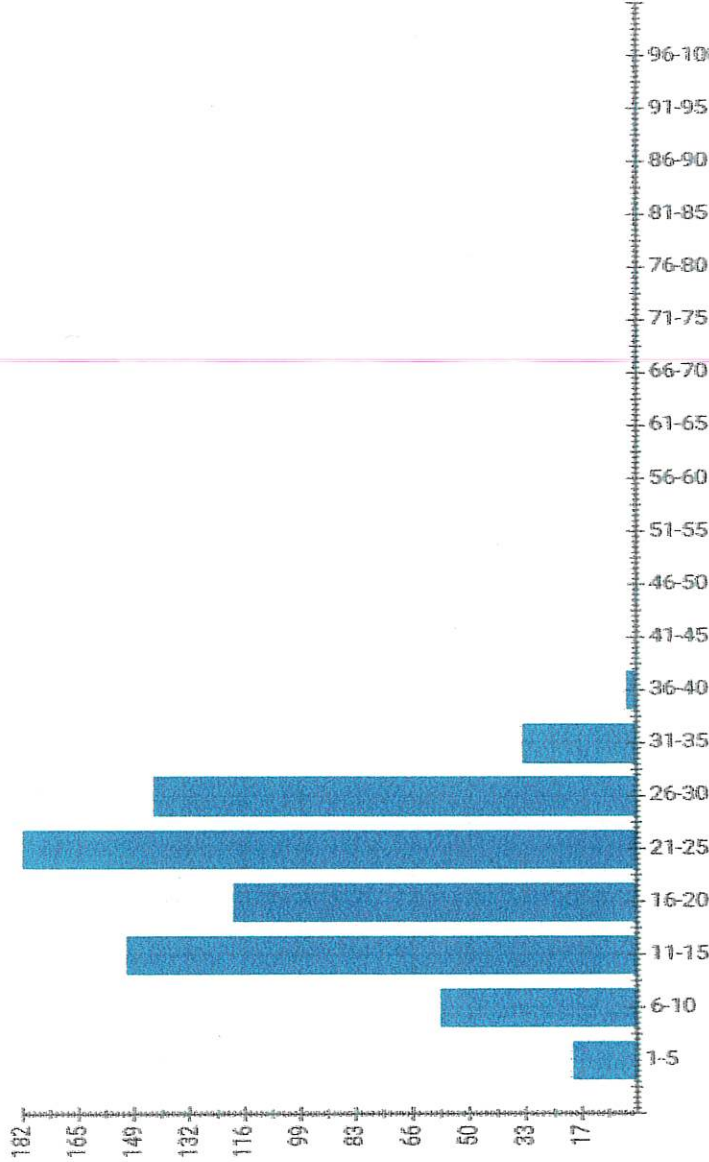
Posted  
Ahead  
35

Address: 140, Old Post Road

Report period: 2025-07-17 to 2025-07-21

Count By Speed Range

| Speed (mph) | Count |
|-------------|-------|
| 1-5         | 17    |
| 6-10        | 50    |
| 11-15       | 149   |
| 16-20       | 132   |
| 21-25       | 182   |
| 26-30       | 116   |
| 31-35       | 33    |
| 36-40       | 3     |
| 41-45       | 0     |
| 46-50       | 0     |
| 51-55       | 0     |
| 56-60       | 0     |
| 61-65       | 0     |
| 66-70       | 0     |
| 71-75       | 0     |
| 76-80       | 0     |
| 81-85       | 0     |
| 86-90       | 0     |
| 91-95       | 0     |
| 96-100      | 0     |
| Total       | 759   |



■ COUNT

# Count by Speed Range Report

Location: 140 Old Post Road

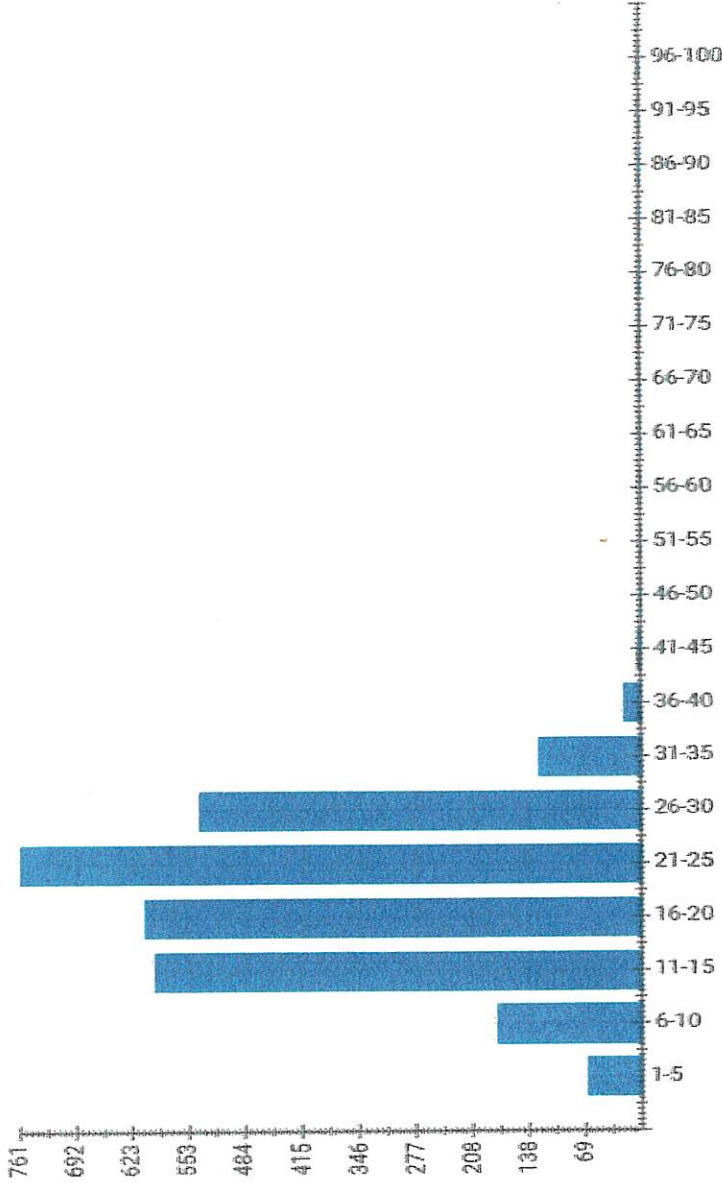
Address: 140, Old Post Road

Report period: 2025-07-22 to 2025-08-05

*Activated Posted speed 35*

Count By Speed Range

| Speed (mph) | Count |
|-------------|-------|
| 1-5         | 67    |
| 6-10        | 177   |
| 11-15       | 585   |
| 16-20       | 608   |
| 21-25       | 761   |
| 26-30       | 541   |
| 31-35       | 125   |
| 36-40       | 21    |
| 41-45       | 3     |
| 46-50       | 0     |
| 51-55       | 0     |
| 56-60       | 0     |
| 61-65       | 0     |
| 66-70       | 0     |
| 71-75       | 0     |
| 76-80       | 0     |
| 81-85       | 0     |
| 86-90       | 0     |
| 91-95       | 0     |
| 96-100      | 0     |
| Total       | 2898  |



■ COUNT