

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG  
ORDINANCE NO. OR:20/04**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, COUNTY OF SOMERSET,  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO AMEND, REVISE AND SUPPLEMENT  
THE BOROUGH CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG AMENDING SECTION  
7-34 SPEED LIMITS**

**WHEREAS**, residents of the Borough Watchung have expressed safety concerns to the Mayor and Council relating to the current speed limits on County of Somerset Roads: Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road, Stirling Road, and Somerset Street; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough Council of the Borough of Watchung desires to lower the speed limit on Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road, Stirling Road, and Somerset Street for the health and safety of our residents; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 39:4-197.2, entitled, "County road lying within municipality; regulation of traffic and parking" permits "any municipality, which maintains a paid police force, may, by ordinance, resolution, or regulation, pursuant to R.S.39:4-197 and with the consent of the governing body of the county, regulate traffic and parking along and upon any county road or part thereof, lying within its corporate limits, in the same manner and to the same extent that it is authorized by law to regulate the same upon municipal roads and streets"; and

**WHEREAS**, the residential density has increased greatly over the years from when the original speed limit was set until present conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 39:1-1 defines the roadway as a "Suburban business or residential district" means that portion of highway and the territory contiguous thereto, where within any 1,320 feet along that highway there is land in use for business or residential purposes and that land occupies more than 660 feet of frontage on one side or collectively more than 660 feet of frontage on both sides of that roadway; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 39:4-98, entitled, "Rates of speed", sets the statutory speed limit at thirty-five (35) miles per hour in any suburban business or residential district; and

**WHEREAS**, Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road, Stirling Road, and Somerset Street are the main roads children must walk to get to School; and

**WHEREAS**, parks for Borough children and families are all adjacent or require access from these roads attracting children and families at all times of the day, evening and non-school hours; and

**WHEREAS**, a youth pedestrian was the hit by a vehicle and sustained serious injury while walking home from the park at Bayberry School on Valley Road; and

**WHEREAS**, Mountain Boulevard has no sidewalks except at Watchung lake, Valley Road has limited walking paths but no sidewalks, Hillcrest Road has no sidewalks and no shoulder, and Stirling Road has a limited length of sidewalks, and very few crosswalks for pedestrians; and

**WHEREAS**, Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road and Stirling Road's lack of sidewalks forces pedestrians to walk in the shoulder of the roadway creating a pedestrian hazard; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough Council of the Borough of Watchung believes it is in the best interest, welfare and safety of its residents and the general public to lower the speed limit on Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road, Stirling Road, and Somerset Street.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Watchung, in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 39:4-197.2 "County road lying within municipality", Section 7-34 of the Code of the Borough of Watchung, entitled, "Speed Limits" is hereby amended to provide as follows:
  - a. The speed limit on Mountain Boulevard (County 527) between Wildwood Terrace and Brookdale Road shall be lowered and set at 35 MPH.
  - b. The speed limit on Mountain Boulevard between Brookdale Road and the Watchung Circle shall be lowered and set at 25 MPH.
  - c. The speed limit on Valley Road (County 527) between Bonnie Burn Road and Knightsbridge shall be lowered and set at 35 MPH.
  - d. The speed limit on Valley Road between Knightsbridge and the Watchung Circle shall be lowered and set at 25 MPH.
  - e. The speed limit on Stirling Road (County 653) between Dogwood Lane and Watchung Circle shall be lowered and set at 25 MPH.
  - f. The speed limit on Somerset Street (County 531) between Johnston Dr and Watchung Circle shall be lowered and set at 25 MPH.
  - g. The speed limit on Hillcrest Road (County 531) between Crestwood Dr and Watchung Circle shall be lowered and set to 25 MPH.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Borough Council of the Borough of Watchung that a copy of the within Ordinance shall be forwarded to, and the effectiveness shall be contingent upon, the County of Somerset passage and approval of the same; and

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Borough Council of the Borough of Watchung that upon the County of Somerset approval and in conjunction with the County, all Borough officials, employees and agents shall take all necessary actions to in order to effectuate the within Ordinance, including but not limited to the installation and removal of "Speed Limit" signs in and from the designated areas in order to provide sufficient notice to motorists; and

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Council of the Borough of Watchung that should any section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, or not approved by the County of Somerset, the remaining portions of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby and shall remain in full force and effect, and to that end the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared to be severable; and

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Council of the Borough of Watchung that, upon County of Somerset approval, all ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this amending ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of their inconsistencies only; and

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Council of the Borough of Watchung that this ordinance and requirements thereof shall take effect after final passage and twenty (20) days after approval by the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders and publication as required by law.

INTRODUCED BY: Robinson  
PASSED: May 7, 2020  
PUBLISHED:  
ADOPTED:

ATTEST:

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Borough Clerk

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Keith S. Balla, Mayor