

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Tuesday June 17, 2025 ~ 7:00 P.M.**  
**Litchfield Intermediate School, Litchfield, CT**

First Selectman Denise Raap called the in person Public Hearing of the Litchfield Board of Selectmen to order at 7:04 p.m. D. Raap read the call, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Litchfield will hold a public hearing pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 14-307c and Sec. 14-307e, on June 17, 2025, at Litchfield Intermediate School, 35 Plumb Hill Road, Litchfield, to hear public comment on the proposed use of speed cameras as automated traffic enforcement safety devices in the Town of Litchfield as authorized by Chapter 249 of the General Statutes.

Selectman Jodiann Tenney explained that the presentation focuses specifically on speed cameras, not red light cameras, as the primary option for improving traffic safety. The main goal is to enhance safety for both vehicles and pedestrians, with an emphasis on protecting children. She clarified that speed cameras are not meant to reduce or replace the role of state troopers. In fact, the upcoming fiscal budget includes funding for a third resident trooper; however, the state currently lacks enough academy graduates to fill that position. J. Tenney highlighted that Litchfield has 127 miles of roads and only two resident troopers, who must prioritize emergency calls over speed enforcement. While the budget includes overtime for speed enforcement, and the state has run campaigns to fund it, enforcement remains limited. J. Tenney also pointed out a limitation with traditional enforcement: once a trooper is stationed in an area, driving apps often notify other drivers within 10–15 minutes, reducing the effectiveness of that enforcement. To better understand available solutions, four companies publicly presented their speed camera systems. Additionally, Selectman Dan Morosani attended a state-run workshop, and the Northwest Council of Governments has hosted multiple meetings on automated safety device guidelines. D. Morosani noted that meta-studies from various sources support the effectiveness of speed cameras in reducing vehicle speeds and serious accidents. He emphasized benefits such as 24/7 operation, high technical accuracy, and the ability to free up police resources for other duties. Echoing J. Tenney's earlier point, he stressed that the cameras are not a substitute for law enforcement but rather a way to cover high-risk areas, allowing officers to focus on other parts of town. Both J. Tenney and D. Morosani explained that all revenue from speed camera citations must be reinvested into the program and traffic safety improvements, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb enhancements. D. Morosani has had discussions with the Public Works Director about numerous areas in Town that could benefit from such upgrades.

D. Morosani acknowledged some downsides to the technology. One concern is the automated nature of enforcement, which eliminates officer discretion. For example, in-person officers might consider extenuating circumstances before issuing a ticket, whereas speed cameras automatically issue citations when set thresholds are met. However, he assured that all camera violations are reviewed by a human before a ticket is finalized. These tickets function like parking fines, they do not add points to a driver's license. D. Morosani also stated that while

traffic cameras reduce speeding in targeted locations, they do not necessarily change reckless driving behavior elsewhere. Addressing privacy concerns, J. Tenney emphasized that data captured by the cameras is handled by a dedicated company with strict cybersecurity measures and used solely for issuing speeding citations. J. Tenney further clarified that the law provides a process for contesting tickets. The Town will appoint a hearing officer, funded by citation revenue, to manage disputes. While some towns use retired police officers for this role, it's not a requirement.

To implement the program, the Board of Selectmen would submit a proposal to a town meeting, where an ordinance must be passed by residents. The law mandates that cameras only activate when drivers exceed the speed limit by 10 mph or more, though thresholds may be raised to 15 mph depending on initial data and administrative needs. Cameras would be allowed in school zones, pedestrian safety areas, or locations with high accident or citation rates. D. Morosani added that CTDOT has already conducted studies on local speeding patterns, noting that Route 254 regularly sees speeds of 99 mph or more. J. Tenney stated that the program includes a 30-day warning period before citations are issued, during which violators will only receive warnings. A public outreach campaign is required before any installation to ensure residents are fully informed. The fine structure includes a state-mandated \$50 limit for the first offense, with an added processing fee potentially bringing the total to \$65. The second offense incurs a \$75 fine. If someone other than the vehicle owner is responsible for the violation, the citation can be transferred to the actual driver through a specified procedure. Unpaid tickets would follow a collections process similar to parking tickets or E-ZPass violations.

D. Morosani explained that a public hearing is underway to gather resident feedback. The next steps include provisionally selecting a vendor, potentially issuing an RFP, and finalizing contracts contingent on passage of the ordinance via public vote. Vendors are expected to assist in drafting the ordinance and supporting documents. Legal and permitting processes will involve input from both the vendor and the town's legal counsel.

J. Tenney described three financial models presented by vendors. The first involves the town purchasing the cameras upfront, which offers the highest revenue share but is not favored due to the significant initial cost. The second model leases the cameras for approximately \$2,500 per month and still provides a good revenue share. The third, and most commonly used by smaller municipalities, involves no upfront or leasing cost, but provides the town with a smaller share of the revenue. This last model is seen as the most financially prudent option.

### **Public Questions and Comments**

Wolfe Boehme, Litchfield resident, expressed his support for speed cameras highlighting this has been an issue according to Town minutes for 20 to 30 years.

Yvonne Gilyard, a resident of Bantam, inquired about the upfront cost of purchasing the traffic enforcement devices and asked which option the Town of Washington had selected. D. Morosani responded that, while he had not reviewed the licensing agreements, his understanding

is that Washington chose the third option, receiving a smaller share of the revenue but with the least financial burden on the municipality. He added that outright purchase of the cameras is typically a model used by larger cities. Y. Gilyard also asked who determines camera placement. D. Morosani explained that placement depends on the selected model; in a revenue-sharing model, the company generally has more influence over placement than if the municipality owns the cameras outright. J. Tenney noted that final approval of camera locations rests with the State.

Patty Dauten, a resident of Litchfield, asked who is responsible for enforcing the tickets. J. Tenney explained that under Model 3, when the criteria for issuing a ticket are met, the footage is first reviewed by the vendor, then sent to a local officer for review and approval. Once approved, the citation is issued directly by the vendor. If the ticket is not paid, it is sent to collections.

Craig Miner, a resident of Litchfield, asked whether a Resident Trooper is currently on duty and if speed enforcement is being conducted. D. Raap confirmed that Trooper Tom Schaffer is on duty and has been directed to perform speed enforcement on Cathole Road and West Morris Road. C. Miner then inquired about the BOS's intentions regarding the number and locations of camera installations. J. Tenney responded that the focus has been on school safety zones and the intersection of Routes 118 and 254. C. Miner expressed concern that a driver traveling at 90 mph through the 118/254 intersection would receive only a \$75 fine under the automated enforcement system, whereas if stopped by a police officer, the offense could be considered reckless driving and result in a license suspension. He also asked who would be responsible in the event of a data breach. D. Raap stated that the Town would not be storing the data itself. C. Miner further noted, based on his reading of the statute, that it may not necessarily be a police officer reviewing the footage to determine if a citation is issued, it could be a town employee. J. Tenney acknowledged this point, stating that it highlights the importance of hiring qualified and properly trained personnel, and that the public is placing trust in local government to ensure that happens. C. Miner asked if emergency responders who are exempt from citations, by virtue of their role, would only be exempt when responding to emergencies, and whether their license plates would still be collected. D. Morosani responded that this issue has not yet been fully addressed and would need to be covered in the ordinance.

Bill Buckley, a resident of Litchfield, expressed his support for the use of speed cameras. He inquired about the duration of the contract for leasing or operating the cameras. J. Tenney responded that the contract length would depend on the company and, like all municipal contracts, would be reviewed by Town Counsel. B. Buckley then asked what would happen if the camera stopped generating enough revenue to cover the cost of the system, but the town was locked into a long-term contract, such as one lasting seven years. D. Morosani replied that during his training with the State, this concern was raised, and data suggests that revenue decline is not as significant as expected. He noted that due to the number of out-of-town drivers passing through Litchfield, unfortunately, speeding is likely to remain an issue. He added that the Town would likely prefer a revenue-sharing model to avoid putting municipal funds at financial risk.

Steve Simonin, a resident of Northfield, voiced opposition to the use of speed cameras, expressing concern that the system could be used in the future for purposes beyond speed enforcement. He recommended continuing to use current radar speed signs and placing officers at problem areas instead.

Ken Tingley, a Litchfield resident, also opposed speed cameras, citing concerns about due process, privacy, and racial injustice. He stated that police presence is a more effective deterrent and described the camera initiative as a potential “money grab.” He also raised concerns about insurance companies potentially using citations to raise rates.

Wendy Westcott, a Bantam resident, sought clarification on whether enforcement camera data would be shared with law enforcement. J. Tenney stated that cameras do not and will not share data with law enforcement. D. Morosani added that even in extreme cases, such as an Amber Alert, the data is ring-fenced and protected under Connecticut law. J. Tenney emphasized that if state laws were to change regarding data usage, the Town would want to revisit the issue with the public before moving forward.

Ken Tingley III, a Litchfield resident, asked what happens if no revenue is collected. D. Morosani explained that under a revenue-sharing model, there is no financial risk to the Town. K. Tingley also asked whether the state mandates that revenue be directed toward traffic safety. D. Morosani confirmed this. K. Tingley expressed concern that the Town could become financially dependent on the revenue, leading to tax increases if it were lost. J. Tenney noted that financial decisions are not made by a single board but involve both the BOS and the BOF.

Patricia Peifer, a Litchfield resident, stated that the initiative stems from the Vision Zero mission to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes, not to generate revenue. She cautioned against working with vendors whose business models rely on revenue generation and advocated for using consultants instead. She noted that a camera can only be installed where there is a documented history of crashes resulting in serious injury or death. Between 2022 and 2025, Litchfield had 551 crashes; 18 were attributed to speeding, and 59 to traveling too fast for conditions. She also contacted a Connecticut auto insurance provider, which stated that insurance impact depends on the violation, not the enforcement method. She warned that contesting a ticket makes it public record, which insurance companies can access. P. Peifer also raised concerns about visitor perception, citing that issuing citations could be seen as unwelcoming. She referenced a statement from an OSTA video indicating difficulties collecting fines from out-of-state drivers and criticized the idea of contracting with a collection agency. She urged the BOS to consider the broader implications of such agreements.

Eric Metzner, a Litchfield resident, asked who reviews the terms and conditions of the camera system contracts. D. Morosani responded that the Town retains an attorney and may consult specialized counsel as needed, at a rate of \$250 per hour. E. Metzner also asked what would happen if state laws governing data usage change. D. Morosani stated he would advocate for including provisions in the Town ordinance allowing reevaluation of the program to protect civil liberties. E. Metzner expressed opposition to speed cameras.

Todd Carusillo, First Selectman of Goshen, stated that Goshen is in the early stages of exploring traffic control camera systems. He emphasized that elected officials have a responsibility to address speeding, and in the absence of funding for additional troopers, speed cameras represent a viable safety-first option.

A resident with 25 years of police experience, including 11 years specializing in fatal accident reconstruction, expressed strong support for speed cameras. He explained that officers are often tied up with higher-priority issues, leaving limited capacity for regular speed enforcement. He emphasized the need for accurate data collection and involvement of the Town engineer.

David Peifer, a Litchfield resident, opposed the use of speed cameras, stating that they pose serious constitutional concerns. He argued that license plate images are insufficient evidence and that citations are unfairly issued to vehicle owners regardless of who was driving. D. Peifer urged the Town to adopt alternative safety measures recommended by the Traffic Safety Action Group, such as pedestrian safety zones, and argued that traffic stops conducted by police are more effective. He also warned that automated enforcement would create additional administrative burdens, diverting resources from public safety.

Ed Fabbri, a Litchfield resident, acknowledged the town's speeding problem and called for a multi-faceted approach, including speed cameras, increased police presence, and physical traffic-calming measures like speed humps or tables.

Y. Gilyard stated her opposition to speed cameras, citing concerns about technology vulnerabilities and hacking. She advocated for investing in more officers instead.

Selectman Jeff Zullo assured residents that any decision on speed cameras would follow the full town meeting process to ensure authorization and public approval. He remained neutral on the issue but noted that areas of concern include Litchfield Center School and Lakeview High School.

C. Miner stated he supports law enforcement but opposes speed cameras. He expressed concern about insurance companies obtaining data that could lead to dropped coverage and urged the Town to focus on bringing more officers into service.

Selectman John Bongiorno voiced his opposition to speed cameras, citing concerns about potential changes in state law, data security, and lack of local control over camera placement.

J. Tenney concluded by acknowledging that while speed cameras will not solve the Town's speeding problem entirely, they may help in key areas such as school zones where children are crossing.

**Adjournment** J. Zullo motioned to adjourn the hearing at 9:06 p.m. J. Tenney seconded the motion.

Denise Raap, First Selectman