

## Citizens Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 11, 2022 • 6:30 PM • Middletown Municipal Center Rooms 220/221

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.

### 2. Roll Call

*MEMBERS PRESENT:* Chris Haughey, Jeff McCard, Assistant Township Manager Nick Valla, Captain Peter Feeney, Sergeant Mark McLeod, Officer Michael Stum, Public Works Superintendent Eric Gartenmayer, Bill Zadrovicz (Traffic Planning & Design), Steve Gozur (Traffic Planning & Design).

*MEMBERS ABSENT:* Sally Miller.

*RESIDENTS PRESENT:* Elaine Miles (Summit Trace).

### 3. Reorganization

#### a. Appointment of Chair

- i. Jeff McCard moved to nominate Chris Haughey as Chair.

#### b. Appointment of Vice Chair

- i. Chris Haughey moved to nominate Jeff McCard as Vice Chair.
- ii. Mr. Valla added that with Kristi Ann Morris and Mathew Tharakan's election to the Board of Auditors, they are no longer able to serve on the Citizens Traffic Commission. He asked the members present to encourage their friends and neighbors to apply.

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Members approve minutes of October 12, 2021 meeting by consensus.

### 5. Old Business

#### a. Activity since last meeting

##### i. Highland Park Traffic Meeting 08/31/21

Since holding a community meeting with the residents of Highland Park in late August 2021, Traffic Planning & Design has been working on a series of proposals to calm traffic in the neighborhood. Bill Zadrovicz shared that he and his team have developed a three-phased plan:

- (Phase 1) Restrict the exit from the development on Highland Park Place onto SR 413 to a right turn only, due to the existing curve on SR 413 which limits visibility.
- (1) Consider removal of existing traffic signal MT #6 (Highland Park Way at Bus. Route 1) or change it to a right turn only from HPW onto Bus. Route 1.
- (1) Limit two rear access points on Highland Park Way to the shopping center by closing

them to traffic except emergency vehicles.

- (1) Install planned traffic signal at the other intersection of Highland Park Way and Business Route 1 between Inspire Federal Credit Union and Dunkin' Donuts.
- (1) Close Heartwood Road to traffic between Handy Road and Hollow Road except emergency vehicles, piloting with a temporary closure.
- (1) Install planned updated school zone flashers near Albert Schweitzer Elementary School.
- (2) Install two raised intersections and/or speed pillows on Highland Park Way, locations to be determined.
- (2) Adapt pedestrian facilities and stormwater inlets at Heartwood Road closure.
- (2) Retime traffic signals on Woodbourne Road and Trenton Road adjacent to Highland Park
- (3) Install additional raised intersections near shopping center entrances along Highland Park Way if needed.

The CTC primarily discussed proposed Phase 1 solutions. It was shared that the Township is looking into the rear access points of the shopping centers and that it would be wisest to proceed assuming those cannot be changed.

The consensus of the CTC was that limiting turns onto 413 from Highland Park Place to right turns only was a good safety improvement that the neighborhood would likely support. Removing the existing signal at Highland Park Way and Bus. Route 1 would likely create new issues. Restricting to only right turn exits onto Bus. Route 1 from Highland Park Way at the existing signal might be effective and is worth testing. Closing Heartwood Road to traffic in the proposed location may get mixed reactions from the neighborhood, but it has the potential to be very effective for reducing cut-through traffic. It was agreed that any of these solutions should be piloted for 6-12 months before being adopted permanently. It was noted that the School District should be notified ahead of any closing of Heartwood Road so they may accommodate bus routes. The idea of allowing parking on both sides of Highland Park Drive (between Harvest Road and Trenton Road) was also discussed. The group discussed potential next steps and when it would be best to coordinate another meeting with the neighborhood.

#### **ii. Parkvale Avenue**

The Police Department did not have an opportunity to conduct the study prior to the meeting due to a backlog of other studies. Upon further review, it was decided that due to the location and narrow width of Parkvale Avenue, it would be extremely unlikely for there to be a speeding issue that would warrant resolving. No further action was recommended.

#### **iii. S. Hawthorne Avenue**

Since the October meeting, the Police Department has been present on S. Hawthorne as has deployed multiple stop sign enforcement details. S. Hawthorne Avenue is also one of few streets in the Township with traffic calming, in the form of speed humps. No further action was recommended.

#### **iv. Langhorne Gables Stop Signs**

Mr. Valla shared the Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance in December making the intersection of Parkview and Buttonwood Avenues in Langhorne Gables an all-way stop. It was previously a one-way stop in one direction on Parkview. Mr. Valla shared that in the preparation of this ordinance, he discovered several other existing stop signs in Langhorne Gables that were not properly documented in the ordinance. Approximately 17 existing stop

signs were memorialized in the same ordinance. One resident living near the intersection of Parkview and Buttonwood Avenues expressed concern about the placement of the signs after the ordinance was adopted. Captain Feeney reported that he spoke with this resident and clarified some of her concerns. Superintendent Gartenmayer reported that the signs will be installed soon.

## **6. New Business**

### **a. Snowball Gate**

Mr. Valla shared he received feedback from a resident involved in the line painting performed on Snowball Drive, and stated the resident noticed a positive improvement on cars spending around the Drive. He requested previously to have speed studies performed on Spring Valley Road and Scarlet Oak Road, which were set aside until the line painting was performed. The resident has requested to have these roads studied.

The Police Department reported that they studied this area around 2 years ago, but stated it may be worth evaluating again now that the line painting is in place. Speed studies for Spring Valley Road and Scarlet Oak Road will be performed and discussed at the next meeting.

### **b. Summit Trace Stop Signs**

Mr. Valla shared that he received two unrelated complaints from residents who inquired about why the two intersections of Summit Trace Road and Oakridge Drive were not all-way stops. The roads intersect twice, once near the SR 413 access and once near the shopping center/Newtown Bypass access. The direction of traffic head into the develop from both points of access does not have a stop sign while the other two directions of traffic do have stop signs.

The Police Department reported that they seldom see accidents in this area. Other than one accident near the 413 access that led to one of the complaints, this has not been reported as an issue before. The Police Department also stated that adding stop signs in these locations likely would not reduce any cut-through traffic.

The idea of adding “opposing traffic does not stop” or similar signs at these intersections emerged. The Public Works Department will look into installing these in the appropriate locations.

### **c. Walter Miller Elementary School Speed Limits**

Mr. Valla stated one of the crossing guards inquired about altering the school zone speed limits and signage around Walter Miller Elementary School. The crossing guard has not provided any further detail. Mr. Valla shared that the Township put together a plan to upgrade the school zone flashing signals in most of the Township’s school zones. He added that one of the signals at Walter Miller Elementary School would be moved closer to the road to improve visibility. No further action was recommended.

**d. Tareyton/E. Winchester Ave. Parking**

Mr. Valla shared that he spoke with a couple from Tareyton who came in shortly after a recent accident that occurred while a care was exiting the development on Kenton Drive onto E. Winchester Avenue. The couple stated that there are regularly cars parked along E. Winchester Avenue belonging to residents whose homes back up to the road, and that they access their vehicles via a backyard fence gate. The couple felt that the parked vehicles impede the view of oncoming traffic and contributed to the accident.

The Police Department stated that there were likely more factors that led to the accident cited by these residents and that this intersection is not known for being an accident generator. They added that parking is prohibited at least 20 feet from any intersection regardless of additional parking restrictions.

Traffic Planning & Design stated that because E. Winchester Avenue is a PennDOT road, any parking restrictions the Township wishes to impose would require PennDOT approval, if not led completely by PennDOT. TPD advised that the residents contact PennDOT's citizen request portal. No further action was recommended.

**7. Public Comment**

**a. Elaine Miles, Summit Trace**

Ms. Miles distributed a document outline several concerns she had about the proposed settlement plan for the Stone Farm property near her home, as well as concerns about the proposed elementary school near Maple Point Middle School. Her primary concern with both projects is the traffic impact they will have to the adjacent major roads.

Traffic Planning & Design provided background about the traffic impacts of the settlement plan and provided insight to the assumptions used in making traffic volume projections. Mr. Valla explained that since the Stone Farm property is in litigation, the review process is different than a regular land development. Ms. Miles was also informed that the proposed elementary school has not yet been presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

**8. Open Floor**

**a. Woodbourne Road/Swift Road Signalization**

A member inquired about the status of the signalization project ongoing at the intersection of Woodbourne Road and Swift Road/Lower Silver Lake Road. Traffic Planning & Design stated that the plans are going through the review process with PennDOT.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 12, 2022.