

Citizens Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 13, 2021 • 7:00 PM • Hybrid Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

2. Roll Call

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Haughey (virtual), Kristi Ann Morris (virtual), Sally Miller, Mathew Tharakan, Assistant Township Manager Nick Valla, Chief of Police Joseph Bartorilla, Sergeant Mark McLeod, Officer Michael Stum, Public Works Superintendent Eric Gartenmayer, Bill Zadrovicz (Traffic Planning & Design), Steve Gozur (Traffic Planning & Design), Management Intern Christina Bernhardt.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff McCard, Captain Peter Feeney.

3. Approval of Minutes

Members approve minutes of April 13, 2021 meeting by consensus.

4. Old Business

a. Activity since last meeting

i. Quincy Hollow (Queen Lily and Quarry; new: Quincy Drive)

Assistant Township Manager Valla reported that he has received a total of five complaints about speeding in various parts of the Quincy Hollow section, with most complaints focused on Queen Lily and Quarry Roads, both of which parallel New Falls Road. Mr. Valla added that in addition to speeding concerns, some residents reported issues with cut-through traffic. Mr. Valla mentioned he received a new complaint about speeding on Quincy Drive near the “bend” spanning Quiet Road to Queens Bridge Road.

Sergeant McLeod reported that studies were performed on Queen Lily Road and Queen Anne Road. The 85th percentile of speed for Queen Lily Road was 30 MPH; the 85th percentile for Queen Anne was 25 MPH. Both are below the enforceable threshold. Additionally, no concerns about the volume of traffic from either study were reported.

Officer Stum added that he can continue to monitor the area during the evening rush hour when issues are reportedly at their worst.

The Police Department will perform a study on Quincy Drive and report back in October. Superintendent Gartenmayer will check the area for signage.

No traffic calming actions were recommended.

ii. Highland Park Drive

Mr. Valla reported that the resident initially complaining about cut-through traffic on Highland Park Drive was not satisfied with the study having been performed on Highland Park Drive near Hawk Road and is requesting one be performed closer to the intersection with Hollow Road.

Bill Zadrovic from Traffic Planning & Design stated that cut-through traffic through all of Highland Park is being reviewed as part of the planned Chick-Fil-A land development in the Langhorne Square Shopping Center.

Sergeant McLeod stated that the location of the study is chosen at the Police Department's discretion to maximize the possibility that the study will demonstrate an issue. He added that Highland Park Drive and Heartwood Road are known cut-throughs, and that mitigation efforts such as creating a one-way flow of traffic would cause more disruption to the residents than keeping things as-is.

Chris Haughey, a resident of Highland Park Drive, added that traffic is typically at its worst during 5 and 6 PM within the Highland Park development. He suggested line painting to accommodate parking could be a long-term solution to improve traffic.

Mr. Zadrovic added that retiming the traffic signals surrounding the development could be another long-term solution to reduce cut-through traffic, though many habits are deeply engrained in the locals taking the cut-throughs.

No further actions were recommended.

b. Update on past projects & discussions

i. Traffic Calming Policy

Mr. Valla stated that the Traffic Calming Policy will be discussed in October since there were several other issues to discuss during this meeting.

5. New Business

a. Aspen Avenue

Mr. Valla shared he received a complaint from a resident living on Aspen Avenue. He said the woman initially inquired last summer about adding speed humps and a reduced speed limit sign on the road, and that she did not respond after being sent the Traffic Calming Policy. She reached out again with the same concerns.

Sergeant McLeod stated that it is unlikely there is a significant speeding issue in the area since the road is only 800 feet long. He added it is unlikely to be used as a cut-through from Maple Avenue to Brownsville Road since there are other more direct ways to cut across. Additionally, he mentioned a police officer lives nearby and has never mentioned speeding as a concern.

No further actions were recommended.

b. Parkvale Avenue (North of Superhighway)

Mr. Valla shared that he received a complaint from the same woman complaining about Aspen Avenue reported issues on Parkvale Avenue, stating her son and family live there. Mr. Valla said the issue is on the side of Parkvale Avenue north of the US-1 Superhighway.

Officer Stum said he monitors the area frequently since the road is narrow, but noted there is not typically much traffic on the road.

Sergeant McLeod added that there have never been studies performed on Parkvale Avenue before, but that one could be performed.

The Police Department will conduct a traffic study and report back to the CTC.

c. Stop Sign at Third/Hulme

Mr. Valla received a complaint from a resident of Langhorne Gardens who lives near the intersection of Third Street and Hulme Avenue. He is requesting a stop sign be placed on Third Street at the intersection as it is currently uncontrolled. Mr. Valla added that Fourth Street and Hulme should also be considered for a stop sign as it has the same traffic patterns as the Third Street intersection. Additionally, it was noted that the streets are narrow.

Officer Stum noted that a study was performed in the area about two years ago which did not identify any significant volume issues. He added that the area is likely only traveled by the residents Langhorne Gardens and delivery drivers. Officer Stum expressed some concern about the precedent that would be set by adding a stop sign at this location.

No further actions were recommended.

d. Georgetown (Hampton Drive between Branford Way and Shelton Lane)

Mr. Valla shared a resident of Georgetown reached out about requesting speed humps as it was reported cars drive quickly in the area that is heavily populated by young children.

Sergeant McLeod stated there is a slight downhill portion near that section of Hampton Drive that could potentially generate speed. However, he said there are several police officers who live in the area that have never mentioned issues with speeding in the neighborhood. Additionally, he noted that most intersections in the development have stop signs.

Mr. Valla suggested Mr. Gartenmayer check for "Watch Children" signs in the area.

The Police Department will conduct a traffic study and report back to the CTC.

e. S. Hawthorne Avenue

Mr. Valla stated a resident of S. Hawthorne Avenue called in to complain about speeding and cut-through traffic on S. Hawthorne Avenue. The resident noted a study was performed about five years ago with no actions taken since then. Mr. Valla reviewed the file and confirmed a study was performed in winter 2015/2016. He added that the residents felt weather and school closures negatively impacted the validity of the study, which led to a second study being performed in June 2016. That study showed an average speed of 28 MPH and an 85th percentile of speed of 33 MPH, which is below the enforceable threshold.

Kristi Ann Morris stated there are two sets of speed humps on S. Hawthorne Avenue already and that they also have a “Do Not Enter Except Local Deliveries” sign posted. She added that Clearview Avenue nearby is also sometimes used to cut-through from Brownsville Road to Old Lincoln Highway.

Sergeant McLeod stated that S. Hawthorne Avenue has always had cut-through issues, and that the road is plenty wide enough to handle the volume of traffic it gets. He added that the “Do Not Enter Except Local Deliveries” sign is not enforceable. He suggested Mr. Valla ask what time of day issues are the most prevalent, and that a new study be performed after school is back in session.

The Police Department will conduct a traffic study and report back to the CTC.

f. No Parking on Nursery Avenue (Center St. to Bristol-Oxford Valley Road)

Mr. Valla shared he received a call from a resident on Nursery Avenue complaining about motorists driving through part of his yard when cars are parked on Nursery Avenue. The resident shared that most of the cars parked are across the street at the neighbor’s home. Mr. Valla ended the conversation recommending the resident talk to the neighbor, adding that parking restrictions are typically not done punitively to restrict a single property.

A discussion about whether or not the complainant’s home had curbs along the street. Traffic Planning & Design said it is likely they paid a fee in lieu of sidewalks and curbs in order to not provide them.

Officer Stum stated that he will monitor the situation and report back to the CTC.

g. No Parking on Fawnhill Drive (Township Line Rd. to Gunning Lane)

Mr. Valla shared he received a call and subsequent email from a resident of the Laurel Oaks development complaining about cars parked along Fawnhill Drive near the development entrance that make it difficult to drive around. The resident provided Mr. Valla with several photos of parked cars, which were shared with the CTC.

Mathew Tharakan stated he lives nearby and has not noticed an issue at this location, but that there are other parts of Laurel Oaks with parking issues that making driving more difficult.

Sally Miller stated she periodically drives through the development and has noticed the issue before on multiple occasions.

Officer Stum stated he can monitor the area moving forward since the photos all appeared to be from a party at the home. He suggested Mr. Valla ask for times when this issue is most prevalent.

Mr. Valla agreed and added that he also reminded the resident that parking restrictions are not typically done for one property owner.

6. Open Floor

a. Route 1 Improvements

Mr. Valla stated he spoke with Ms. Morris earlier that day about sharing more information on PennDOT's multi-million dollar three-phase improvements to US 1. He mentioned Phase 1 is nearly complete in Bensalem Township, and that Phase 2 is underway now, which spans from the edge of Bensalem Township up to the area near Neshaminy High School. He added that PennDOT just concluded a public comment period for the Phase 3 improvements, scheduled to begin in about five years, which was heavily promoted by the Township. Phase 3 would span from the area near Neshaminy High School through Langhorne Manor Borough. Mr. Valla stated he will work on adding updates on this project into the public information stream on a more regular basis.

b. Langhorne-Yardley Road TIP Project

Ms. Miller asked about the status of the Langhorne-Yardley Road improvements at Woodbourne Road and Bridgetown Pike. Mr. Gartenmayer and Mr. Valla confirmed that there have not been any major updates on the project in some time, but that construction is still expected to begin in late 2022 or 2023.

c. Hale Road at Heartwood Road

Mr. Haughey shared he received a concern from a resident in Highland Park about a new fence constructed at a home near Hale Road and Heartwood Road. He added that the new fence is inhibiting visibility for motorists coming from Hale Road onto Heartwood Road.

Mr. Valla verified that the home was issued a zoning variance by the Zoning Hearing Board and a fence permit, stating that it appears the fence was properly permitted. He added it is likely that motorists were used to the prior chain link fence and were not used to having a solid vinyl fence. He agreed to follow up internally on the matter and report back.

d. Parking on Winchester Avenue

Chief Bartorilla shared there have been some complaints to the Police Department about parking along Winchester Avenue that are causing visibility issues for motorists leaving the Tareyton development from Kenton Drive. He stated the homes along Eaton Court that back up to Winchester Avenue have backyard gates allowing access to Winchester Avenue, making it easy for them to park there. Tareyton has a history of parking issues. He added the difficulty parking inside the development would make a parking restriction difficult.

Sergeant McLeod asked about parking restrictions on small segments of roads. Mr. Valla confirmed the Township does have more than one parking restriction defined as a certain number of feet away from an intersection.

The CTC agreed to address the matter further in the future.

e. Langhorne-Yardley Road Crossings

Mr. Zadrovic shared that the Township submitted a grant application to the Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) Transportation Enhancements Grant Program for two additional pedestrian crossing signals along Langhorne-Yardley Road near Briggs Road and Maple Point Drive. He expects the grant decision to be made by January 2022.

f. School Zone Flasher Improvements

Mr. Gartenmayer asked if any improvements were planned to school zone signals as previously recommended by Traffic Planning & Design. He stated there is a bulb out at one and asked the Police Department if it should be replaced, or if a new system would be coming soon.

Chief Bartorilla and Mr. Valla stated the signals would likely be discussed soon for the 2022 budget. Mr. Zadrovic stated the signals will likely cost \$210,000 for 27 signal improvements in 14 school zones.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2021.