

TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

July 7, 2009

The Traffic Advisory Committee convened on Tuesday, July 7, 2009 at 7:30 a.m. Committee members present were: Jane Billings, Borough Manager; Brian Craig, Chief of Police; Tom Dee, community Representative; Al Federico, Chair, Traffic Engineer; Michael Markowicz, Community Representative; Charles Rowels, Public Works Director; Bill Titus, Swarthmore Fire and Protective Association. Mr. Ralph Jacobs, Chair of the Public Safety Committee of Borough Council, and Eck Gerner, Mayor, also attended.

Discussion included:

1. Call for public comment: None.
2. Review of intersection of Yale and Harvard Avenues.
 - a. It was generally agreed that relatively high traffic and pedestrian counts warranted investigating and implementing ways to enhance the safety of the pedestrian crossing at the intersection.
 - b. Ms. Billings reported that she and Police Chief Brian Craig held an on-site meeting with Mr. Larry Bucci of PennDOT for possible pedestrian safety enhancements at the intersection. Mr. Bucci suggested adding additional pedestrian crossing signs on Yale Avenue at both approaches to the Harvard Avenue crosswalk, with arrows pointing directly to the crosswalk. (Since no PennDOT permits were required, this work was completed by the Borough in June, 2009). Other possible measures to enhance pedestrian safety include installation of reflectors along the painted edge of the crosswalk; a pedestrian crossing sign in the middle of the crosswalk; and installation of a raised crosswalk. All would require PennDOT approval. The Committee requested that Ms. Billings move ahead with requesting permission to install the reflectors and pedestrian crossing sign, and conduct further investigation on the raised crosswalk, including cost and any potential problem with the location.
 - c. It was generally agreed that vehicle speeds on Yale Avenue do not appear excessive based on the data obtained from the Borough's JAMAR traffic recorder. The 85% percentile speed was 39 miles per hour, and only 5% of cars exceeded 42 miles per hour; these speeds are consistent with the posted 35 mile per hour speed limit. Furthermore, Chief Craig reported that he monitored traffic speeds while in the field with Mr. Bucci and Ms. Billings, and the top speed observed was 43 miles per hour, with most cars close to the 35 mile per hour speed limit. It was decided not to pursue physical traffic calming measures at this time.
3. Ms. Billings advised the Committee that the traffic delimiters on Cedar Lane will be reinstalled this month. PennDOT is also reviewing a proposed change to the signal at Baltimore Pike that would permit through left turns on a "green ball."

4. Mr. Titus asked if the Borough was considering adding *Opticon* devices, which allow emergency vehicles to activate the green light, at all intersections in the Borough (they are currently in service only at Swarthmore Avenue and Chester Road), Ms. Billings said she would see if the existing lights can be retrofitted, and whether the Borough's insurance carrier might pay.
5. The Committee discussed the request of the residents of the 300 and 400 blocks of Rutgers Avenue for traffic calming. Concerns listed by the residents include speeding motorists, wrong-way drivers, and high number of pedestrians without a safe place to cross. The Committee agreed to do the following preliminary steps:
 - a. Obtain accident data (Chief Craig).
 - b. Obtain vehicular and pedestrian traffic counts while SRA camp is in session at the CADES school (July) and again when school and sports activities resume in the fall (mid-September); (to be coordinated by Al and Michael; petitioners will be requested to help with traffic counts).
6. Mr. Titus asked if the Swarthmore Swim Club could install a stop sign the top of their driveway; Ms. Billings said she would call the club.
7. Mr. Jacobs asked if the TAC would like to have input on the currently-being-formed Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Members did not think they necessarily needed to play an active role in the committee, but would welcome any concerns about traffic that affected bicycle or pedestrian safety.
8. The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 1, 2009 at 7:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.