

West Vincent Township Traffic Safety Committee

Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2024

In Attendance: Adrienne Boyance, Jane Nina, Christine McGowen, Whitney Jaeger, Ted Otteni, Frank Costanzo, Ken Alan, Officer Nick Rubino, and Kevin Freese. Supervisor Dana Alan (substituting for committee liaison Bernie Couris). Audience members: Suzanne Roth, Marty Blumenthal, Ken Miller, and Steve Sladek.

Meeting called to order, 7:06 p.m.

Ken thanked Officer Rubino and Kevin for their efforts after the recent storm that had come through the area.

Committee positions were confirmed: Ken Alan, chairperson and Adrienne Boyance, vice chairperson. Seeing no volunteers for recording secretary it was agreed that the committee would go with a revolving secretary. (Adrienne volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.)

Suzanne Roth asked Officer Rubino if there is any value to residents calling in a license plate if a problem is observed. The officer stated the force can run tags and follow up with that person but cannot enforce anything which is not witnessed directly by an officer.

Officer Rubino stated there is a new traffic reporting system in place, which for now only Ruth (the secretary) can access.

Kevin Freese from Public Works gave an informative presentation on traffic counts while sharing a map showing the state roads (highlighted in yellow on the map). The suggestion was given to post the map on the website.

He thanked office assistant Christina Casey for her help in producing the map.

Kevin stated that Hollow Road had approximately 1,400 vehicles traversing it within a one-week period (roughly 200 per day) and an average speed of 37 MPH. (The posted limit is 30 MPH). He suspected the recent hunt event had skewed the report lower than normal.

Two vehicles were noted as travelling 65 MPH.

Kevin discussed how speed studies can potentially get speeds raised, not lowered, due to people driving too fast, and that his reports are only for informational purposes. (We would need to hire an outside contractor for an official study shared with PennDOT, to change a road's speed limit.)

A traffic counter is used to determine what type of usage the roads get, for repair reasons.

Public Works conducts about two studies per month.

Kevin noted the traffic counter needs replacement, due to technical issues.

Whitney suggested implementing informational signs indicating the rules of the road, which could be located at Routes 401 and Saint Matthews intersection, where everyone could read them when coming to a complete stop.

The idea was tabled for future discussion.

The committee discussed how, years ago, Chester Springs Road was turned over to the Township from PennDOT. The process required the road being fully refurbished, with the Township receiving monies to maintain it. Per Ken Miller: This was done because PennDOT wanted to widen the road, but the residents resisted this proposal, so the Township had to take it over to maintain its current state. Ken then stated this is not necessarily an untenable solution for all bad roads - but we don't have the manpower to maintain them all, and the money we receive is not always enough.

Road Conditions: The committee discussed storm water repairs to keep roads from deteriorating. Whitney suggested planting willow trees to suck up water runoff. It was stated that willow roots could become a problem too, but that some stormwater could be managed by plantings – something the EAC is supposed to be working on (educating homeowners), along with how to maintain stormwater drains.

Adrienne offered concerns about brine deteriorating roads. Kevin replied that improper sealing of roads, rather than salts, is a culprit.

PennDot and the Township

It was agreed that the Township should have reliable contacts within PennDOT. Ken Alan mentioned a potential one is Monica Harrower - the Cultural Resource Coordinator for District 6 - to whom he will reach out to on the committee's behalf.

Suzanne Roth commented how Flowing Springs/Schoohouse roads are too narrow, and there should be consideration (by the utility companies) to moving the telephone poles. Officer Rubino stated this has been discussed but it is not possible.

Ted Otteni and Frank Costanzo mentioned the possibility of putting PennDOT on notice because of so many potholes on our State Roads. The committee agreed to needing more concrete information other than “everyone’s car is getting messed up in certain areas.”

To this, Ken Alan, Adrienne Boyance and Marty Blumenthal each stated how they contact PennDOT with their concerns. Ken suggested that every committee person/all township residents with issues should contact PennDOT directly, and ongoing, with their road problems. [800-FIX-ROAD / PennDOT.pa/gov/contactus/]

Ken then stated he would provide a newsletter article, letting residents know how to report State Road issues. (This has since occurred).

Horseshoe Trail

Ken Alan brought up continual speeding/safety concerns with this road, in particular the stretch running between Janie Lane and Chester/Yellow Springs Road.

The committee agreed to consider areas, such as the S-curve between Ivy Lane and Pine Drive, that could benefit from tree removal, thus helping to increase the line-of-sight.

Multi-modal Plan

Ken provided each member with a copy of the Plan, asking everyone to review it for discussion at the next meeting.

Bike Rodeo

Adrienne discussed holding a Bike Rodeo, possibly in the springtime or in the fall (when kids are in school).

The preferred location is the Ludwig's Corner Fire House.

Adrienne mentioned a previous one was held by Chester County, who offered to provide future events *pro bono*.

Ken will connect with the firehouse to gauge interest level/availability.

The committee voted unanimously to move forward with a Bike Rodeo once a date is established.

Whitney offered to bring a horse, to help acquaint people with how to negotiate around animals on the road.

Conestoga Road closure

Ken relayed notes from Senator Katie Muth's recent townhall meeting, discussing the imminent closure of the bridge along Route 401 (just west of the Mill at Anselma).

Ted stated he has information to share on detour routes.

Schoolhouse Lane safety and stormwater runoff was brought up by nearby residents Steve Sladek and Suzanne Roth.

They stated their prior outreach with former township manager John Granger about problems from new development there, causing runoff issues, which were never properly addressed.

Supervisor Dana Alan suggested this issue to be put into writing and submitted to manager Jacqui Guenther.

Furthermore, regarding the Schoolhouse/Flowing Springs area, Steve and Suzanne brought up the possibility of adding mirrors and/or removing trees to improve sight lines.

Mirrors – Both Officer Rubino and Kevin Freese feel answers to this issue is beyond their respective positions.

Supervisor Dana Alan recommended that if needs are identified, they could then go to the township manager for review.

Steve Sladek stated the café's parking creates hazardous situations.

Discussion continued from the previous (November 2023) meeting on Whitney's suggestion to the possibility of painting a center line on the winding area of certain roads.

Per Kevin, this issue would need to be presented to PennDOT. Plus, both consistency in repainting/cost to the Township would need to be considered.

This idea will be given future consideration if need be.

Ken reminded everyone that resident/farmer Ken Miller will be addressing the committee at the next meeting.

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The next meeting was decided on: Thursday, March 14 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.