

West Vincent Township Traffic Safety Committee

May 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Adrienne Boyance, Whitney Yeager, Jane Nina, Christine McGowan, Frank Costanza, Ted Otteni, Ken Alan, Kevin Freese; BOS Liaison, Bernie Couris

Visiting guests: Brian Styche and Patty Quinn, Chester County Planning Commission

7:07 p.m. - **Meeting called to order by Ken Alan.**

March 14, 2024, meeting minutes unanimously approved.

7:14 p.m. – **Presentation by Ken Miller on recommended road safety practices when approaching agricultural machinery, livestock, and farm personnel.**

Ken Miller and his wife, Sue, along with their two sons, Randy and Jesse, own and operate Birchrun Hills Farm, at Davis Lane and Horseshoe Trail. Theirs is the last operating dairy farm in WVT, and one of the few remaining in northern Chesco. Feed is controlled by the Miller's; farmland is leased to produce feed.

Their farm machinery moves across roads throughout WVT and beyond. When moving farm equipment over the 11 ft, middle to side roadway lines, The Miller's choose to drive an escort lead-out pick-up truck. Law for equipment escort applies to equipment over 14 ft width. Top tractor speed is 22mph, which can slow traffic behind it. A large chopper, plus tractor trailers are used. The chopper requires an escort.

Ken mentioned that cows do sometimes get loose. What should people do? If in a car, slow down and move to the side, or stop. Knock on the house door or look for someone at the farm or try posting on social media. Cows can be skittish but are not typically aggressive. Cars should slow down if approaching a tractor, and if behind - do not pass. There isn't enough space to pass from behind, given the width of most local roads. Adrienne mentions that having the escort vehicle is helpful and having the tractor slow when approaching a person on foot or bike, is best. Farmer Ken noted that Wine & Cheese Fridays at the farm have helped with community because of engagement and education. The committee discussed the possibility of The Miller's joining the bike rodeo, targeted for this autumn.

7:31 p.m. - **Roads Report from Kevin:**

Traffic counts from Flowing Springs Rd. between Sheeder Mill and Hollow Rd intersection: Avg speed was 32mph; 300-500 cars/day.

Traffic counts from French Creek Rd. Average speed, mid-20mph; 200 cars/day.

Kevin notes that in 1933, Act 69, there are rules about cutting down trees along the road, with approval from supervisors and notice to property owners.

Drainage on Jaine Lane is three weeks from being finished, namely on the lower flat section of Jaine Ln. Paving will be completed once drainage work is complete. St Andrews is on the list to go out to bid this year, likely to be done this autumn or winter.

Steve Sladek from Hollow Road thanked Kevin and Public Works for filling potholes.

7:41 pm. - **Police Report:** No police report, since Officer Rubino is not present.

7:41 p.m. – Ken has been in contact with our District 6 PennDOT contact, Matt Anderson, who stated the far-right lane on Rt 100 (just north of Black Horse Road to Top of the Hill Beverage) is a trucks/bus lane, and that section of Rt 100 saw no traffic incidents in 2023. Formerly, this was the most dangerous section of road in WVT.

8:00 p.m. - **Committee Report:**

Ken noted that Whitney and Adrienne spent time on Multi-modal plan.

Ted gave an overview on tree removal recommendations to improve sight lines. Two Motions were made to remove trees on HST in S-curve section and at St Matts. Ted has been told that if a twp. road intersects with a PennDOT road, the twp has the right to assure clear sight lines

Kevin noted that coming from Phillips Lane onto HST to St Matts – “looking left [up Saint Matts] is blind to trucks and twp.equipment. “Could the twp. consider trimming the shrubs and trees of the northeast corner property.” Ken Alan stated he will request an upcoming meeting between the TSC and the BOS to discuss these Motions.

Discussion of a stop sign at St Matts and HST was raised. Ted argued against a stop sign at St Matts and HST.

The topic may be discussed again during a future mtg.

8:15 p.m. - **Multimodal Plan update:**

Ken: “The goal of plan is to help residents move across the twp. Safely, using non-vehicle methods.”

Ken noted that traversing the twp. on foot is not much of a Multimodal Plan concept, since so few of us walk long lengths of the twp. Discussing an equestrian Multimodal Plan: Having an un-encumbered equestrian pathway requires involvement with Nat Lands. Whitney would like to see trails be multi-use for foot, bikes, horses.

Discussing a Multimodal Plan for bicycles -

Ken stated that Matt from PennDOT suggested for the committee to consider working on a bicycle initiative with the Chesco. Planning Commission, the Phoenixville Regional Planning Commission, and/or the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and across townships. Ken would like to reach out to a few organizations mentioned. Grants are not available at the local level. Grants are available for the major trails – Chester Valley, Schuylkill River, Strubel, and other similar connections to create a trail circuit. Roads coming for re-surfacing are assessed by Chesco. Planning for the possibility of marking as bike routes or bike facilities. PennDOT will incorporate multi-modal tools, but the twp. needs to maintain them.

Ken will contact Ed Theurkauf (Twp. Liaison with the Phoenixville Area Planning Commission) to discuss trails maps in WVT.

Brian Styche, from Chesco Planning Commission, said he can help with working across twps. to evaluate trails plans. County is working on publishing an off-road trails map, including hiking and equestrian trails. Chesco. has an interactive map – Trail Finder – where residents can look for available trails. ChesCo can help with mapping and assessment.

8:22 p.m. - **Bicycle Rodeo update:**

Ken reached out to Ludwigs Corner Fire Co., via email. Resident/Ludwigs Fire Volunteer Marty Blumenthal volunteered will get us LCFC president Paul Matttes phone number, to get a date in play. Marty suggested WV Elementary as a possible venue to hold the rodeo. Kevin will ask the board if they are interested in hosting.

Separate but related note: Iron Tour is 09Jun. WVT is a sponsor and gets 3 or so free entries. Ken reached out to put it on the twp. calendar and will look into advertising the free spots. During this discussion, it was noted that the Sheeder Mill bridge has deteriorated boards which need to be repaired. This bridge is along the IT route. It was confirmed PennDoT is responsible for fixing the Sheeder Hall bridge boards.

8:44 p.m. - PennDOT and One Map updates:

Residents need to continue to log issues into One Call. Marty, who is active in the N Chesco. Fire chiefs' Association. has similar issues – Division 6. N ChesCo has 12.5 miles of paving allocated by PennDOT/year. Per Ted, we get tax money based upon resident counts, and while PennDOT will provide money for municipalities/twp. to take ownership of PennDOT roads, PennDOT has better purchasing power. Marty talked with Katie Muth 1:1, and feedback from her office to Marty/N Chesco. Fire Chiefs Association is planned. PennDOT is understaffed by 40% per Chesco. reps. Matt Anderson is our PennDOT contact. Drainage is the main problem, along with the freeze/thaw cycle. It has been suggested the Traffic Safety Committee should author a letter to Katie Muth about roads budgets.

9:00 p.m. - Public Comment:

Steve Slaydek is highly frustrated with parking/safety concerns. Traffic at School House Ln. has conditions which are deteriorating. People are on foot, along with bikes and horses, and kids are running around. Steve has tried reaching out to Jacqui Guenther, the township manager, Police Chief Mike, and “anyone who will listen, but...getting no traction.”

Whitney reminded the committee that it was suggested that a mirror be installed at School House Ln. and Flowing Springs. Ken suggests we take some time to dig into the Butterscotch Pastry Shop weekend congestion/parking issue during the next mtg.

9:14 p.m. – Meeting adjourned.