

**Minutes
Township of Falls
Neighborhood Traffic Advisory Committee**

September 12, 2022

Members in Attendance:

Amy Gallagher
Ian James
Robert Leary
Ariane Presser
Leon Thompson

Members Absent:

Also in Attendance:

Lt. Henry Ward, Falls Township Police Department
Joshua Seeherman, RVE

Lt. Ward opened the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

The minutes from the August 8, 2022 meeting were approved with no changes.

Lt. Ward spoke about the new cameras for stopped school buses. This program is to videotape vehicles that pass a stopped school bus with their lights flashing. The camera program was approved, but there are many kinks to be worked out. It may not have been thought out completely. They are not thrilled with the company that is running this program. The company is only interested in the 95% who pay the fine. The other 5% would be turned into a criminal violation and the company would have to send someone to district court with their video and they don't want to do that. They said it would cost them too much money. So, the 5% will get away with this and we would be losing citations. We are having another meeting this month, but the bill will have to be fixed by the Legislator and that takes time. The Township will probably just start issuing criminal citations, not civil ones. The ticket goes to the owner of the car, but that is not always the driver. That's another problem.

Regarding speeding on Thornridge Drive and the lack of stop signs problem that we spoke about at the last meeting, Lt. Ward said to get a stop sign, we need to do a traffic study. Lt. Ward said he did put the Speed Spy out there and dug out a Speed Spy study from 2019. He handed out a comparison of both studies. The only difference was the number of drivers. There has been an increase in traffic. The speeds though, were almost identical. There were only 3 drivers doing 31-35 mph and no one doing over 35 mph. There were 50 cars going 26-30 mph which is over the speed limit, but it's not egregious. Some complaints said vehicles go 60 mph, but people's perceptions are not accurate. They also put the speed sign out there to show drivers the police are doing something. He spoke to the Public Works Director about painting Vascar lines because they need that to do any speed enforcement. But at these speeds on the study, they couldn't even cite anyone, because the court gives a leeway of a few

miles. But even though they can't cite drivers for 31 mph, they can stop them and issue warnings. There is no good spot to put the stop sign because it's such a curvy road. Ms. Gallagher said the residents complained that there were too many cars parked on the street. Lt. Ward replied that he had all the cars checked and all those cars were registered and inspected, so there is nothing he can do. Ms. Gallagher asked if the resident said there was a bus stop there. Lt. Ward said he spoke to the school district and the district will examine this bus stop, but right now they feel it's safe. They will move it if the Township insists, or parents complain.

In other business, Pen Ryn School called the Township asking for a crosswalk to be painted on S. Olds Boulevard to improve crossing safety. It is a Township owned road, so he asked the Township Manager, and he didn't see a problem with it. Lt. Ward said there is no crossing guard there.

Pennsbury East (old Medill Bair) changed their traffic pattern going in for this school year but did not tell the Township about it. The first two days were a mess. The pattern is the traffic goes around in a big circle and then comes out. The problem the first few days was that they were letting vehicles make a left turn. He advised them to only let vehicles turn right and that alleviated some of the traffic. If it becomes unsafe, they will try to figure something else out.

Regarding Northpoint, Chief Whitney would like to increase the number of commercial vehicle inspectors before it really takes off down there.

We had previously spoken about all the dump trucks coming in and out of the Morrissey yard. They currently are not taking any trucks in that yard right now. That may change in the future because they have the construction contract at Northpoint.

The WaWa on Lincoln Highway is almost ready to start construction. Once construction starts, it's typically done in 30 – 40 days. Lt. Ward spoke to Mr. Takita about traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue and he said let's wait and see if that problem comes about. We really won't know until WaWa opens.

Ms. Gallagher said she sees the speed machine is on S. Olds Boulevard. Vehicles are speeding there. Lt. Ward said the police asked the state police to use radar there a few years ago, and they did, but the trooper couldn't make it to the court date and all the hearings got dismissed. Lt. Ward said the state police can use radar, but Township police are not allowed to use radar. We have lasers for speed now, but they must line up precisely and it's touchy in that area. We will try to hit that area again.

Raising Cane's (the new chicken restaurant on Commerce Blvd.) called and asked for traffic help. They didn't think of it while they were building but they don't have enough room for the traffic backup. It's a privately owned shopping center, so we can't help them unless the traffic goes out onto Oxford Valley Road. The landlord didn't offer them any help either. They will open on September 29.

Lt. Ward then reported on accidents within the Township. They are the same pretty much as last year. Nothing stands out. Most of the speeding occurs on Route 1 and Route 13. It's hard to enforce speed

on Route 13 because it is unsafe for our officers. There is nowhere to pull off the road safely. Officers will try to follow them to Levittown Parkway, West Trenton Avenue, or Route 1 where it is safer. Route 1 is still heavily enforced. Alden Avenue has been rather quiet.

PennDot is going to be reconfiguring the intersection at Bristol Oxford Valley Road near the WaWa soon.

Mr. Seeherman asked about the impact of Northpoint. Lt. Ward said Morrisville Borough is going to have the most problems because of all the traffic going through their residential area. They always complain to Falls about the traffic now. There are three warehouses that are over a million square feet each that are going to open at Northpoint. One is an Amazon, the second is UPS, and the third is Chewy. The trucks will have to go through the residential area but there is nothing we can do. It used to be this way during the steel mill heydays. People have forgotten how much traffic there was then. In addition, there will be between 5,000 – 8,000 employees. So, during a shift change it will be a mess. That's why we are starting to plan for these commercial vehicle enforcement officers, so the truckers know we are watching them, and they won't come in their broken-down trucks. In the beginning when we had the landfill trucks, we spent 5 years hammering them about the conditions of their trucks. The trucks would literally tip over, or have wheels fall off. It's been much better with the trash trucks since then, but occasionally, we get something crazy. For example, the scrap guys that are taking the crushed cars to the landfill, instead of putting four cars on they squeeze a fifth car on and then try to get under Route 13 and they hit the bridge and it rips a car off. This has happened three times so far this year.

The river is being dredged right now, so they may be able to get more stuff in by ships which would mean less truck traffic. There is also an active train line there too.

There was no other business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.