

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING
August 20, 2013
3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chief Paul Tiernan, Lt. Bill Hargrove, Roy Simonson, Dave Gula, Tom Parkins

Absent: Andrew Haines
Marvin Howard

Guests: Marge Hadden, District 4
Donna M. Organist, Newark resident
Albert Porach, Newark resident
Carla Stone, Newark resident
Dennis R. Williams, Newark resident

1. REQUEST TO DESIGNATE BOTH SIDES OF RITTER LANE BETWEEN ORCHARD AND TOWNSEND ROADS AS "NO PARKING ANYTIME".

Chief Tiernan clarified the above request should read, "Request to designate both sides of Ritter Lane between Orchard and Apple Roads as "No Parking Anytime".

Mr. Williams said in addition to the number of students on the street the residents have seen an increase in the amount of "day parkers".

Roy Simonson asked if residential permit parking exists from Orchard Road to S. College Avenue. Mr. Williams said yes.

Ms. Organist said she lives on Ritter Lane where no parking currently exists. Ms. Organist said she often takes Beverly Road or Apple Road to get home and said often times cars are parked on both sides of the street. Ms. Organist also mentioned with cars parked on both sides of the street as well as the city vehicles pulling out of Phillips Avenue makes it very difficult to drive down the street and often times she has to pull to the side of the curb for a car to pass.

Ms. Stone said she lives on the corner of Orchard Road and Ritter Lane. Ms. Stone said the overnight parking has increased significantly; there are parties, and littering. Ms. Stone said cars have blocked her driveway in the past and with a granddaughter with cancer she cannot take the chance of getting blocked in.

Ms. Organist said last night or the night before she was driving down Apple Road to her home and the cars were bumper to bumper down Ritter Lane.

Lt. Hargrove asked if on the streets (ie: Orchard Road and Townsend Road) that have residential permit parking if the residents felt it has helped. All the residents agreed it has helped.

Tom Parkins asked if there is a sense that these overnight parked cars are visitors or residents. The residents all agreed that the parked cars are visitors and the majority if not all of the cars are gone by the morning.

Tom Parkins asked if the daytime parking or overnight parking was worse. Mr. Williams said he felt the daytime into the evening parking was worse.

Lt. Hargrove said after the petition was circulated he received a phone call from a resident on Apple Road that was opposed to the request. The concern was the traffic from Ritter Lane would be pushed onto Apple Road.

Councilmember Hadden said there were issues of this type on Sunset Road and recognizes that the students will find another street to park on.

Ms. Hadden said the story her constituents shared with her was horrible. Mr. Williams said his wife passed away last fall and following the ceremony the neighbors had reserved parking for guests at his home. Ms. Stone said it was very upsetting to her that the students moved the traffic cones.

Ms. Hadden said the students will find the pockets of where to park. Ms. Hadden said she would like the University of Delaware to educate the students on the parking options available instead of pushing them into the neighborhoods.

Tom Parkins asked if the residents were requesting no parking and not just restricted parking. The residents confirmed they were asking for special residential permit parking. Ms. Hadden said when this was first discussed she suggested no parking anytime on one side of the street and permit parking on the other side of the street and was told that could not be done. Ms. Hadden said this was the reason no parking anytime was requested.

Lt. Hargrove said for example a rental with five residents living there they will receive two (2) permanent passes and two (2) guest passes. The guest passes are not to be used on a daily basis and is not an extension of the parking passes. If these guest passes are used on a daily basis, the parking enforcement officer will issue a warning and then ticket for misusing the passes.

Dave Gula inquired if the petition was complete. Lt. Hargrove said the petition seemed fairly complete.

Lt. Hargrove said the City Manager or Council can declare a residential parking district.

MOTION BY LT. HARGROVE, SECONDED BY DAVE GULA, TO SEND THE REQUEST TO COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL TO DESIGNATE BOTH SIDES OF RITTER LANE BETWEEN ORCHARD AND APPLE ROADS AS "NO PARKING ANYTIME" SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL PARKING DISTRICT.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5 TO 0.

2. REQUEST TO CHANGE THE SPEED LIMIT EASTBOUND ON W. CHESTNUT HILL ROAD FROM 35 MPH TO 25 MPH.

Chief Tiernan said he received a letter from John Quintus from 254 W. Chestnut Hill Road.

Lt. Hargrove said speeding on W. Chestnut Hill Road has been an ongoing complaint for many years. Lt. Hargrove said the traffic division conducts enforcement on a weekly basis for a few hours.

Lt. Hargrove said as a result of the complaint the speed sign was placed in the 25 mph zone at the bottom of the hill on W. Chestnut Hill Road. The results showed an average speed of 33.3 mph, the 50% speed was 34 mph and the 85th percentile speed was 40 mph. Lt. Hargrove said there are some speeding issues, however in his opinion not too excessive.

Lt. Hargrove said from August 9-14 there were 3 cars traveling over 60 mph and 72 cars traveling over 50 mph. Lt. Hargrove said for the most part the times were spread out evenly throughout the day. Lt. Hargrove said the greatest was between 3-4 pm there were 5 cars traveling over 50 mph. Lt. Hargrove said 41-50 mph there were about 100 cars per hour from 12-7 pm traveling over 40 mph.

Lt. Hargrove said he is not sure if changing the speed limit from 35 to 25 mph would change driver behavior. Lt. Hargrove said his recommendation would be to continue with targeting enforcement. Dave Gula asked if the data could be used to target certain times of the day. Lt. Hargrove said most definitely. Ms. Hadden asked if installing rumble strips would help. Lt. Hargrove said he is not sure as he has not had any personal experience with this type of approach.

Ms. Hadden asked if the data had a breakdown of certain times/days of the week. After reviewing the data, Lt. Hargrove said for the most part it was consistent every day.

Roy Simonson said the only way he felt to get a handle on the speeding issue would be for Council to approve a tolerance and didn't feel that giving drivers 15 mph over the speed limit was effective. Lt. Hargrove said the road must be taken into consideration as well. Roy said he felt establishing a stricter policy would change driver habit. Lt. Hargrove said by lowering the speed limit he anticipates council would receive more complaints from residents that this would be a speed trap.

Ms. Hadden said she is in favor of strict enforcement. Roy said from an engineering perspective 25 mph is unworkable, from a citizen perspective it is great. Roy said media technology should be used to advertise that if you speed you will get a ticket. Ms. Hadden suggested posting "Strictly Enforced" signs with the speed limit. Lt. Hargrove thought this was a good suggestion.

MOTION BY LT. HARGROVE, SECONDED BY TOM PARKINS, TO USE DATA COLLECTED TO TARGET ENFORCEMENT ON SPECIFIC HOURS/DAYS AND TO INSTALL "STRICTLY ENFORCED" ON THE SPEED LIMIT SIGNS ON W. CHESTNUT HILL ROAD.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5 TO 0.

3. REQUEST FOR A LEFT HAND TURN SIGNAL FROM S. MAIN STREET TURNING ONTO AMSTEL AVENUE.

Chief Tiernan said this letter was received from a resident.

Lt. Hargrove said the road was recently finished and there is a left hand turn lane from southbound S. Main Street turning left onto Amstel Avenue.

Lt. Hargrove recommends setting this item aside until the students return to see there are issues with cars queuing up beyond the limits of the left turn lane or do not make it through the light in one cycle. Lt. Hargrove suggested using the camera at Elkton Road and Main Street to see if either one of these issues exist.

MOTION BY LT. HARGROVE, SECONDED BY TOM PARKINS, TO SET THIS ITEM ASIDE FOR A FUTURE TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING TO ALLOW FOR A BETTER ANALYSIS OF THE INTERSECTION WHEN THE STUDENTS RETURN.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5 TO 0.

4. REQUEST FOR BOLLARDS/BUMP OUTS AT POMEROY TRAIL/WYOMING ROAD CROSSWALK.

Chief Tiernan said an email was sent to Charlie Emerson, Parks and Recreation Director from a resident.

Lt. Hargrove said where Pomeroy Trail crosses Wyoming Road the crosswalk is clearly marked and laid out. Lt. Hargrove said a marked crosswalk exists with two very wide shoulders on Wyoming Road marked as bicycle paths. Lt. Hargrove said if bump outs were installed he felt it would cause a safety concern by pushing bicyclists out into the traffic lane.

MOTION BY LT. HARGROVE, SECONDED BY ROY SIMONSON, TO DENY THE REQUEST FOR BOLLARDS/BUMP OUTS AT THE POMEROY TRAIL/WYOMING ROAD CROSSWALK.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5 TO 0.

New Business:

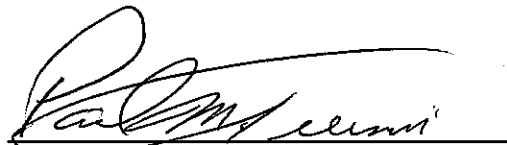
Chief Tiernan called for new business for the committee.

Mr. Albert Porach said in the past he requested the speed sign be placed on the 200 block of E. Park Place. Lt. Hargrove said the department has two speed signs and are currently conducting speed surveys on S. Main Street, New London Road, Route 4 and Pickett Lane. Once this data has been collected, Lt. Hargrove said he would be happy to place the sign on the 200 block of E. Park Place.

Mr. Porach said he lives in the 200 block of Chestnut Hill Road and watches the vehicles speed far greater than 25 mph. Lt. Hargrove said it is a difficult area to enforce without space on the shoulder to park a car.

Mr. Porach said when the students return he has noticed a lot of erratic high speed traffic during the evening hours. Mr. Porach asked if the DUI interdiction programs could perform a checkpoint there. Lt. Hargrove said the locations are selected based upon statistical data (ie: DUI arrests, DUI related crashes) and are not randomly selected. Lt. Hargrove said and if so the issue with the checkpoints would be where to park the 15-20 patrol vehicles and intoxilyzer van. Lt. Hargrove said the three main checkpoint locations are Paper Mill Road, Delaware Avenue, Library Avenue.

Lt. Hargrove said once the data is collected for E. Park Place he would be happy to review the data for spikes in times and perform direct enforcement.



Paul M. Tiernan, Chairman