Traffic and Safety Committee

September 20, 2016

Minutes

Chaired by: Paul Odenwelder

In Attendance: Bill Albergo, Chief Shawn Bennett, Lauren Brickner-McDonald, Natasha Cooper, Lisa Duke-Lees, Bill Koy

1. Minutes of June 9th, 2016 were approved.
2. Manager’s Report: Rich Sheola was unable to attend.
3. Parking on Glen/Melrose

* Jocelyn Stanton, residing on the corner of Glen and Melrose, raised the issue of parents parking illegally along her property and obstructing the view of other drivers and pedestrians
* Ordinance for no parking on Melrose was established to stop High School students parking their cars there during school hours
* There is no additional police manpower available to ticket offenders during school drop off/pick up
* Sergeant Benitez has been freed up to patrol and ensure safety, but has a large area to cover from Wildwood up to Briarcliff Middle School
* Chief Bennett has been down to observe the issue, but did not see anyone parking illegally
* Lauren Brickner-McDonald highlighted a previous TSC report of suggestions for ways to improve safety
* Improvements proposed in the upcoming referendum include an additional parking lot at Briarcliff
* Bill Koy to report back following the next meeting as to whether the Wildwood referendum includes proposals to ease traffic congestion
* Follow up on the idea of driveway buddies – residents living near the school offering up their driveways to provide additional safe parking during drop off/pick up

1. Speeding and Crosswalks

* Resident Kevin Driscoll sent TSC a letter highlighting the speed of traffic on The Boulevard and that often cars do not stop for pedestrians at the crosswalks
* Chief Bennett reported that a Speed sign has been ordered. This will enable a traffic study based on accurate readings of how fast people are driving. It will be posted around town in areas where there are ongoing complaints of speeding
* Chief Bennett highlighted that cars are only required to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks
* With regards use of the police radar, there has to be a good space for the officer to be parked and for him to pull people over.
* The number of heavy vehicles – UPS, Fedex, Borough, landscapers - speeding round town was highlighted as a particular concern. Landscapers parking in narrow roads also a problem.
* Complaints received from 2 residents on Pinewood Lane which is used as a cut through by drivers to avoid the traffic lights.
* Concern for pedestrians crossing the Boulevard at night. Drivers are not able to see pedestrians well at night and may also not be aware of the crosswalks.
* Encourage pedestrians on the Boulevard to wear reflective armbands – to be provided by the town and included in the budget
* Need to investigate ways to highlight the crosswalks to drivers
* Any addition such as LED lights, or extra reflective material/paint on the crosswalks would need to be approved by the county

1. Midvale Three-way Stop

* These stop signs were put in to slow traffic and enable residents to turn onto Midvale during times of heavy traffic.
* The issue now is that people are not stopping and pedestrians and other drivers have the expectation that they will stop. Removing the stop sign would remove this expectation and may be safer, but it would not reduce the issue of speeding on Midvale.
* Bill Ryden would need to investigate traffic calming solutions – such as traffic circles, chicanes, moving the speed bump closer to the stop sign, etc - and look into the costs of re-engineering of the road. Costs may be prohibitive
* Lauren highlighted that the speed bump in Midvale needs patching as it is a hazard for cyclists.

1. Traffic Safety Awareness

* Need for solutions that do not rely on police manpower or money. An interim solution is to focus on education and raising awareness of problem areas
* Lisa Duke-Lees to coordinate with Sergeant Benitez and follow up with Nikhil Badlani Foundation for ways to promote traffic safety awareness
* Chief Bennett is starting “Coffee with a Cop” which may be an opportunity to discuss and educate on traffic safety
* Highlight “hot spot” danger areas, based on the data collected by the Speed sign. Check with NHTSA for appropriate wording/already available signs.

1. Chief’s Report:

* Laurel Hill Rd paving taking place this week
* Good response from volunteers for CERT team
* Two mirrors to improve visibility for turning vehicles, have been ordered from Garden State Signs. One for Midvale/Elm and one for Midvale/Ball
* The review of the house sign ordinance is being led by the Fire Chief, Matt DiSantis. The Council have discussed and the standards are being updated so that they can be represented for approval.
* The State is not going to release money for road repaving and so Lake Drive will not be paved. However, once the gas line work is completed the town will spot fix the existing pot holes

1. Halloween

* A survey went out to residents in the proposed second safe trick or treating zone near Wildwood School. 75 surveys were sent out and 17 responses were received in favour of the second zone.
* There will not be a second zone this year as it is not cost effective – it is a larger zone and would require more security and policing
* Focus for this year is to promote better candy donation
* Last year 55,000 pieces of candy were donated. There were 1,200 trick or treaters in the Village. This data should be shared with residents to improve awareness of the need for donations
* Reminders for donations to go in the school Backpack, on the ML Boradcast email and on the electronic board on the Boulevard
* This year there is approx.. $2,000 in the police budget for candy
* Would it be possible for people to donate cash for Halloween candy? Would this be legal? If so, it could be co-ordinated through the schools
* Chief Bennett is keen for an Eagle Scout/Girl Scout to take on the project to promote aware and encourage residents to sign up for Everbridge – which can now be used to send out notifications and reminders, as well as emergency alerts and surveys. Residents should also be encouraged to connect on Facebook
* With regards to trick or treaters from out of town, this is very difficult to enforce.
* The CERT team of 12 volunteers to have vests and better walkie talkies and will be alert to people who are openly abusing candy availability

2017 Budget Requests:

* Sergeant Benitez to provide a number for the Bike Rodeo at Wildwood
* Reflective armbands

TSC Monitoring:

* During Fall focus of monitoring should be on street lights, overhanging tree branches and areas where views are obstructed by overgrowth.
* List of issues to be submitted to DPW no later than October 15th

NEXT MEETING

**December 13, 2016 - Tuesday**

5:30pm Borough Hall, Council Chambers