

## ROADS, HIGHWAYS, AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

March 7, 2016

Present: R. Carlson, M. Kirchgasser, and B. Clark

Mr. Kirchgasser reminded the audience that Committee Meetings are used to vet ideas and concerns with members of Council but intentionally not with a Council quorum. He then acknowledged some of those present, including Corey Destefano, Antonelle and Tony DiCicci, and David Chartier, who noted he was present because he was interested in the traffic situation at Middletown Road and Forge Road.

### Request for Improvements—S. Old Middletown Road

Corey Distefano, 243 S. Old Middletown Road, expressed her concern for the number of cars speeding on South Old Middletown Road. While she acknowledged that the flashing speed limit signs that the Township installed were helping, she felt that was not solving the problem. Ms. Distefano reported that she emailed some ideas to Council, which includes a larger pedestrian walking area and a narrower cartway for vehicles to slow them down. She also noted that the average speed on the road seems to be 40 miles per hour.

Mr. Kirchgasser provided a brief history of the current situation, reporting that Ms. Distefano came in prior to Christmas 2015 and talked about first steps to take to reduce speeding on S. Old Middletown Road. These steps included the speed limit sign with radar, notifying the State Police, and contacting the PTG at Indian Lane about the concern. The Township followed through with the first two steps but Ms. Distefano acknowledged she forgot to notify the PTG. Mr. Kirchgasser noted there was active presence by the State Police on the road and asked if she felt the radar signs and police presence were helping. Ms. Distefano agreed but felt the progress made was minimal. She expressed that she was happy with the progress made but because so many people walk on that road, she thought more pedestrian space would also be helpful.

Mr. Kirchgasser then acknowledged that Middletown Fire Company was also aware of the problem, as well as Rocky Run Fire Company.

Bruce Downing, PO Box 137, asked where the cars were going. Mr. Kirchgasser expressed that he thought it was not so much of a shortcut but more of a behavioral pattern.

Mr. Kirchgasser went on to tell Ms. Distefano that he has her suggestions and he wants to make sure he addressed them in time. He noted he communicated with her about how Council is trying to advance passive transportation in the form of walking and biking. They are in the process of sketching a trail network throughout the Township with the Granite Run area acting as the “wheel” and then connecting it to other parts of the Township with “spokes.” From there, other branches of trails could branch out to other key locations in the Township, like possibly using Old Middletown Road to connect to the Roosevelt School site. Ms. Distefano asked if the proposed map is online and Mr. Clark stated that there were only draft printouts. He also noted that directly opposite the athletic area of Indian Lane School there is already a path that connects

S. Old Middletown Road to the General Steuben cul-de-sac, which could take pedestrians to Rt. 352. Ms. Distefano noted that was good information to have.

Mr. Kirchgasser recognized the need for additional progress and noted that a member of the State Police force lives on the road in question and is adamant about enforcement.

Ms. Distefano then expressed concern for PADOT dump trucks speeding down the road at 1 AM, asking if they could use the entrance from Rt. 352 instead, and Middletown Township trucks are speeding there too, asking if they could be told to slow down. Mr. Clark stated that PADOT has no obligation to use their rear entrance. Ms. Distefano reported she contacted PADOT and was told the trucks shouldn't be using Old Middletown Road and to ask the Township to make the formal request. Mr. Clark stated the Township could make the request. Ms. Distefano also stated she was told to ask the Township to make a formal request about having a speed survey conducted on Glen Riddle Road. Mr. Clark stated that has already been completed by PADOT and based off of those recommendations, speed and signage changes were made.

Mr. Kirchgasser asked Ms. Distefano to update him with the progress made in contacting the Indian Lane PTG. She agreed.

Mr. Clark passed out the Designation of Road map to show use of roads, which are classified as primary, etc. This came out of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan, but the designations and classifications are almost the same as the 1980 Comprehensive Plan. Volumes of traffic have not changed all that much. He felt this may be helpful in trying to sort out road complaints.

#### Review of Speed Limit and Intersection Safety Concerns –Old Forge Road

Mr. Kirchgasser reported that Antonella DiCicci made a presentation about speeding and safety concerns on Old Forge Road, specifically at the intersections of Old Forge Road with Fair Acres, Darlington Road, and Yearsley Mill Road. She was involved in 2 car accidents in a 10 day period, which resulted in her not being able to start her freshman year of college on time. Mr. Kirchgasser disclosed that he knew the DiCicci family personally, was aware when the accidents occurred, and is also a resident of Old Forge Road. He also pointed out that drivers tend to use Old Forge Road as a cut through to avoid backups on both Rt. 352 and Rt. 1. At times, Old Forge Road can back up as far as Darlington Road.

Tony DiCicci commented that all roads lead through Middletown, not to it, and that both accidents his daughter was involved in were caused by non-residents. Ms. DiCicci went on to explain that her accident at the Darlington Road intersection was caused because the other driver did not know she had a stop sign. The other accident was at the intersection with Fair Acres and caused by employees of Fair Acres walking from the bus stop. The crosswalk at Rt. 352 is usually blocked so it is common that residents walk down Old Forge Road and cross closer to the Fair Acres entrance, which is not safe. It resulted in Ms. DiCicci's car having to have the breaks slammed to avoid hitting the pedestrians. Mr. Kirchgasser also commented that Fair Acres' non-smoking policy is also a cause of the issue since employees have to leave the property to smoke

and commonly do so by walking up to Rt. 352. He felt Fair Acres should help with constructing sidewalks.

Ms. DiCicci asked if it would be a good place for a crosswalk at the entrance of Fair Acres if that location was made a 3-way stop. Mr. DiCicci also noted that a lot of drivers turning into Fair Acres don't realize they are supposed to stop there.

Mr. Kirchgasser stated the Township would send a letter to Fair Acres requesting a pod be set up for smokers if the campus is to remain non-smoking so that staff do not cross traffic and that a sidewalk be installed to accommodate their pedestrians. He also stated the Township would look into considering a 3-way stop at the location.

Mr. Kirchgasser explained that there are symptoms and problems in the Township when it comes to traffic and that what they are currently looking at is the problem of how traffic at Route 1 affects drivers on Darlington Road. He reported that the Township's traffic engineer is in the process of developing a plan to address the traffic on Rt. 1 and it will likely be a loop road system. He stated that the Township has met with PADOT and is working with Senator Killion to get this improvement moving if the Township has it pre-engineered. He also noted that the intersections of Rt. 452 and Rt. 1, Rt. 352 and Rt. 452, and the clover leaf are all in TIP status with PADOT, which means the project is definitely slated to occur but when is still unknown. The Township is hoping that by doing the preliminary work, the State will move the project along faster. He also noted that the LST tax in the Township is expressly for this purpose.

Mr. Kirchgasser went on to explain that symptoms of the problem resulted in the light being installed at Forge Road and Rt. 352, the bridge being replaced over the Rocky Run Tributary on Old Forge Road, and the stop signs that were installed at this location at about the same time. In order for a stop sign to be installed at Darlington Road, sight distance would need to be reviewed prior. Mr. DiCicci thought that if Darlington Road could not work then possibly a three-way stop at Joseph's Way on Old Forge Road would be an alternative as a calming measure. Mr. Kirchgasser stated that stop signs are by law, not able to be used as a calming device. Mr. Clark commented that besides Ms. DiCicci's concerns, another resident, Monica Crane, questioned why some speed limit signs say 25 mph and others say 35 mph on Old Forge Road. He noted the Code Book says the road should be 35 mph. Nevertheless, he would have the traffic engineer look into these concerns, as well as Mr. Sullivan's previous suggestion on a center line and stop bar being painted on Darlington Road. Mr. Kirchgasser thought that was a good idea.

Jean Vasquez, Pennell Place, commented that there is a white stop sign in her development. Mr. Clark stated that decision was made by her Home Owners Association and it was up to them to replace it if that is a concern, as it is not a public road. Ms. Vasquez asked how they would go about buying a stop sign and Mr. Clark stated he could send her some information on manufacturers.

Ms. Vasquez also expressed concern that only 2 cars at most are able to turn left on to Rt. 1 from Rt. 452. Mr. Kirchgasser reported that the lights on Baltimore Pike from Riddle Hospital to Valley Road, and to Rt. 352/Rt. 452 intersections are all timed together. If they lengthened one, the others would all be affected. Mr. Clark noted that there was a delay on the light though, so if

a car is already in the middle of the road, the driver should be able to safely complete the left turn. Mr. Kirchgasser also commented that the traffic improvements they are considering would address this. Ms. Vasquez then asked why there are not sidewalks in front of the Township building and Mr. Kirchgasser stated that was being looked at with the trail system. She went on to express concern overall for pedestrians, noting students walking along roads to the high school and the problems previously discussed with Fair Acres. Mr. Kirchgasser agreed but noted the improvements will take time.

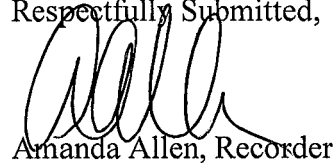
David Chartier, 41 Stephen Drive, reported that he requested a stop sign like the one at the Old Forge Road and West Forge Road intersection for the intersection of Stephen Drive and West Forge Road. There were 2 accidents this year and a visibility issue. Mr. Clark reported the engineer looked at the location and that vegetation is to be taken down to eliminate the issue. He was not sure if that occurred yet. Mr. Kirchgasser asked Mr. Clark to follow up on this. Once action is taken, the Township could re-evaluate the need for a stop sign.

In summary, Mr. Kirchgasser asked Ms. Destefano to confirm when she speaks to the PTG and the Township would provide her with information about the proposed trail; a sight distance study would be completed for the possibility of a stop sign at Darlington and Old Forge Road; the Township would follow up with Fair Acres regarding having them provide pedestrian routes, and the Township would consider a 3-way stop sign or different markings at Old Forge Road at the entrance of Fair Acres. He also instructed Ms. Vasquez to follow up with her HOA and the Township would let her know about future meetings regarding trails or traffic improvements. Ms. DiCicci asked for a timeline. Mr. Kirchgasser stated the engineer would need about 30 days to complete the study and Mr. Clark stated that information should be available in April or May at the latest.

#### Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned by Mr. Carlson at 6:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amanda Allen, Recorder