

**Town of University Park
Council Committee on Police, Traffic and Public Safety**

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Meeting Notes

Committee members present: Joel Biermann, Ward 1; Joe Schultz, Ward 2; Linda Verrill, Ward 4; Martha Wells, Ward 6; Roland Stephen, Ward 7

Guests: Town Administrator David Deutsch

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Continued discussion, excessive vehicle noise

Mr. Deutsch summarized conversations he has had with Mayor Carey and Chief Baker on this topic. Various factors make it a difficult problem, e.g., limited enforcement tools, the fact that many offending vehicles are actually not modified but stock configurations. After discussion, committee determined that a productive immediate course of action might be to invite Senator Pinsky and Delegates Healey, Washington, and Williams to an after-session meeting in late May or June (after the state legislative session has closed) in which this issue, along with any others of interest to town residents, could be raised for discussion. Schultz to request that an item be added to the council meeting agenda at the earliest opportunity. In the interim, Mr. Deutsch will explore with the State Highway Administration and the county whether it would be possible to have signs prohibiting the use of truck jake brakes place on the town perimeter roads.

2. Lowering the town speed limit

The Committee reviewed earlier discussions of this idea that have occurred over the past couple of years. There is consensus in the Committee, albeit for varying reasons, that a 20-mph speed limit town wide is an idea worth exploring. Based on informal advice from the Police Chief and Town Attorney, the Town could pursue such a goal using different tools, including school zone limits and designation of the Town as an urban village. The Committee recommends that the Town Council request that town staff prepare a formal report detailing alternative options available to the Town for reducing the speed limit town wide. Schultz to convey that recommendation to Council via the Mayor.

3. Updates

A traffic counter device borrowed from a neighboring municipality will be set up on the 4000 block of Van Buren February 18. Town staff should have collected the data needed to report on the question of installing traffic-calming devices on that block by at least the March 15 Council meeting. The Committee strongly recommends that the Town take steps to either repair its existing traffic monitoring devices or purchase some that work.

Mr. Deutsch said that the County has been reluctant to send Code Enforcement Officers to look at the apparent zoning ordinance violation at the corner of Baltimore and Sheridan because of the pandemic. Staff will reach out to the County again to try to arrange a meeting at the site.

The Committee agreed to produce a short list of proposed projects to install chicanes, mini-circles, medians, and other devices that serve the dual purpose of traffic calming and streetscape beautification in time for the list to be considered during the FY22 budget process. Schultz to schedule a special meeting of the Committee within the next ten days to finalize the list.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by Joe Schultz, Chair