



**Local Traffic Advisory Committee  
LTAC  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 30, 2022  
7:00 PM**

**Attendance**

- Members:** Donald Hartzell, Earl Moore, Pat Vernon, Ronald Smith, Carla Stilson, Council Representative; Donald Franson, Township Engineer; Amy Kerner, Township Public Works Director
- Ex-Officio:** Eric Silver, NTCC; Chief Gardner, SCPD; Trish Meek, Transportation Planner/CRPA (zoom); Shaun Kauffman, Centre County Emergency Management Coordinator (zoom)
- Guest:** Nicholas Schaefer, P.E., Dir. Transp. Svc. – Central PA – Trans Associates (zoom)
- Staff:** Susan Hetzel, Recording Secretary
- Absent:** Lt. Barry Smith, SCPD; Chief Kent Knable, EMS; Chief Jason Troup, Alpha Fire Dept.; Van Swauger, Transp. Coord. SASD
- Residents:** Stacy Silver, Jill Musser, Tom Ertsgaard, Beth McGraw, Deb Hilands, and 10 Zoom Attendees
- 

***Call to Order***

Chair Hartzell called the Wednesday, March 30, 2022 meeting of the Local Traffic Advisory Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

***Order of Business***

***Approval of Minutes***

Local Traffic Advisory Committee (LTAC) Reorganization Meeting, Wednesday, January 12, 2022  
Local Traffic Advisory Committee (LTAC) Regular Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, January 12, 2022

**Mr. Smith moved to approve, both, the reorganization and regular meeting minutes of the LTAC Meetings, Wednesday, January 12, 2022. Mr. Vernon seconded.**

Chair Hartzell called for further comments. Ms. Stilson asked that a clarification be made to the roll call (for consistency) to identify that the Ex-Officio's Mr. Silver and Chief Gardner, attended in person and that Ms. Meek and Mr. Kauffman, attended via zoom. In addition, LTAC received an email from Mr. Eartsgaard that his raised hand (on the zoom) was missed and request that his comment provided, be included in the regular meeting minutes.

Chair Hartzell called for approval of the minutes as amended.

**Minutes unanimously approved as amended (7-0-0).**

---

**Oak Ridge Avenue – Centre Hills Village Neighborhood Traffic Calming Project**

**Council Remand Directive to LTAC; Committee Discussion**

Chair Hartzell started the meeting with the reading of Councils' remand letter to the LTAC. Further summarizing that although Council unanimously denied the motion for funding for a proposed road closure of Squirrel Drive at their February 3, 2022 meeting that they remain committed to funding traffic calming measures within the Centre Hills Village study area; but such measures cannot begin and end with a closure of Squirrel Drive.

Chair Hartzell added that in moving forward with tonight's discussion that the remand letter recommends that LTAC consider recommendations for a phased approach that would implement various traffic calming techniques that could be employed to provide relief to the existing traffic issues within the neighborhood and

that a closure of Squirrel Drive would only be considered as a last option should lesser improvements, or combinations of lesser improvements, prove inadequate to addressing existing traffic conditions.

Chair Hartzell stated that this meeting would not be open to public comment. LTAC's objective for tonight's meeting is for LTAC and Ex-Officio Members, which include Mr. Silver, Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee Representative (NTCC), to come up with a phased traffic calming study/design plan for the Oak Ridge Avenue-Centre Hills Village Neighborhood Traffic Calming Project, as remanded, for the purpose of the LTAC to make a motion for recommendation to Council. In addition, Chair Hartzell read Mr. Silver's email to the LTAC regarding the NTCC's meeting, Sunday, March 27; after their review of Council's remand letter that NTCC would like to propose a phased approach to begin with,

- Speed humps; then, if necessary,
  - Pinch points; and, then if necessary,
    - Close Squirrel Drive one-way only; then, if necessary,
      - Close Squirrel Drive completely; and,

For safety purposes, the neighborhood would like crosswalks painted at all intersections, stop signs, and a crosswalk at the entrance to the Thompson Woods Preserve.

#### **LTAC Comments and Discussions**

Mr. Moore stated that the remand seemed to imply that the NTCC did not take into consideration other options. Ms. Stilson stated that Council reviewed the NTCC survey results that included the overall NTCC survey options; further stating that this was not Council's intent.

If first moving forward with speed humps, Ms. Stilson stated that the NTCC survey results reflected that pinch points received more votes than speed humps; and, speed humps are rated more effective for traffic calming and traffic volumes than pinch points. LTAC realizes that the traffic engineer's design and proposal costs for a speed hump would require fieldwork to identify distances of driveways, intersections, and stormwater inlets that it will be important that the steps of the phases are clear. However, if speed humps are phase one; and, phase two proves needed; would LTAC come back to determine the next phase or should the recommendation include future phases. Chair Hartzell stated that Oak Ridge Avenue-Centre Hills Village Traffic Calming's revised phasing is starting with speed humps, and (if needed) add other devices, which is a bit different from past projects. Before getting into details for a design, Chair Hartzell requests that LTAC continue with comments and discussions. Ms. Stilson stated that if the speed humps are more effective, we (as a committee) do not want to short ourselves, if the distances are comparable and speed humps could be, in reality, more effective than a combination of speed humps/pinch points... Mr. Silver stated his agreement; further suggesting that when the steps are written up for the project that it would be helpful that when we envision the vote, to the residents, that it should be for the project, as remanded, as a total phased approach, so that the rest can be technical engineering and construction.

Mr. Smith requested clarification for a proposed stop sign at entrance to Thompson Woods Preserve. Mr. Franson stated that the request was, in addition to all intersections, to install a painted mid-block crosswalk (not a stop sign) at the entrance to the Thompson Woods Preserve. In the design phase, the traffic engineer would determine the additional signage required that alerts, crosswalk ahead. Ms. Kerner stated that to allow for a mid-block crosswalk that there is a minimum distance required from existing street crossing(s), if the required distance is not obtainable; the crosswalk design might need painted at Dublin Street. Ms. Stilson stated that the crosswalk (a very positive request), however, is not part of the traffic calming project.

Mr. Smith stated the importance of traffic counts and speeds; for example, the permanent speed sign near the Methodist Church on East Branch Road. Further asking if a speed sign could be permanently placed in the study area. Mr. Franson stated that the sign company, by agreement with the State College Borough and College Township, placed a sign on East Branch Road. The company maintains ownership of the sign and uses this sign for calibration and field-testing of their equipment; and, in turn, SCBPD has access to the data. In addition, the placement helps with speed awareness in the Lemont area. With the Centre Hills Village project area having multiple streets, permanent placement would require purchasing of more than one sign. Mr. Smith asked who determines the placement of the Township speed signs. Mr. Franson stated that placement of Township speed signs are primarily complaint or project driven and are placed by order of the Township Manager or supervisory staff.

Mr. Vernon stated that the NTCC's proposed phased approach is fine.

Mr. Moore stated that he had no additional comments at this point.

Chair Hartzell added that if Council approves a phased approach that includes speed humps, this would be the first speed hump(s) in College Township, as they have been proposed in years past and not approved. However, speed humps have been used in State College Borough, their public works department has learned to work with them, and the speed humps have proven to be very effective. In reviewing the manual for speed hump placement for the most effective results, speed humps are recommended to be installed 275-feet apart. Depending on driveways and parking, it may not be feasible to have every speed hump at 275-feet on Oak Ridge / Shamrock Avenues.

Mr. Franson stated that normally, once the LTAC would have a proposal, the next step would be to go back to NTCC. Chair Hartzell reiterated that in order to expedite the process the NTCC made it clear in their email that there would be no need to go back to NTCC. Mr. Silver stated confirmation that there is no need to come back to NTCC; the NTCC provided the written sequence for a phased approach and would accept as many speed humps as possible and that the NTCC would have no need to have another meeting. Chair Hartzell stated that in review of the guidelines that LTAC would need to make a motion for the engineering study proposal to include the cost(s) of the project as a phased approach and authorize the engineer to present the proposal to Council. Then it would come back to LTAC for planning the presentation to the neighborhood before the vote.

Mr. Silver stated the appreciation to focus on speed humps as they are, phase one. Further stating the importance that since the remand letter specifically says, "Phased Approach," the NTCC would like all the phases kept together in the proposal (as one option). This request is to avoid the phases being miss-identified as options that could be interpreted by Council to be separate study process; further requesting that the remand letter be incorporated into the proposal.

Mr. Moore recommended that with the phased approach that the committee should come up with some milestones that indicate the direction for the next phase or project status, by either speed or cut-through reduction. Mr. Schaeffer stated that the estimated reductions in the proposal would be based on the design guidelines for a specific traffic-calming device. Ms. Kerner stated that the Local Traffic Calming Handbook has guidelines of percentages, for example the 18-percent reduction in traffic volumes, etc. The phased approach could be applied to the guidelines. Mr. Franson stated that the best goal would be to get below the number that qualifies a study.

Chief Gardner stated that the speed humps are a great idea. However, the Township should have the speed devices placed in the study area pre-construction and post-construction to establish traffic counts and traffic speeds; this way you can establish the matrix.

Mr. Kauffman stated that once the apartment complex opens the Township might need to refigure the criteria for the project area. Further stating that LTAC may want to look at the potential that if a speed hump is installed that the group may want to see if a pinch point could be installed at the speed hump (with the idea that may provide additional benefit and lower cost). In addition, from a standpoint of Fire and EMS, (the vehicles are not a typical sedan), the equipment carried does not like speed humps; but (if the driver knows that they are there) speed humps are not an issue. Therefore, signage is very important to EMS vehicle operators, even at 25-MPH the emergency vehicles can have equipment dislodged. Lastly, it is also very important that maintenance is done, such as, trimming vegetation and roadway painting, for continued visibility of the signs and road markings. Mr. Schaeffer stated that he has never seen speed humps and pinch points installed together; but would check with PennDOT on the matter.

Ms. Stilson stated that since this project is phased and the College Township Traffic Calming Guidelines are not specifically written for a phased project that we want to make sure that we have the process laid out in writing, for LTAC's next meeting. Before presenting the future proposal to Council, it will be good to have an overall understanding of the process and make sure that everyone is on the same page. Therefore, for the next meeting, LTAC should have a process laid out, in writing, for clarification of the phased approach, for instance,

- LTAC meets to review the plans and a draft timeline for the project that should include monitoring expectations of the matrix, and how LTAC would recommend moving forward with the phased project, then...
- Presentation to Council,
- If Council gives the funds, then...
- before the vote, LTAC holds open house presentation to the neighborhood,
- the ballot cards are mailed to property owners to vote on the phased project,
- LTAC meets to review the results,
- notify Council of the vote results.
- if the vote is "yes," how the project moves to construction.

Ms. Stilson asked the NTCC that what if there would be a "no" vote on the phased approach; this could happen. Mr. Silver and the audience collectively agreed that the NTCC would be very proactive in reaching out to their neighbors expressing the importance of a return vote. Ms. Stilson stated that since this project is being phased as one option that she would be willing to put together the steps going forward for the next meeting of LTAC / NTAC to review and discuss.

Mr. Moore requested that the phased guidelines incorporate the estimated reductions in speed and/or traffic volumes that would trigger the next phase.

#### **LTAC Motion**

Mr. Smith moved to authorize the Township Traffic Engineer-Trans Associates to prepare a proposal for engineering study, cost, and phased design approach for the Oak Ridge Avenue-Centre Hills Village Traffic Calming Study starting with phase one - speed humps, keeping in mind the potential need for future phases such as pinch points that is to include a copy of College Township Councils' remand letter and further authorize Mr. Franson, Township Engineer on behalf of LTAC to present the proposal and design to College Township Council to move forward to the next meeting.

Mr. Smith asked the secretary to read back the motion.

Mr. Smith amended the motion to strike authorize and replace with recommend that,

**Mr. Smith moved to recommend that the Township Traffic Engineer-Trans Associates prepare a proposal for engineering study, cost, and phased design approach for the Oak Ridge Avenue-Centre Hills Village Traffic Calming Study, starting with phase one - speed humps, keeping in mind the potential need for future phases such as pinch points that is to include a copy of College Township Councils' remand letter and further authorize Mr. Franson, Township Engineer on behalf of LTAC to present the proposal and design to College Township Council to move forward to the next meeting.**

**Ms. Stilson seconded the amendment.**

Ms. Stilson asked for clarification of the word "study"; what is he studying. Chair Hartzell stated that the study is for the most efficient design of the placement for phase one – speed humps and phase two – pinch point placements. Mr. Schaeffer is present and understands that we want phase one to be as efficient as it can be, we would hope that phase one would be the solution, as we discussed earlier, we do not want to limit phase one in considering the next phase if that keeps phase one from being as efficient as possible. Mr. Schaeffer confirmed.

Mr. Franson stated that the proposal must include traffic counters to be installed pre-construction(s) and post-construction(s) for accurate verification of counts and results. Mr. Silver stated the reminder that the last week of April that Penn State classes are out. Mr. Franson stated the question if the counters could be installed before the end of April. Mr. Schaeffer stated that (if it does not rain) they might be able to schedule within a week.

Ms. Kerner stated that with a phased project, there is a need to define (for instance) how many months after construction for counts to be taken to verify that we have brought it down below thresholds or that we move forward to the next phase. We do not want to lose track of the fact that we want some sort of metric guideline. Ms. Stilson stated the question that is this recommendation for Trans Associates or LTAC to provide. Ms. Kerner clarified that the LTAC should come up with the metrics that (although phased) follow the guidelines as close as possible. Ms. Stilson stated that she had offered to get a metric together before the next meeting and would look forward to working together on a draft for the LTAC / NTCC-CHV to review.

Hearing no further discussion, Chair Hartzell called for a vote.

**Mr. Vernon moved to accept the motion.**

**Mr. Moore seconded. Motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.**

Mr. Silver asked if the counters would be installed before the end of the April 2022 to get the baseline. Mr. Franson stated that he would authorize Trans Associates to get the traffic counter tubes installed as soon as possible.

**Chair Hartzell called the Local Traffic Advisory meeting closed at 8:10 PM**

Respectfully Submitted by,

Susan Hetzel, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved on: Wednesday, July 27, 2022