



March 11, 2021

Dear Collegeville Residents,

We are reaching out to our neighbors on Park Ave. and its intersecting streets to let you know the work we have been doing to address the speeding on Park Ave. Before we move any further on this issue, we need to know your comments and concerns.

The Speeding Problem on Park Ave.

Many residents along Park Ave. have asked the Borough to help slow the speeding. Park Ave. has become an increasingly busy “bypass” to avoid the lights at Main St. and Second Ave., and we know the traffic volume will only increase again when more people resume their daily commutes as the COVID pandemic subsides. About six months ago, The Streets, Public Safety, and Lights Committee of the Council instituted a program with our Police Chief to reduce the truck traffic on Park Ave. Hopefully you have now noticed a significant decrease in trucks except for local deliveries.

The Safety Committee, our Council and our Police Chief have all had numerous discussions on the best ways to slow traffic on Park, and early this year we requested that a traffic professional from PA’s Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) meet with us. Transportation Safety Engineer Mark Hood came out to Collegeville and reviewed the speeding on Park, as well as Clahor, and Ninth Avenues, and proposed solutions. You can read the LTAP report recommending Traffic Calming measures for Park Ave here: <https://www.collegeville-pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Traffic-Calming-Memo-Collegeville.pdf>. You can find a copy of this letter on our website www.collegeville-pa.gov under news and you can click on any of the live links in the letter.

Traditional, Lower Cost Solutions

Easy, less costly solutions recommended first for Park Ave. were:

- Having our police continue to enforce the speed limit, which they will do.
- Using temporary speed awareness devices. We have done that, but over time, area residents ignore them.
- Installing edge lines at the end of the roadway. It was decided that these would not have any significant effect.
- Allowing on-street parking on one side of the street. The road was not seen as wide enough.
- Painting bike lanes, which require five feet of space on both sides of the road. Again, Park Ave. was not wide enough.

Our Preferred Traffic Calming Device

For our next proposed solution, we looked into the different Traffic Calming devices, such as speed humps, raised crosswalks, and raised intersections. We felt that installing devices called Speed Pillows at three approximately equally spaced locations along Park Ave. from Third Ave. to Route 29 (2nd Ave.) were our best option. These are designed for use on residential streets and can be used on emergency response routes. This series of raised areas, spaced across the entire roadway width with two open gaps in the structures, permits wide axel emergency vehicles to pass without slowing down while normal traffic would need to slow to no more than 25 mph.

The pillows are approximately four inches tall with a gentle rise about six feet long to reach that height, followed by a 10-foot level run and another six-foot long ramp back to street level. They are designed to avoid damage to vehicles if approached properly. Advanced warning signage and horizontal street markings would be placed at an appropriate distance to warn drivers that they were approaching them. A second warning sign would be located on the side of the road at the beginning for the pillow.

After much discussion, our police chief, the Council, our Safety Committee, and our LAPT engineer all believe that installing Speed Pillows would be the most effective, yet safe solution to reduce speeding on Park Ave.

Speed pillows should not pose problems for bicyclists, except if they are approached at high speeds. These pillows are successfully used in areas with heavy snowfalls. Snow removal would require training for the snow removal personnel. We would also take drainage into consideration and construct the pillows accordingly.

There are some downsides. If these pillows are installed, we can anticipate there will be some noise associated with them. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that many drivers may decide to avoid Park Ave. by using Fifth Ave. to Clahor Ave., causing traffic on Fifth Ave. to increase.

You can see a video that gives an overview of speed pillows here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZ8Vol8UR2I>.

We Want to Hear From You!

This is our first request for comments. Because you are most affected by any decisions we make concerning Park Ave., it is important that we to hear from you, whether you support or are against our approach. You can e-mail me at my e-mail address below, and/or attend our upcoming Streets, Public Safety and Lights Committee Zoom Meeting on Monday April 5th at 7pm. The link for that meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89380655729>. The links to each of the Safety Committee meetings and the agendas are always posted monthly on the Collegeville Borough calendar.

Sincerely,

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