

Traffic Planners Talk About Speed Humps:

Minutes of the September 15, 1997, NSCNA Meeting

Presiding: Dallas Maham, Vice President

Treasurer's Report: Harold Anderson, Treasurer. Membership now includes 71 households, 30 of which are new members for 1997. Current balance in the association's account is \$1,585.

Secretary's Report: Lynda Oakes, Secretary. Minutes of the May 6, 1997, meeting were presented in the Summer 1997 issue of the NSC Newsletter.

Pam Penick announced that a petition was being circulated by the residents in the Daleview Drive area regarding the noise generated by Stripling Blake during the night. Attendees were given an opportunity to sign the petition at the end of the meeting.

Guest speakers Joan Hudson and Rafael Cruz, engineers from the city transportation department, presented the city's newly adopted Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. This program has been under evaluation throughout the city since the speed hump program was placed on hold because of concerns about slowing emergency vehicles and about the effects of diverting traffic.

A focus group was formed in June 1997 to review "calming devices," which are intended to slow down traffic rather than divert it. Representatives from EMS, the fire department, City Planning, and neighborhood organizations are participating in the review.

Ms. Hudson and Mr. Cruz showed slides and passed out printed material illustrating the calming devices, which include landscaped traffic circles, curb extenders, diagonal dividers, and traffic diverters. A question-and-answer period followed the presentation.

Q: Are these devices being planned according to the shape of the affected neighborhood?

A: Yes, patterns and flows of adjacent streets are being studied, boundaries and arteries identified.

Q: What is the cost of these devices?

A: Speed humps are the cheapest, but are not attractive. The cost of landscaping must be considered in traffic circles and curb extensions.

Q: The presence of parked cars on many streets seems to preclude the use of anything but speed humps. How can other devices help such areas?

A: Each street is unique, and it will take a combination of several types of solutions.

Q: What are the criteria for funding?

A: A potential area must meet criteria for throughput and the speed of passing cars. The current effort is to develop a ranking criteria and to determine how much funding will be available.

Q: In 1994 there was a petition for speed humps on Thrushwood and Primrose. The study was not comprehensive enough, and the area was not considered

eligible to receive city funding. What kind of feedback will there be for the current process?

A: The process must be ongoing and involve community cooperation. The city has received approximately 900 petitions for speed humps, and many streets do not meet the minimum criteria.

Q: How can we get accidents recorded? Many accidents have occurred which have not been recorded.

A: Only accidents that are recorded by the police department are available for consideration for speed bump planning. They must show up in the city computer. Accidents stay on the computer for 3 years.

Q: What about the use of signs and traffic restrictions during certain hours?

A: These methods have been used in the past but are ineffective and very hard to enforce.

Q: Can an individual pay for a speed hump in front of his or her home?

A: Such an installation would have to meet the city's minimum requirement for speed hump installation.

Q: Why doesn't the city just pay for speed humps now?

A: Because of a lack of funding. The original funding for the trial speed humps last year was \$100,000. All of the cities we have studied as examples have had considerably more to spend. Portland had a million dollars in funding.

Q: What about private funding from local businesses?

A: Such requests must still meet the criteria: traffic traveling at 30 mph, signatures from 67% of the residents, and evaluation by the city.

Q: How can we get the process started for our streets?

A: Petitions can be circulated: 67% of the residents on the affected street must sign the petition.

End of the question-and-answer session.

[Secretary's note: A petition form for speed humps is printed on the reverse side of this page. Residents may circulate a petition for their immediate streets. The city requirement is that 67% of the houses on each target street must sign. Signed petitions should be given to Lynda Oakes (call me at 467-7781), who will forward them to the city transportation department.]

Old Business: The request for a sign variance in excess of the standard height has been withdrawn by the requesting party. Residents on Ashdale would have been affected by the change.

By-Laws Committee: Three people have agreed to serve on the By-Laws Committee. They are Donna Eagle, Phyllis Milstead, and John Migl. They will have an organizational meeting within the next 2 weeks and will provide a short review at the next meeting.

Lynda Oakes
Secretary