



July 7, 2014

Dear Resident of Old School House Road/Pheasant Hill Lane:

I am writing to you to gain your input about a serious traffic safety situation on Old School House Rd. The problem is excessive speed and a disregard for traffic control devices. This situation will be a topic of discussion at the July 16, 2014 Board of Supervisors meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Township building. We hope you will attend and be part of this discussion.

It is important to understand the history of this road and what is motivating the offending drivers currently using Old School House Rd. For years, the surface of Old School House Rd. was in very poor condition. In 2011, as part of the Township 10-Year Road Program, the road was resurfaced. Additionally, a 4-way stop sign system was installed on Chesterville at its intersection with N. Creek and State Route (SR) 841.

These two events have provided an incentive for drivers to use Old School House Rd. as a shortcut in lieu of using SR841. Old School House Rd. was never intended for high volume, thru-traffic use. It was a path designed by property owners to provide access to their properties. The narrow road width and terrain features make this road unsuitable for high volume, thru traffic.

I and many neighbors have observed the offending drivers. These drivers do not fall into any specific category – they are young, old, trucks, cars and even school buses. Many exhibit a total disregard for the safety of others. To give you an example, our Assistant Township Manger and I were putting some finishing touches on the stop sign. A large diesel truck roared up to the stop sign, slammed on the brakes, looked in our direction, give us an obscene gesture, and accelerated off quickly.

After requests from some of your neighbors, the Township installed several traffic calming devices, mainly additional speed limit signs and a stop sign at Pheasant Hill Rd. The stop sign has provided an additional measure of safety related to a bi-directional blind approach grade and to residents of Pheasant Hill Rd. exiting to Old School House Rd.

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Unfortunately these devices have not remedied our most serious traffic safety issue - excessive speed. The combination of excessive speed, high traffic volume, and poor sight distances, make it difficult for many residents to exit their driveways safely.

We have concluded that signs alone will not solve the problem. After thoughtful consideration & research, I believe it is time to do something more to improve the personal safety of those who live on or directly off this road. With the approval of a majority of residents on Old School House Rd and Pheasant Hill Lane, the Township proposes to install a series of "speed humps/tables". Our proposal is to provide 4 of these devices on Old School House Rd at the approximate locations indicated on the enclosed map.

These devices will control speed, but the ultimate objective is to create a sufficient inconvenience to thru-traffic to cause these drivers to choose to use SR841 in lieu of Old School House Rd. SR841 is entirely suitable for high volume, thru-traffic.

Speed Humps/Tables should be distinguished from speed bumps. A Speed Table is a section of roadway elevated approximately 4 inches with shallow angle transition ramps. The shallow ramp slope provides smooth transition and does not interfere with our snow plows. A detailed description of a Speed Table is provided in Pennsylvania's Traffic Calming Handbook, pages 38-47 which is enclosed. [The full document is provided on Franklin Township's website.](#)

Speed Bumps are usually about 3 to 6 inches in height, 1 to 3 feet in length, and force traffic to slow to 5 to 10 miles per hour. They can often be found in parking lots. Speed bumps may generate severe vertical displacement at low speeds and are not to be used as a traffic calming measure.

The Township receives an annual payment from PennDOT to help maintain our roads. It is a reimbursement of taxes collected on liquid fuels. PennDOT will approve the use of speed humps/tables, but will suspend this payment if we install speed bumps.

I believe this project will improve the personal safety of not only the Old School House Rd residents, but all who use the road. Unfortunately, the local property owners will pay the price of inconvenience to increase the margin of personal safety.

I have spoken to a number of Old School House Rd. residents and they are in favor of this solution. Please come to the July 16, 2014 BOS meeting and give us your thoughts on this safety improvement. If you cannot attend the noted meeting, please provide your input to the Township office via email, phone or fax. I look forward to seeing you on the 16th!

Sincerely,

John Auerbach, Chairman
610-420-4369 (cell)

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