

## Munster Community Association Special Safety Meeting

June 10, 2015

Munster Community Centre

6:30 p.m.

Moderator: Normand Gibson

Guests: Ottawa City Councillor Scott Moffatt, Ottawa Police Constable Arun Daniels

Main topic for discussion: Speed in the community with particular focus on Bleeks Rd. as a residential street

### **Began with discussion of recent community activities:**

#### Black truck:

There were three reports (going back to the weekend before last and on to the Monday following) of a black pick-up truck appearing to be watching and in some cases following children. Ottawa Police increased patrols during the week following the reports and there have been none since. There were a few reports out of Richmond but unable to tell if they are connected. None of the incidents involved children being contacted directly. Constable Daniels advises anyone who notes anything suspicious to report it so investigators can follow up.

#### Break-in:

There was one reported break-in on Bleeks Rd to a vacant property. Constable Daniels advises all residents to ensure their homes are secured, especially if they are away. This includes locking main floor windows and doors and ensuring garages are not left open.

### **Main meeting focus:**

Speed and traffic concerns are a community issue recorded as far back as the 1970s. One of the issues is a speed limit that drops from 80 to 50 coming into Munster from all directions. This is a particular concern along Bleeks both ways because there are residences on the street. The intent of today is to identify both interim and long-term solutions to address the issue.

### **Proposals:**

#### Speed limit reduction to 40km throughout the hamlet

Councillor Moffatt notes there is not data to support an overall reduction because people tend to drive whatever speed they are comfortable and longer straightaways on main arteries tend to be prime for speed. Speed on residential streets in each of the quadrants should be 40km and some streets are marked as such. It is noted though that not all streets are marked (ie Cranberry Court leading into the southeast quadrant does not have a speed marker) which makes speed allowed on those streets 50km.

Perhaps a review of all quadrant main entrances to ensure speed is marked. Proposal to have whole town made 40km. There are communities within Greater Ottawa that are 40km so no apparent reason Munster should not be. If the City will not approve this motion it can be pushed through a petition by the residents of the hamlet.

#### More progressive slow down coming into town

It is felt that the town boundary may not be well marked and that dropping from 80km to 50km is often ignored. Suggestion that the boundary be pushed out further with a decrease from 80km to 60km to 50km to allow more time to recognize town boundary.

#### Community ownership of issue

It is noted that speeding drivers include both residents and people passing through. Education within the community is key and part of that must be letting residents know speed is a concern. Manotick has launched a Keep it to 40 program in their community with signage and education. The City does have a speed awareness program but it is only a 2-year increased signage and patrols program that generally is only a temporary fix.

Besides residents traffic to and from the track is a concern. Perhaps a conversation with the track management to promote awareness at the site among users.

Concern was also expressed over snowmobiler, ATVs and dirt bike speeds.

The City does have Children at Play signs that are available through the Councillor's office. This may be one way to show residents and those travelling through town that speed is an issue and to show areas where extra care may be required.

#### Three-way stop at key intersections

It was proposed that perhaps three-way stops at key entrances coming into town would force people to slow. Councillor Moffatt explained there are provincial guidelines for levels of traffic that must be evident for a three-way stop to be warranted. This is primarily because if traffic does not dictate the signage drivers begin to recognize there is not usually a need to stop and may disregard the signage causing more severe complications.

#### Speed bumps

It was proposed that speed bumps on Bleeks might be appropriate. Councillor Moffatt noted that in Richmond and North Gower where speed bumps exist there is strong evidence of people driving around them to avoid the hit which could create issues for pedestrians. It is also noted that snow plows and emergency services don't like speed bumps. Proposal to consider improvements to Bleeks Rd including extending the paving and widening the road. Councillor Moffatt notes Bleeks is due to be resurfaced in the future and this can be considered. Another option may be painted lines or rumble strips to make people aware they are hitting town.

### Speed display boards

The City has several traffic calming measures, one of which are display boards. Councillor Moffatt indicated stats from a study in 2014 indicated 76% compliance to speed when the signs were up. It was noted though that the sign was there during the week so would not have caught the weekend and race track traffic. The Councillor noted there is an option to have the signs in place for 7 days which might provide a more reflective measure.

### Other measures

Another traffic calming measure is bulb-outs which physically narrow the road and force people to slow down. Concerns were raised about what this would mean for pedestrians and cyclists. It was also noted this will not help with the smaller vehicles including dirt bikes and ATVs.

Mid-road flexible pilons are another alternative that are proving effective. These are flexible so can be driven over and are placed at intervals of about 600m so they do not impact pedestrian, bicycle and automobile flow.

### Enforcement

Records of complaints lead to increased enforcement. It was noted that there has only been one complaint about speed on Bleeks in the last 18 months. A resident noted that previous complaints may not have resulted in action. Constable Daniels reminded everyone that issues only become evident when complaints are filed.

### **Actions**

Councillor Moffatt will acquire a number of Children at Play signs and Norm will act as liaison within the community for anyone who wishes to get one. Those who attended will be emailed when Norm receives them so they can be distributed. Norm will post availability on Facebook or MCA online with any leftover signs for distribution.

The City's traffic department has been working on analyzing several traffic calming options including the three-way stop. Councillor Moffatt will follow up with them on progress.

Norm will investigate getting additional signage for the entrances into town that might be attached to town markers. Suggestions included "What's the Rush" – "Please Slow Down" – "Children at Play". Those who attended the meeting will be emailed for their thoughts on the best slogan.

Councillor Moffatt will look into getting the mid-road pilons and a 7-day speed sign.

The Munster Mash had been planning on an expanded format for the 2015-2016 season. A portion of the newsletter will be marked for speed awareness.

Councillor Moffatt will look into making the community 40km throughout.

Councillor Moffat was asked to communicate with the race track re speed awareness.

Councillor Moffatt is to email Norm and provide data or comments on what was discussed. Norm will schedule a follow-up meeting to further discussion resolutions/ plans once data from the traffic department is in and once Councillor Moffatt has some updates.

### **Future actions**

Look at road improvements to Bleeks Rd when resurfacing begins. This could include widening the East of Munster Road on Bleeks portion that is already paved, and possibly extending to outside the current area. Curbs and sidewalks should be considered as well.

Look at formal community awareness program such as Manotick's Keep it to 40 or the Pace Car Program.

Consider petition if the City will not approve the blanket 40km for the hamlet.

Change signage coming into town to drop from 80km to 60km to 50km.

There may be an opportunity in the future – if changes to provincial laws go through – to have painted crosswalks installed at key points. Right now these crosswalks are not supported by law.