

FINAL May 4, 2017

To: Board of Managers, Chevy Chase Village
From: Porter Wheeler on behalf of the Traffic Committee
Date: May 4, 2017
Subject: Further Comments On Proposed Amendments To Speed Hump Policy

The Traffic Committee (TC) met again on April 26 to consider developments from the Board's Public Hearing on April 10 and to discuss further the proposed amendments to the CCV Speed Hump Policy. Chief Fitzgerald provided more complete data on measurement of automobile speeds in the Village.

To reiterate, the current policy that includes both traffic volume and speed is entirely consistent with current practice in virtually all jurisdictions, both in the US and worldwide. TC members have not found instances where only traffic volume is considered. Also, in the TC's opinion, the 2011 AAA study cited clearly concludes that the risk of injuries to pedestrians increases as speed increases.

Based on this additional information, there was again unanimous agreement among TC members present that **the Committee is comfortable with the existing policy overall**. However, the TC continues to recognize that improvements could be made so that the policy could better serve the Village.

We now add the following new suggestions to the Board, in addition to the specific policy modifications suggested earlier at the April 10 Hearing:

- Consider further revisions to the section on Removing Speed Humps to allow or require reconsideration and re-polling about reinstallation of humps during street repaving.
- Consider adjusting the speed criteria to reflect the 85th percentile of the actual speeds measured compared to the speed limit (usually 25 mph), instead of adding an increment of 5 mph. But, again, TC members strongly and unanimously urge that a speed criterion be retained.
- Modify the definition of households to be notified of an application such that if a wider range of households may be affected, then they would also be surveyed.
- Consider other alternatives to speed humps, such as sidewalks or alternative traffic calming devices.

In conclusion, we remind the Board that the Committee process serves to provide a forum to openly discuss, filter and analyze these matters without unduly burdening the Board's agenda. On April 10, TC members heard the many opinions presented to the Board on April 10th, both emotional and somewhat technical, and, after considerable discussion, judged them **not** to be persuasive.

The TC appreciates this opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the Village Speed Hump Policy. Should the Board decide to consider revisions, the TC has proactively presented ideas for improvement and remains available to clarify or expand on any of these recommendations. The TC has not had an opportunity to consider the latest version of Mr. Crockett's proposals.

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The Traffic Committee (TC) met on two recent occasions, February 7 and March 22, to discuss the proposed amendments to the CCV Speed Hump Policy. We appreciate the proposer Mr. Crockett meeting with us on Feb. 7 to outline his views, and then later sharing with us a substantially revised proposal via a marked up (edit mode) version of the CCV Speed Hump Policy for our review.

We remind the Board that the existing policy has been in place for about six years (since 2011), having been crafted by an ad hoc committee of CCV citizens. To our knowledge there have been no applications for speed humps since the policy's adoption and hence no trial of the existing process. Further, no applications are pending.

A recent "petition" was made directly to the Board, proposing to waive the entire policy for a specific installation; it was not consistent with the application process outlined by the existing policy and was subsequently withdrawn without consideration by the Board. Hence, there is no experience with or evidence about the performance of the existing process. Thus, the urgency of waivers and of these proposed amendments proved puzzling to the TC.

In response to the Board's request for comment, the TC first discussed the existing policy in entirety. There was unanimous agreement among TC members present (seven members): **the Committee is comfortable with the existing policy overall**, albeit the TC recognizes that improvements could be made.

Next the TC discussed the main proposed revisions (as summarized in italics) seriatim, and made several recommendations for improvement should the Board choose to move in that direction.

1. *Revisions to the preamble to reflect adoption of the amendments.* This was not discussed. Revisions will be derivative to any policy changes made.
2. *Revisions to the provisions regarding the accounting of abstention or non-response to the survey/questionnaire.* The TC recommends the following revisions: that the percentage of households (land parcels) along the proposed street segment that must indicate approval be reduced from 75 percent to 70 percent of all eligible households, removing the language about abstentions and non-responders. Further, that the TC will review the proposed list of eligible households and may determine, in consultation with the Chief of Police, that a wider area of households would be impacted and broaden the number of households eligible to respond to the questionnaire. Approved unanimously.

3. *Elimination of the condition urging family attendance at a street safety workshop conducted by the Village Police Dept.* The TC concurs and recommends elimination of this provision, but further cautions against a false sense of security related to installation of speed humps, indicating a lack of belief in their efficacy. Approved unanimously.
4. *Household acceptance of location of speed humps is proposed to be asked of all respondents, and clarifies that an application cannot proceed unless a suitable and acceptable location can be found.* The TC concurs that all eligible households be asked whether they would accept installation of a speed hump and related warning signs in front of their property, and further recommends that the lack of affirmative responses to this question could mean that no suitable location is available. The Village Manager should make reasonable efforts to obtain responses on location acceptance by all eligible households. Approved unanimously.
5. *Elimination of the speed criterion, such that speed hump applications could then qualify without regard to speed.* The TC recommends against the elimination of the speed criterion. The primary motivation for speed humps is to reduce excessive speed and/or divert traffic. Virtually all hump regulations across the country identified in a broad scan by TC members use speed as a key factor. A traffic safety mantra is "speed kills," whereas the proponent says: "speed is unimportant in determining the likelihood of an accident." The TC disagrees and recommends no change in the speed criterion. Approved unanimously.
6. *In the Removing Speed Humps section, insertion of conforming language regarding the percentages and treatment of abstentions and non-respondents.* The TC concurs and notes that there are several places in the text that will need to be conformed to whatever amendments, if any, are adopted.

The TC appreciates this opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the Village Speed Hump Policy. Should the Board decide to make revisions, the TC has proactively presented ideas for improvement. We further urge the Board to invite non-binding views and recommendations by Montgomery County Fire and Emergency Medical Services regarding speed hump installations in the Village. The TC remains available to clarify any of these recommendations.

