

Speeding complaint fails to gain traction in village

Written by MARK JAEGER

Wednesday, 21 August 2013 18:07

Hillcrest Road resident argues fast-traveling vehicles are a serious problem, but police chief says data doesn't agree

When is speeding not speeding?

That was the question posed by Hillcrest Road resident Paul Dudzek during a presentation Aug. 8 to the Village of Saukville's Public Safety Committee.

Dudzek complained about traffic routinely speeding past his home. He raised the same issue last month when talking with Town of Saukville officials.

The road connects the town to the village, dropping from an unposted limit of 55 mph on the west to 25 mph as it enters the village in the area of Highway 33.

"Many of us along Hillcrest Road do not feel safe due to the excessive speed of the drivers traveling through our neighborhood," Dudzek said in a letter to village officials.

"Traffic, both eastbound and westbound, does not obey the 25 mph speed sign. We want to enlist your help in slowing down the traffic on our road."

In response earlier complaints, a patrol car was sent to the neighborhood with a radar gun to track traffic.

Although the radar showed several vehicles going 32 mph, Dudzek said the officer told him traffic stops are only made when vehicles reach 35 mph or higher.

"That says a speed of 34 mph in a 25 mph zone is safe and acceptable. This is the equivalent of traveling 47.6 mph in a 35 mph zone," Dudzek said.

"Would this be acceptable to the village police department? I think not."

Police Chief Jeff Goetz said his officers routinely monitor traffic on Hillcrest Road along with other trouble spots where motorists tend to speed.

"The goal is to get compliance with the posted speed limit, not to generate revenue for the village," Goetz told the committee.

"I have been doing this for 28 years and I don't know any department that issues tickets for 5 mph over the posted limit. We do our best."

Goetz said six months of traffic records show two speeding tickets were issued on Hillcrest Road. The motorists in those cases were traveling 40 mph and 42 mph in the transition zone where the speed limit is reduced from 35 mph to 25 mph.

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Goetz said a radar check of westbound traffic showed the average speed of vehicles leaving the village was 26.9 mph.

Citing the limited availability of officer, Goetz said speeding is more closely watched on busier streets, where the risk to the public is greater.

After failing to get assurances that heightened enforcement would reduce the speeding problem, Dudzek suggested making drivers more aware of the speed limit on Hillcrest Road.

Trustee Mike Krocka, chairman of the Public Safety Committee, said the Saukville Lions Club might be interested in supporting a sign campaign along the road.