

Council approves Motion to reduce speed limit on Stone Road

In a motion passed on January 14, Council voted at the Committee level to reduce the speed limit on the north leg of Stone Road, from Bayview Avenue to Clift Trail, from 50 km/h to 40 km/h.

The decision follows resident feedback and discussions among Council members, with concerns about safety in a residential neighborhood and consistency with nearby school zones.

The speed limit reduction was proposed after residents raised concerns about traffic speeds in the area. In response, Council members requested a speed limit assessment by the Town Planning Department to determine if the change was warranted.

The Planning Department conducted the study in October and November, following procedures outlined in the Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC) Automated Speed Limit Guidelines.

The findings of the assessment, which were presented to Council in a report on January 14, indicated that a reduction would not be necessary as it did not meet the TAC's requirements for traffic calming measures. As a result, the Planning Department recommended that the existing speed limit be maintained.

However, many Council members voiced strong support for the reduction.

"My preference is that it would keep with the rest of Stone Road and be 40 km/h," said Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson. "It's a self-contained neighborhood?and reducing the speed limit from 50 to 40, yes, may take everybody an extra minute to get home?but it provides a little extra comfort and a little bit of extra safety for the residents who, for the most part, are the ones driving this. Because they are the ones who see, from their perspective, excessive speeds.?"

Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo also supported the reduction, emphasizing the need for consistency along the entire length of Stone Road.

"I think there's a lot of merit in consistency along Stone Road," Gallo noted. "It is one road and the chances of someone identifying the different speed limits when they hit a particular area will be extremely low. So, if it goes to 40, I have no issues with that, but it should [be] consistent across the whole street.?"

The stretch of Stone Road in question is situated between two school zones, both of which have 40 km/h speed limits. This added to the argument for lowering the speed limit to match the surrounding areas and improve safety for pedestrians, and particularly children living and attending school in the area.

In contrast, Council voted to uphold the existing speed limit on Timberline Trail, where residents had also requested a traffic calming assessment. The study, which focused on the stretch of Timberline Trail between Highland Gate and Trillium Drive, concluded that this area also did not meet the criteria for additional traffic calming measures. As a result, the Planning Department recommended maintaining the speed limit at 40 km/h.

While the motion to retain the speed limit on Timberline Trail passed, Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner, expressed disappointment.

"I understand the warrants weren't met, but the traffic here moves very quickly, and there's a lot more traffic now with all the new homes," Gaertner said. "I know in the past we've made exceptions, so I can't vote for this at the moment. Hopefully, the residents can work with staff again to see if there's anything else that can be done."

By Selena Loureiro