

2104 West Admiral Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Re: Shore Drive Safety Initiatives

The Honorable Harry Diezel
604 Rosaer Lane
Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Dear Councilman Diezel,

I thank you for taking the time to personally speak with me the other night at the "On the Record" with City Council. I am coordinating an effort for our subdivision Cape Henry Shores along with Ms. Empsy Munden of Cape Story By the Sea to improve the safety along Shore Drive, specifically in the area from Great Neck Road to First Landing State Park.

Improving the safety along this residential area of Shore Drive has been a long continuing effort, but we have achieved only marginal success. For our section of Shore Drive between Great Neck Road and First Landing State Park, the city has recently placed several pedestrian warning signs and provided limited police speed enforcement. Mr. Shashiah, Senior Traffic Engineer, informs me that the state will be installing flashing caution lights to accompany these pedestrian signs and the city will remove view-obstructing center island vegetation higher than 24 inches for that short section west of Kendall Drive.

I have enclosed both our most recent civic association letter to the city and Mr. Spore's reply to these initiatives for the Councilman's information. When discussing this issue recently with Mr. Shashiah, various reasons have been given for turning down our requests. It seems that the city is reluctant to reduce the speed limit to 35 MPH citing the following reasons:

1. An increased safety hazard of slower drivers doing 35 MPH being rear-ended by faster drivers doing 45 MPH or more. Mr. Shashiah mentions speed studies indicating 85 percentile exceed posted speed limit for the 0.7 mile section.
2. Concerns of receiving complaints for creating a "speed trap" for this section along Cape Story by the Sea and Cape Henry Shores subdivisions.
3. A road's "natural speed" or perceived acceptable speed for that section of road.

I believe that more reasonable efforts should be made to avoid a possible vehicle accident or pedestrian injury for this high-density residential area. The costs to reduce the speed limit to 35 MPH is insignificant, but the impact for improving our resident's safety would be most welcome. I believe that technical "fluff" will not suffice for a suitable explanation if all reasonable measures have not been pursued to improve the safety for residents and pedestrians along this section of Shore Drive. Any assistance that the Councilman could provide in our efforts would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

David M. Williams
April 10, 2009

(757) 619-7049 cell
(757) 481-1668 home

Attachments:

1. Cape Henry Shores Civic Association ltr to Mayor and City Council dtd 2/17/09
2. City of Virginia Beach ltr to Mr. Martin S. Schuman dtd 2/09/09