

Radar speed signs to be installed on residential streets across township

By Angela Gismondi

Speeding remains a top concern across King and councillors want to do something about it.

Radar speed boards will be installed on residential streets in Nobleton and King City in an effort to reduce excessive speeds on the local roads. Speed board devices are used to reduce traffic speeds by making drivers aware of how fast they are moving relative to the speed limit and inducing them to adjust their speed accordingly.

The decision was made at the council meeting July 6. Councillors also requested that additional boards be purchased and placed at other problem locations throughout the Township if the traffic calming budget permits.

The discussion began with Councillor David Boyd asking for a speed board for Hazelbury Drive in Nobleton. It was in response to a staff report which indicated warrants were not met and that traffic patterns for speed on Hazelbury Drive (from Wilsen Road to Hawman Avenue) does not justify the implementation of traffic calming measures as petitioned by the residents.

Staff received a petition from residents in August 2014 and placed a bidirectional traffic counter in the study area in May. It was determined after review of the data that the 85th percentile average speed of the southbound traffic was 51 kilometres per hour (km/h) and the northbound traffic speed was 52 km/h. In order to meet the warrants for traffic calming the 85th percentile speed should exceed the posted speed limit by a minimum of 15 km/h. The posted speed limit on Hazelbury Drive is 40km/h.

Staff agreed to continue to monitor the road as part of its yearly monitoring program, but that was not good enough for Boyd.

“I noted the speeds in that area are 11 kilometres per hour over the posted speed limit,” said Boyd. “I sympathize with the residents of Hazelbury and I think we should consider some form of traffic calming in that area. Visual signs prove to be effective, can we put one on Hazelbury and continue to study the effectiveness going forward?”

At the same meeting, council was considering the purchase and erection of two solar powered radar speed board feedback signs on Kingscross Drive for a period of one year on a temporary basis. Boyd suggested that an additional sign be purchased and put on Hazelbury for one year.

“One sign would be sufficient,” said Boyd. “It’s a good start.”

Mayor Steve Pellegrini suggested that the Township purchase more speed boards if there is money in the budget.

“If these signs are the way to go, we should get some more of them,” said Pellegrini. “Speeding is one of the biggest issues. I can tell you street in Schomberg, Kettleby and King City that have the same issue. If these are effective, let’s put them up.”

Councillor Linda Pabst agreed more signs would be better.

“We certainly have enough areas in King Township where these can be used,” said Pabst.

Councillor Cleve Mortelliti pointed out that speed boards are less expensive than speed humps. The radar boards cost about \$5,000 each.

“Reports indicate these boards are having an impact,” said Mortelliti. “It’s a good bang for the buck.”

Kingscross Drive resident Mary Muter was pleased to hear that staff would be implementing these speed boards, especially since the temporary speed humps which were installed on the street did not fix the problem.

“Racing cars were out again on the weekend with the noise and high speeds,” said Muter. “I don’t know if this will stop them but at least it’s an attempt.”

Local Councillor Debbie Schaefer noted that the speed humps were unable to be placed where they were needed on Kingscross Drive because of the topography of the area. She hopes the radar signs are a better option.

“I’m very hopeful that it will help us address the problems on our residential streets,” commented Schaefer.

Both Pellegrini and Mortelliti pointed out that the signs have been stolen in the past.

“Over the past 10 years, two of these speed boards have been stolen out of Kingscross Estates,” said Mortelliti. “How do we keep them secure?”

He also asked if the radar signs are equipped with cameras and if they have the ability to snap photos of cars that are speeding.

Pellegrini asked if photos of drivers travelling at excessive speeds could be published in the local papers. Staff said they would look into those matters and get back to council.

They will also continue to monitor the speeds on the local streets and report back to council on the long-term effects associated with implementation of the feedback signs on traffic patterns.