

Speed hump money would be better spent on Henderson, say residents

By Brock Weir

A \$100,000 plan recently approved by Council to install speed cushions on stretches of Kennedy Street West, Mavrinac Boulevard and McMaster Avenue would be better spent on traffic measures on Henderson Drive, according to area residents.

While the speed cushion pilot could be delayed until next year to bring costs down pending a decision slated for next Tuesday, Council received comments from two residents, Abe and Erika Gannus, sounding off on the plan during last month's Open Forum session ahead of the August Council meeting.

Responding directly to the plan, which was formally ratified earlier this spring, the neighbours said the stretch of Kennedy Street West in question is 2.2 km in length serviced by four existing stop signs, and up to three speed bumps, all with a speed limit of 40 km/h.

Mavrinac Boulevard, they contended, is similar in length clocking in at 2.1 km, 40 km/h and serviced by two stop signs and four roundabouts.

Bringing up the rear is McMaster at just half a kilometre with one stop sign at 40 km/h.

Mr. Gannus urged Council to take another look at Henderson, which is 2.5 km with just one pedestrian operated light for the entire stretch, and speeds between 50 and 60 km.

'We have lived for the last 30 years on what has been a peaceful and quiet residential neighbourhood, but changes have occurred to change this ideal setting,' he said. 'Though our frontage is on Haskell, our rear faces Henderson. A couple of years ago, when Bloomington was under repair, permission was given for trucks to use Henderson as an alternate. Even though this work was completed over two years ago, no one has rescinded this allowance. Henderson is a residential street, but it is now open to heavy load traffic which starts at 5 a.m., and continues throughout the day into the evening.

'The truck drivers like it' and why not? It is 2.5 kilometres long without a stop sign. This has greatly added to the noise in the neighbourhood.'

'Disquieted' neighbours is one thing' and another resident cited the noise, even on Saturdays, which often leaves them unable to keep their windows open at night' but Council should also pay attention to the wear and tear trucks might pose on Henderson as it is constructed as a residential road, not necessarily to contend with the heavy loads carried by each rig.

'Our additional concern is the speed along Henderson, particularly in the late hours when street racing is the norm,' he continued. 'Of its two and a half kilometres, 2.1 kilometres of that is a straightaway, an ideal racing set up. Aurora has recognized speeding by installing lighted speed indicators, but to what effect?'

These concerns are not new. Similar issues were voiced to Council earlier this year by Kimberley Kerr, a resident of Millgate Place, who said her street became particularly busy after speed bumps were installed on Kennedy Street and 'eighteen wheelers' have adopted the area to avoid Yonge and Bathurst.

'At the back of my house, the speed is posted as 50 km per hour,' she said. 'Trucks drive at over 100 km per hour all through the night, and during the day, they drive at 80 to 90 km per hour. York Regional Police have abandoned our street: police cars are rarely seen in the Theatre Aurora Parking lot. The truckers all have CB radios, and as soon as one spots a YRP car, a radio broadcast is made to all truckers who constantly use Henderson Drive as a thoroughfare.

'We see heavily loaded gravel trucks, car transport trucks, and 18 wheelers on a daily basis. Soon there will be a horrific accident, and this note is to inform the Council of the Town of Aurora that something bad will be happening very soon.'