

Meeting of the Town Council of Huntertown, Indiana
Monday, March 29, 2021 6:00 p.m.
Huntertown Elementary School, 15330 Lima Road

A special meeting of the Huntertown Town Council was held on Monday, March 29, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Huntertown Elementary School, 15330 Lima Road. Those in attendance include council members Michael Aker, Patricia Freck, Gary Grant (P), Brandon Seifert, and Michael Stamets; Town Manager Beth Shellman, Resource Officer Ingrid Herriott; and Derek Frederickson of Engineering Resources. Also, in attendance were fifty-five (55) members of the public and zero (0) members of the media. Absent was Clerk-Treasurer Ryan Schwab and Town Attorney David Hawk.

With the absence of the Clerk-Treasurer, the Town Manager agreed to keep minutes. (NOTE: The Clerk-Treasurer compiled these minutes through a video taken by council member Brandon Seifert.)

Gary Grant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

COUNCIL ACTION

No Council Action was taken.

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business was brought forth.

OLD BUSINESS

Gary Grant re-introduced discussion related to a road project along Carroll Road, east of State Road 3, notably near the intersection of Mossy Oak Run. Grant said that the town has already approved a design for the project, however the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has asked the town to reconsider its design to include a concrete barrier down the center of Carroll Road that would not allow for left turns in either direction on Mossy Oak Run. Grant shared visuals of two options for the intersection that INDOT would approve. He also shared a third option, designed by the town without a barrier in the middle, that INDOT has not given approval too. Grant said that INDOT is asking for a barrier because 2019 crash data indicates a need for improved safety measures at the intersection. Grant, a Corporal with the Allen County Sheriff's Department, said he has reviewed the nine (9) crashes that occurred in this area in 2019 and noted that only four (4) of those crashes could have been prevented with a barrier in the roadway and zero (0) crashes resulted in personal injuries. He noted that he had a conference with the Town Manager, the Town Engineer, and representatives from INDOT and the Northeast Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) to discuss this topic and noted that a barrier would push more traffic further down the road and that crash data further down the road also needed to be examined. It was determined to put the project on hold. He also offered a public apology on behalf of the Town that letters notifying the residents in the area of this meeting were not sent. He then opened the floor to public comment on the topic.

The following public comments were brought forth:

Sandy Frick, a resident at 1518 Flint Lock Lane; shared the following concerns: the concern for the number of kids who live in the addition; the concern for getting emergency vehicles into the addition; a request for another meeting with letters being sent out so everyone in these subdivisions can attend.

Steve Harris, a resident at 12331 Shearwater Run, speaking as the president of the Shearwater Homeowners Association; shared the following concerns: the traffic issues within Shearwater because of the number of other subdivisions it is connected to, estimating 800-1,000 cars through that subdivision every day; Bear Claw Lane being too tight and curvy of a road to handle increased traffic; Sunday church traffic with Pathway Community Church neighboring the Shearwater subdivision also creates issues; suggested a stop light at Shearwater run to aid traffic if a

barrier is put in place; Cutting across State Road 3 as another dangerous option for people to exit the subdivisions. He closed by stating a barrier will compound current problems across the board. Later in the meeting, he addressed the council again, asking how tall the proposed barriers would be. Derek Frederickson said they would be 6-8 inches tall. He also asked who was responsible for plowing the area. The answer is Huntertown. He also asked where will the time come to clear the snow out and where will all the snow go? He said that the more open option seven gives the town a better chance to move snow. He asked the council to discuss with Pathway Church about the way it forces people into the Shearwater addition. He also asked if a roundabout been ruled out? Derek Frederickson said yes.

Mark Spencer, a resident at 1510 Switchback Cove, said he was curious about the details regarding the traffic accidents related to two lanes of traffic approaching Mossy Oak heading westbound. Officer Herriott indicated that she did not have a percentage on hand but noted that traffic accidents are largely caused by people waving cars through the intersection without looking to see if the second lane of traffic is clear. He also shared concerns about emergency vehicles accessing the subdivisions. He addressed the council later in the meeting asking if the projected project going to hold more vehicles than the current road, or will it lessen the load on the road and create more issues further east? Derek Frederickson said the project was designed based on current traffic volume.

Rob Kruger, an attorney at 200 E. Main Street, Suite 100, Fort Wayne, IN 46804; representing Indiana Physical Therapy located at 1675 Carroll Road; said prohibiting a left turn from this business would significantly impact this business in a negative way. He then asked if the council would consider not taking the grant money for the project if a barrier would be required. Gary Grant said it was an option and that INDOT indicated it was possible that funding could get pulled, but he did not get a yes or no. Grant also brought up the issue of liability to the town, on both sides of the issue of adding a barrier or not.

Mark Trahin, a resident at 219 E. Gump Road, asked about discussions with the Racquet Club and their concerns about increased traffic. Gary Grant said he is also asking for crash data in that area as well. He also said that developers should contribute to improving street infrastructure adjacent to their developments. He suggested the council should think about potential problems 25-years down the road.

Therese Brown, representing the Allen County Commissioners, said that Fort Recovery Road is a potential opportunity for a new intersection with connectivity to the area. She said County Government is about leveraging our taxpayer monies with Federal monies to get the best result possible. She also expressed concern that not following the standards that the federal entity is requiring may lead to lawsuits down the road, which would be paid for through taxpayer dollars. It is a balance everyone needs to weigh and there all kinds of options.

Bruce Freed, a resident at 1508 Flint Lock Lane, suggested creating J-turns at various spots.

Other concerns raised by unidentified speakers were:

- If the funding from INDOT was for this project specifically, or if the money could go to other projects. Gary Grant said that the funding is only for this project, which is divided into two separate applications, one for the east side of State Road 3 and another for work on the west side of State Road 3. The topic of discussion tonight only covers the project east of State Road 3. He also said the town is concerned that if the town does not follow INDOT's guidelines, there is some uncertainty as to how eager will INDOT be willing to work with the town on future projects. Beth Shellman did provide input on the project scheduled for the west side of State Road 3.
- How will some of the residents on the north side of Carroll Road get into their homes if the barrier is blocking access.
- The walking path as part of these designs is going through the current Carroll Oaks sign and wondered who would be responsible for rebuilding the sign. Beth Shellman said that she has talked with the property manager and he indicated that a new sign was going to be constructed. She asked him to hold off on construction until all the right-of-way is purchased.

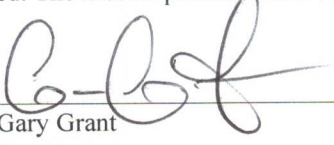
- A resident asked that this information be put on the Huntertown website and Huntertown Facebook page. Council agreed without taking a vote.

Brandon Seifert read a letter from Northwest Allen County Schools Chief Operating Officer John Miller voicing the school district's opposition to a barrier at the intersection.

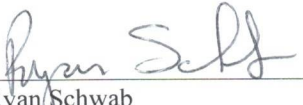
Michael Aker said he hopes to get an agreement can get made on this between the Town and INDOT. If an agreement can be made, he would like to present it to the impacted group of residents before a vote is taken. Without a vote, council agreed to send letter to the residents impacted directly by this project.

After no further public comment was brought forth, Brandon Seifert made a motion to adjourn. Michael Stamets seconded. The motion passed with a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Attest:



Gary Grant
President



Ryan Schwab
Clerk Treasurer