

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

Pottstown streets best at 25 mph

Last month, a Pottstown bicyclist collided with a car traveling south on Manatawny Street at Beech Street.

Jamar McDaniels was transported to Reading Hospital, where he was listed in stable condition.



Commentary by
Tom Hylton

We don't know how fast the motorist was going, but if it had been 40 miles per hour or more, McDaniels would likely be dead.

People fear crime, but there are about three times more fatal car crashes in Montgomery County than homicides.

Excessive speed is by far the leading cause of serious injuries and fatalities involving all kinds of motor vehicle collisions, either with pedestrians, bicyclists or other autos.

As the chart at right demonstrates, the danger of a pedestrian being killed rises exponentially with the speed of the car.

Fatalities are fairly rare with cars going less than 20 miles per hour, but usually fatal at speeds of 40 miles per hour.

There's been a lot of carping about the recent speed limit change on Industrial Highway to 25 miles per hour, but it's safer for everyone concerned.

At the old limit of 40 miles per hour, it takes 2.4 minutes to drive on Industrial Highway from Hanover Street east to the traffic light at the 422 Sportsplex. At 25 miles per hour, it takes an extra 1.3 minutes.

Is that a terrible inconvenience?

In Pottstown, the speed limit on nearly all borough streets is 25 miles per hour, including our busiest thoroughfares, such as High Street, Charlotte Street, Beech Street, State Street, Manatawny Street, and Moser Road.

There are a few exceptions that allow for 35 miles per hour, such as Keim Street and Jackson Street.

To my mind, the speed limits on all these streets should be lowered to 25 mph, to make every Pottstown street consistent. The only exceptions should be commercial roads like Route 100 or West High Street.

Pottstown's greatest strength is its design for walking and bicycling. As we encourage more people to walk and bicycle, should protect them by slowing down traffic.

On Thursday, we'll look at the most effective way to slow down cars: traffic calming.



Chance of a pedestrian receiving a fatal injury from being hit by a car	
20 mph	5%
30 mph	45%
40 mph	85%



WITH MORE STUDENTS walking or riding bicycles to school, slowing down traffic is vitally important.