

Borough of Ben Avon
7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania 15202
Regular Meeting of Council – March 17, 2015
Minutes

Call to Order

Council President Earl Bohn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council Members Present

Michael Wrbas, Richard White, Earl Bohn, Philip Brind'Amour, Ken Opipery

Council Members Absent

Julian Wynnyckyj, Michael Bett

Others Present

Robert Jones, Mayor

Anne Sweeney, Solicitor

Dale Regrut, Public Works Foreman

Carmella Hallstein, Secretary

Adam Beck, Sergeant; Ohio Township Police Department

Public Participation

Several residents addressed council about traffic issues on Juniper Way and Ridge Avenue and the proposal to make Juniper one-way emptying out onto Perrysville Avenue and make Ridge one-way going down the hill from Prospect Avenue to Church Avenue.

Mike Holzworth of 6830 Prospect Avenue stated that he supported the proposal. Mr. Holzworth stated that he and a few neighbors circulated a petition to nineteen households in the area. He stated that seventeen of the nineteen households supported the proposal. Mr. Holzworth presented the petition to council. See Exhibit A.

Lynne Pastor of 6901 Prospect Avenue stated that she did not support the proposal. Ms. Pastor stated that changing the traffic pattern would only shift traffic to other streets and not solve the problem. She stated that other options such as more signage should be considered before making the streets one-way. Ms. Pastor stated that residents who access their garage from the section of Ridge that would become one-way would be forced to go around the block to access their own property. She stated that the proposal might make Juniper Way a little safer but it would make Prospect Avenue less safe.

Bill Bossong of 6831 Prospect Avenue stated that he also has a driveway on Ridge that would be affected by the proposed change. He stated that the problem is traffic not stopping at the stop sign and speeding, not the amount of traffic. Mr. Bossong stated that making Juniper and part of Ridge one-way would only shift the problem to other streets.

Jim Sanfilippo of 6921 Perrysville Avenue stated that ninety percent of the people driving on Prospect Avenue actually live on Prospect and have garages on Juniper so there would not be a lot of outside traffic coming through. Mr. Sanfilippo stated that he is worried about his children playing in his backyard because of the traffic on Juniper. He stated that Juniper is an alley not a two-way road.

Mike Ross of 6820 Prospect Avenue stated that his driveway is on the corner of Juniper and Ridge. Mr. Ross stated that a vehicle or a child on a bike coming out of his driveway has a good chance of being hit if someone runs the stop sign. He stated that he would be inconvenienced by the proposed traffic pattern change but felt that the slight detour was worth the safety of the children in the area.

Whitney Hughes of 6921 Perrysville Avenue stated that many of the residents on Prospect are long time residents that at this point are saying that something has to be done. Ms. Hughes stated that the problem has gone on for a long time and prior attempts to alleviate it have not worked.

Denise Bossong of 6831 Prospect Avenue stated that she has a driveway on Ridge Ave. She stated that she does not mind driving around the block to access her driveway but the issue for her was a little more than just inconvenience. Ms. Bossong stated that when the weather is bad the brick street is very slippery and the proposed traffic change would virtually make her driveway and garage inaccessible in the winter.

Brian Tokar of 6900 Prospect Avenue stated that he has been a resident since 2000 and has seen a change in the volume of traffic that comes through the area. He stated that over time the incidents of vehicles obeying the stop signs have eroded. Mr. Tokar stated that the problem is a combination of not only the change in volume but also enforcement because the intersection is not the most important one that falls under Ohio Township's coverage. He stated that he is in support of minimizing traffic, adding that any inconvenience is well worth the increase in safety.

Mr. Opiery stated that you could not use stop signs to regulate speed. He stated that adding a stop sign requires an engineering study that identifies a defined sight distance problem. Mr. Opiery stated that the one thing that is definitive is that Juniper Way is meant to be one-way, adding that there is not enough room for two cars.

Ms. Sweeney stated that any change in traffic patterns would require an engineering and police report. She stated that the findings of the reports is what dictates which traffic control devices the borough is able to use.

Mr. Regrut stated that you could install jersey barriers at the end of Juniper Way and close it off at Perrysville Avenue. Mr. Bohn stated that closing Juniper at Perrysville might present a challenge for snow plowing. He stated that if Mr. Regrut could figure out a solution the idea should be considered. Mr. Regrut stated that another option would be to prohibit right turns from Juniper onto Perrysville and prohibit left turns from Perrysville onto Juniper.

Mr. Bohn thanked the residents for their comments. He stated that it was evident that a large number of residents would support a remedy such as closing Juniper at Perrysville or making Juniper and lower Ridge one-way. He stated that council would take all of the comments under advisement.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Brind'Amour; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2015 council meeting.

Financial Report - Report given by Ken Opiery, Co-Chair and Richard White, Co-Chair

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Brind'Amour; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the February 2015 financial reports as presented.

Motion: Mr. Opiery; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the March 2015 accounts payable reports as presented, authorizing payments of \$111,434.39 from the general account.

Administration Report – Report given by Richard White, Chair

Resolution 2015-03

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Brind'Amour; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adopt Resolution 2015-03, which appoints a delegate and alternate delegate to the Allegheny North Tax Collection District, pursuant to Act 32 of 2008.

Resolution 2015-04

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adopt Resolution 2015-04, which authorizes disposal of borough records in accordance with Act 428 of 1968 and the Municipal Records Manual.

Public Works / Building and Property Report – Report given by Ken Opiery

Motion: Mr. Opiery; Second: Mr. White; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to authorize advertisement of the bid specifications as prepared by the borough engineer for the Merton Road Retaining Wall Project.

Public Safety / Code Enforcement Report – No Report

Public Affairs Report – No Report

Mayor's Report – No Report

Police Chief's Report – No Report

Fire Chief's Report – No Report

Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission Report – No Report

Solicitor's Report – No Report

New Business - None

Old Business

Avon Park DCNR Grant

Mr. White stated that the required documents needed to finalize the DCNR grant for the 2012 Avon Park Phase II project had been submitted to the DCNR.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmella Hallstein

Borough Secretary

- New traffic pattern being considered for Ridge Ave, Juniper Way and Prospect Ave.
 - The borough may take action on traffic moving safely through our neighborhood as soon as March.
 - Full details below and map on reverse side.
-

Neighbors,

The Ben Avon Borough Council is considering taking action regarding the level of traffic and moving violations along Ridge Avenue and Juniper Way. These actions will be considered at the March meeting of the Borough Council. We are reaching out to everyone who will be affected by the proposed changes to make sure that you are informed and offer you the chance to make your voices heard, either for or against.

As you are probably aware, the Ridge / Juniper corridor has become a favorite shortcut for people driving up to and down from Ben Avon Heights. Neither road was designed to handle the level of traffic that we currently see. Juniper, an alleyway, has required significant maintenance over the last 2 years (and is in need of it again). Even more concerning is the fact that the traffic laws are routinely not followed. Speed along the road is a concern, but more importantly, the stop sign at the top of Ridge Avenue is completely disregarded. In January, there was an incident where a 4 year old was almost hit crossing the street due to a car running the stop sign at speed. There are 10 children under the age of 10 years old who live along the 3 block stretch of roadway and the traffic / lack of visibility through this alley is a major concern.

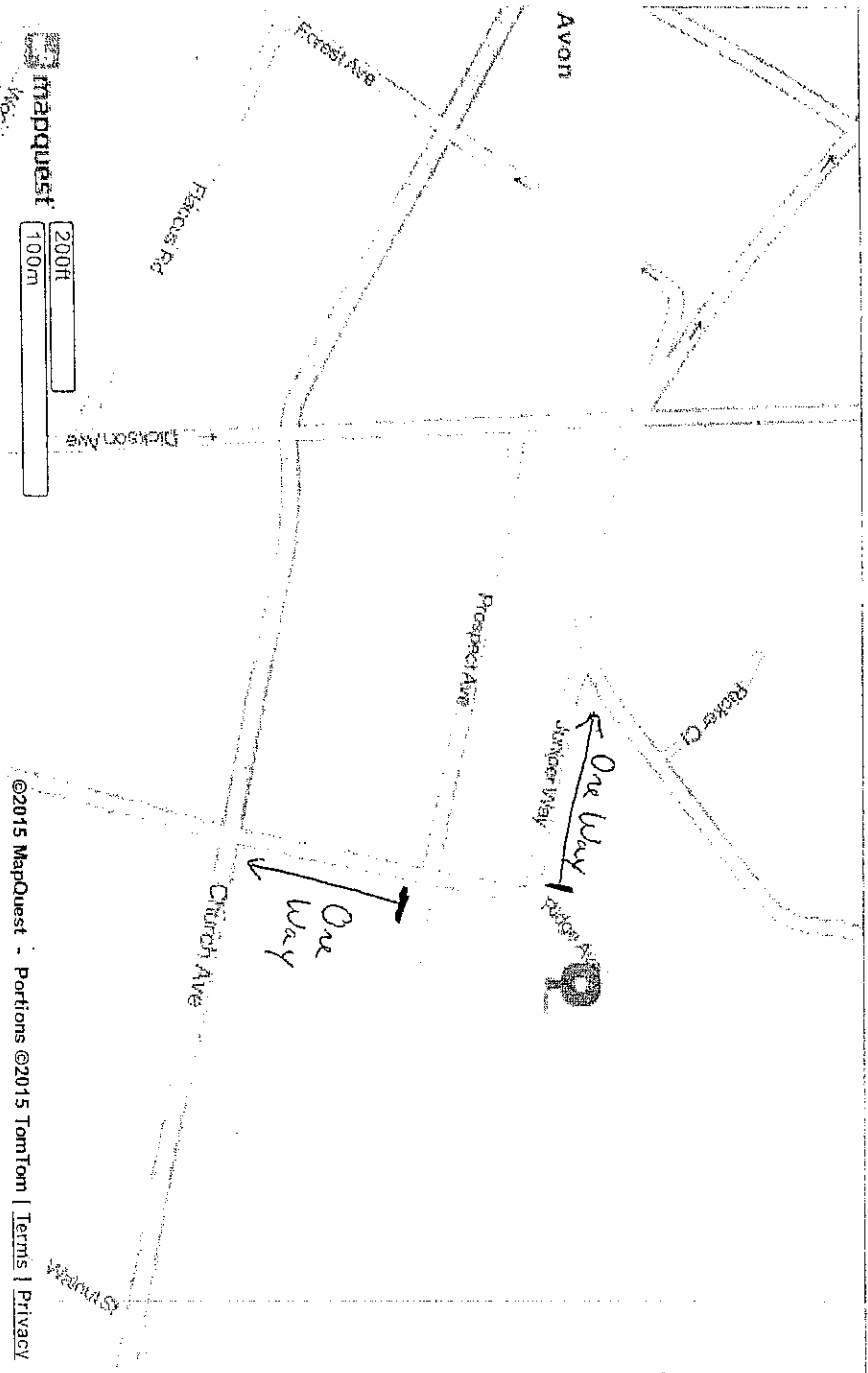
Working with a traffic engineer, the council has developed a plan to deal with this situation. The idea is to turn Juniper Way into a one way street, emptying out onto Perrysville Avenue. Cars will not be able to turn onto Juniper from Perrysville. At the same time, they will turn Ridge Avenue one way going down the hill starting at Prospect. Cars will not be able to turn onto Ridge from Church. To access Prospect Avenue, Ridge Avenue and Juniper Way, cars will have to enter Prospect Avenue at Dickson Avenue. When they get to Ridge, they can choose to go either up or down the hill and then back to the main roads. In effect, the corridor will be shut off for thru traffic. The roads will remain open, but will only be needed by the people who live in the neighborhood or their guests. Thru traffic will then flow along the main roads (Church, Dickson and Perrysville).

This will reduce the amount / speed of traffic in our immediate neighborhood, making it safer and quieter for everyone. The downside will be for people who park their cars towards the ends of the new traffic pattern (Juniper or the bottom of Ridge). When returning home these families will be forced to drive around the block to the start of Prospect which might cause an extra minute or two. This should have essentially no impact when leaving home.

We believe that the benefits of this plan outweigh the negatives and we hope that you agree. Please consider signing the attached petition. We want to make it clear to the council that a clear majority of residents on our neighborhood support this decision. We would also ask that you attend the March Council meeting to make a clear statement of support. If you do not agree, we understand. There are some downsides to this plan and people are not always going to have the same views. If you have any questions regarding the plan, please contact Council President Earl Bohn (earljbohn@gmail.com).

Thank you,

Mike Holzworth - 6830 Prospect Ave. ♦ Whitney Hughes - 6921 Perrysville Ave. ♦ Mike Ross - 6820 Prospect Ave.



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Proposed Solution

1. Turn Juniper one-way exiting onto Perrysville; (No ~~left~~ turns onto Juniper from Perrysville)
2. Turn Ridge one-way at the Prospect Intersect exiting down on to Church
3. Prospect becomes the only access point for Ridge/Juniper but only residents would have a reason to use.

Pros

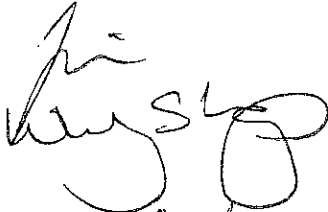


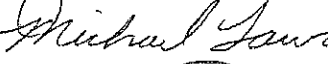


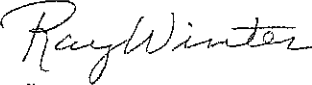



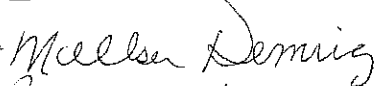

1. Limit traffic on Juniper/Ridge
2. Provide safer environment
 - 10 children under age of 10 yrs live on these 3 Blocks
3. Increased Property values due to no / limited thru traffic

Cons

1. Possible extra drive to get home. (Driving around the block)

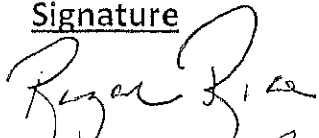
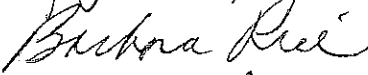


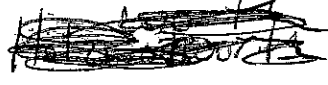




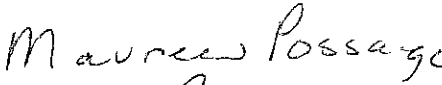
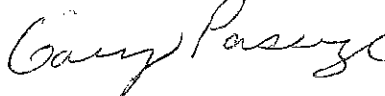

Petition:

In an attempt to lower traffic levels and create a safer neighborhood, I support the Ben Avon Borough Council plan to turn Juniper Way and Ridge Avenue into one way streets.

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
	JAMES Santillo	6921 Perrysville
	Whitney Huges	6921 Perrysville
	Jennifer Lawrence	> 6941 Perrysville
	Michael Lawrence	
	ERIC Pierson	6933 PERRYSVILLE AVE
	MELISSA Pierson	6933 PERRYSVILLE AVE
	Ray Winter	6898 Perrysville Ave
	Craig Zoller	401 Ridge Ave
	MERT DEMIRAG	6906 PROSPECT AVE
	KATHLEEN ELDER	6930 Church Ave
	MELISSA DEMIRAG	6906 Prospect Ave
	SUSAN Kern	6908 Prospect Ave

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<u>Signature</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
	Royce Rice	6917 Prospect
	BARBARA RICE	6917 Prospect
	Michael Holzworth	6830 Prospect
	XXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXX
	XXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXX
	XXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXX
	XXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXX
	Wade Lawrence	6911 Prospect
	Ann Lawrence	6911 Prospect
	Maurice Passage	6907 Prospect Ave
	Gary Passage	6907 Prospect Ave
	Thea Holzworth	6830 Prospect Avenue