

# Motorists encouraged to slow down in residential neighborhoods

By Carole Kelly

Speeding cars through residential neighborhoods is a recurring complaint often voiced to the police and to City officials, and Ward Six residents have mobilized to take action.

Complaints about disturbing speeding on Parker Drive and Patio Place and neighborhood cooperation from Ward Six residents led Alderman Mike Cashion to begin a process of exploring viable options for slowing down drivers who ignore speed limit signs in his ward.

Bright yellow and black yard signs placed in a number of lawns on the streets are urging motorists to "Please Slow Down." Funded from a Livable Neighborhood Grant, the yard signs are the first step taken in the effort to tackle the speeding challenge and are now visible on several Clinton streets. The Livable Neighborhood Program addresses neighborhood needs, empowering citizens to improve their blocks and increase the quality of life.

"We know that constant police surveillance and ticketing are not possible and are not a permanent deterrent to speeding," said Cashion. Parker Drive, with its hills and curves, can be especially dangerous when drivers exceed the speed limit.

In light of doubts by residents that the signs would eliminate the speeding problem entirely, a long-term study



Photo by Carole Kelly

was initiated, and the process to identify viable options on Parker Drive and Patio Place began.

Quantifying the problem involved the police department's running a computer program to document the traffic volume and speeds on the two connector streets. Parker Drive connects Clinton Boulevard and Old Vicksburg Road, and Patio Place connects Clinton Boulevard and Highway 80.

The data documented a high percentage of cars driving significantly above the speed limit. The fact that the streets are connectors made them a priority for a pilot project exploring various "traffic calming" devices, which are physical obstructions to slow down traffic in residential areas. Measures can include center islands; median barriers; chicanes, in which serpentine curves are added to a road; and chok-

ers, which are build-outs that narrow streets.

Efforts are continuing, and Cashion plans to present the next step of the speed calming project at a meeting with the Board of Aldermen this month.

"I met with the Mayor, and we have agreed on a series of choker islands (three on each street), placed at strategic intersections," said Cashion.

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