

NEWS

Common Council rejects speed bumps for South Main St. reconstruction

By Sam Martino
Special to the Reporter

A proposal to place speed tables (bumps) along a half-mile stretch of S. Main St. was rejected Tuesday by the Common Council after neighborhood residents mounted opposition to the plan. Opponents of the measure quickly drew allies from the council concerned about whether speed bumps were the right answer to what some city officials said were concerns of excessive speeding by motorists driving along the southwest into or out of the city.

James Burdick, chairman of the public works committee, proposed backing away from the proposal saying, “This stretch [of road] is not a typical suburban street.”

Burdick echoed what others had been saying about S. Main St. as a feeder road connecting a rural sector into the city as opposed to a neighborhood street.

Aldersperson Candy Davis, who also is a member of the Edgerton Area Fire Protection District, warned that bumps would slow down first responders from the fire department.



Casey Burns of Burns Full Service spoke against a proposal for speed bumps on S. Main St.



Pete Johnson, who led opposition to a proposal for speed tables or bumps on S. Main St. , addressed the Common Council Tuesday.

Photos by Sam Martino

“The speed tables will slow down response time,” said Davis.

Pete Johnson, who spearheaded opposition to the speed tables (more commonly called speed bumps), presented new information Tuesday from a survey of local residents, noting 43 people out of 60 along the route opposed the “bumps.” There were only four who favored the bumps, said Sadie Schieldt, who helped conduct the survey.

Schieldt, who has lived on the street for 47 years, said residents want other methods to slow down traffic, including more police enforcement and better signage.

She, along with Casey Burns of Burns Full Service, warned that truck traffic along the road would create problems.

“I don’t think this is a great idea,” said Burns who sees heavy truck traffic traveling past his business at 318 S. Main St.

Bob Rosenbaum of 415 S. Main St. and a former motorcyclist, said the speed bumps were dangerous for riders.

Johnson’s home at 729 S.

Main was one of the homes targeted for a speed bump.

“It would seem that speed bumps are better suited for secondary neighborhood streets carrying primarily passenger vehicles and light pickup trucks,” said Johnson, noting that there was too heavy a concentration of truck traffic along the street.

Construction began Aug. 16 on a two-year project to upgrade the east-west route serving motorists on the southwest side. The half-mile stretch of road is slated for upgrading with new paving, curb and gutters as well as new sewer and water lines.

The Common Council recently approved a \$1.4 million contract for the first phase of rebuilding parts of S. Main Street.

Then, Alderman Tim Shaw complained about the road surface and how difficult it was for him to hold a cup of coffee without it spilling as he drove to work because of bumps.

He was among the members of the Common Council to pull back on the project.

The roadway is considered a major feeder route for some residents who travel to Janesville from the Hain Road subdivision as well as others headed to Indianford, Fulton and the surrounding area. “We are a main thoroughfare. We don’t need these tables,” said Johnson in an interview with The Reporter before Tuesday’s Common Council meeting.

Johnson said residents are concerned about noise from commercial vehicles passing over the speed bumps.

Opponents of the speed bumps also appeared at a meeting in August conducted by city officials at the Edgerton Public Library.

Then, Johnson presented a list of items demonstrating why he and others thought the speed bumps were not a wise idea.

City officials proposed the speed bumps as a way to slow down traffic on the road following complaints of speeding.

City Administrator Ramona Flanagan said other cities have adopted various ways of reducing speed on streets by using speed bumps or circular roundabouts at intersections.



Typical sign on a city street.

Johnson said nearby cities (Whitewater, Evansville, Fort Atkinson, Milton, or Stoughton) use speed tables.

Madison contains several areas where speed bumps or circular roundabouts are in place.

The Edgerton Police Department conducted a speed survey in 2019 that showed traffic exceeding 55 miles per hour in the 25 mph zone on a frequent basis.

Instead of the speed bumps, Johnson suggested lowering the speed limit to 20 mph and 35 mph on County F leading onto S. Main St.

Johnson said he believed there would be increased noise from heavy trucks, construction trailers, and other vehicles crossing over the bumps if they were installed.

He submitted 93 photographs of various vehicles, such as semi-trucks, dump trucks and pickups with trailers to illustrate the type of vehicles using the roadway.

He also called for more police crackdown on speeders.

In a related action, Police Chief Robert Kowalski gained approval from the city to purchase signs to slow down traffic on Hain Road, also located in the South Main Street area.

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