

Route 309 in Kingston Township may get fifth lane

PennDOT officials will soon conduct a study of the road

By RICH JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Route 309 in Kingston Township may soon become five lanes wide, after the state Department of Transportation (PennDOT) studies traffic flow on the highway. A fifth lane was added three years ago from Shavertown to the intersection with Route 415.

PennDOT officials are planning a study which could call for the additional lane. The corridor safety initiative will focus on the roadway from Kingston Township to the intersection of routes 309 and 415.

Rolly Keisling, community relations director for PennDOT, said Tuesday that a "turning lane" is very likely to be constructed on the highway within the next few years.

"We will be studying the roadway to determine what safety precautions can be put in," said Keisling. "When you look at the size and importance of the Cross-Valley Expressway and what that roadway means to motorists you have to emphasize safety."

Keisling admits that there is a large volume of traffic on the roadway throughout the Back Mountain and said that more is expected when a connection to Interstate 81 is completed.

Area officials have expressed concern about the amount of traffic and the speed of vehicles traveling through the Back Mountain.

A traffic study done in November, 1989 at the Hillside Road intersection showed that an average of 36,857 motorists used the roadway daily. That is 283 percent of the maximum capacity of the roadway.

Area officials have offered many suggestions to better manage traffic, including the installation of more raised barriers like those found on the highway as it enters the Back Mountain area.

Of the approximately four mile stretch of highway from Kingston Township to the 309-415 intersection, only 7/10 of a mile of roadway is separated by raised barriers. Slightly less than a mile of roadway is separated by other forms of medial strips.

PennDOT officials say that when the highway was extended through the Back Mountain plans called for the raised barriers to run up into Dallas, but only \$ 4 million was available for the project and the money ran out before the barriers could be put in.

Local law enforcement officials are hoping that something can be done. According to Kingston



SAFETY STARTS HERE - Barriers on the lower part of Route 309 in the Back Mountain have prevented fatal accidents there. Further up the highway, where no barriers are installed, two fatalities have occurred in the past few months. (Post Photo/Ron Bartizek)

Township police officials, the lack of barriers in certain sections of the roadways adds an extra hazard for drivers.

Last month, a Noxen woman was killed after the car she was driving was hit head-on by another car. Following that accident many officials again brought up the importance of barriers between the

lanes. Kingston Township police officer James Balavage noted that many fatalities on the roadway were caused by head-on collisions. "The fatalities occur when you have a terrible trauma such as a head-on collision," he said. "Raised medials would stop cars from crashing head-on."

Police Chief Paul Sabol said that local police are attempting to slow down the traffic in the area, but emphasizes that the number of cars on the roadway cuts into their ability to do so.

Sabol added that police are doing their best to keep motorists safe. "We get criticized for stopping people and we get criticized for not

stopping people. I would rather be criticized for doing my job," he said.

Figures show that last year traffic accidents on the highway were down in Kingston Township while more citations were issued to motorists who were speeding.

Keisling said that PennDOT's study of the roadway could find that barriers are needed, but he emphasized that the extra turning lane would also be a positive step towards safety.

He added that the study is being done to find safety solutions on the highway. "We will be looking at accidents and traffic patterns on the highway to find the areas that need looking into," said Keisling.

He said that the study could also call for other work to be done on the highway. "We could determine that some curving or widening of the road need done or that extra traffic lights be put in."

Keisling said that the study will also look into the driveways of homes and businesses along the roadway to see if there are any hazards created there.

"We will be taking an extensive look at the highway and what needs to be done," he said.

Keisling added that after the study the area can expect some changes. "We are not only doing this just for a study but also for design," he said. "This is something that has a lot of teeth to it and some kind of work will be started after the study is done."

Saudi

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nance Company of the Army, did his basic training at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Following basic training he was assigned to Fort Polk, Louisiana, where he studied communications.

Later he was sent to Germany where he was stationed in four different places until January 3. His family did not hear from him until Feb. 12 when they received his first letter, dated January 19.

"He told us where he stayed on the way over to the Gulf," said Debbie. "And that it was rough getting over there. He will celebrate his 21st birthday Feb. 21."

"When he was stationed in the United States, he got home quite often and was home on leave for about a month before he went to Germany in October, 1990," Debbie said.

Since he received his first letter, he has moved so we don't know where he is now," Debbie concluded.

Carson Gramley IV arrived in Saudi Arabia January 21

PFC Carson Gramley IV, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carson Gramley III, of Beaumont, graduated from Tinkhannock High School in 1987 and enlisted in the United States Marine Reserves in August of that year.

Carson left for training at Parris Point in December, 1987, after which he went to Camp LeJeune for M.O.S. training for the Motor Transport Battalion out of Wyoming. He was attached to the Marine Wing Support Squadron 473, Detachment Bravo.

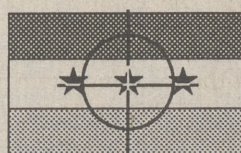
Carson was in the reserve unit when the squadron was activated January 9. The PFC left January 11 for Camp Pendleton, California and then for Saudi Arabia, arriving there January 21.

Dzanko named to Dean's List

Michael J. Dzanko, a biology/political science major, has been named to the Dean's List at Juniata College for the 1990-91 fall term. The Dean's List recognizes grade point averages of at least 3.6 out of a possible 4.0.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Dzanko, Sr., of Shavertown, and a 1989 graduate of Dallas Senior High School.

WAR



On The Home Front

"We received one letter when he got there saying they were along the Persian Gulf where the water was so blue and beautiful, he couldn't imagine why he was there," said his Mrs. Gramley. "The last letter we received from him, February 7, he said they had moved to about 25 miles from the Kuwait border."

"He called home about three times before he was moved and the last time he told us we wouldn't hear from him for about a month. He said they were hauling ammunition and explosives. His morale was very high and he said the group that left together are still together," Mrs. Gramley said. "The quicker this is over, the quicker we get home," he said in his last call," said his mother.

"Carson is our only son," Mrs. Gramley said. "We have three daughters, two older than Carson and both married and one younger and still at home. When Carson was home, he was active in scouting. He was a Cub Scout, Boy Scout and a Scout Leader. He was also an Eagle Scout."

"We sent him a fax letter last week which he will get in four or five days. It wasn't very long but it was enough to let him know we were thinking of him."

Signs

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of Dallas Township, in which many of the newest signs are located. "The local ordinance applies to signs and billboards placed in B-3, B-4, M-1 and M-3 zones," Kozick explained.

The local ordinance says that no two signs may be located closer together than one-fifth of the distance of the combined square footage of the property, with a minimum of no closer than 120 feet between each sign. However, PennDOT says signs must be at least 300 feet apart.

"Poster signs cannot exceed 300 square feet and painted signs 600 square feet," Kozick explained. "Most of the signs on the Meineke property are six by twelve feet. Signs or billboards can be no higher than the structure in the district in which the route is located. The maximum height in B-3 zoning is 40 feet. The sign for 'One-to-One'

is illegal but that is temporary and will be taken out of there," Kozick said.

Kozick explained that on interstate highways, billboards must be thousands of feet back from the highway and are approximately 45 to 50 feet high.

"I have a concern about billboards and signs," Kozick said. "To me a billboard is a sign on someone's property advertising a business other than that of the property owner while one advertising the property owner's business is a sign. It's difficult to decide the difference between a billboard and a sign. Then there are the other signs with lights, but it's difficult to do anything about them because they are usually portable signs and the owners take them in at night. It's a difficult situation," Kozick concluded.

Lehman UMC to meet February 26

The Lehman United Methodist Women will hold their regular monthly meeting at the church on February 26, 7:30 p.m. with Elda Coolbaugh presiding.

The Prayer and Self Denial Program entitled "Skills for Survival" will be presented by Janet Eddy. A special offering will be taken. Project for the month is the Bakeless Bake Sale. Elda Coolbaugh and Lillie Lamoreaux are hostesses.

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Dr. Brady attended Bishop O'Reilly H.S., Kingston; Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre; and Hahnemann University, Philadelphia, Pa. He is a member of the A.M.A., Pennsylvania and Luzerne County Medical Societies and the American Society of Internal Medicine. He served as Chief of Medicine, Nesbitt Hospital, 1988 - 1989.

The office is equipped with a laboratory, EKG, 24 hour Holter, X-Ray service, Pulmonary Function Testing, Doppler vascular studies, and Ultrasound service. Dr. Brady also performs PAP tests, Pelvic exams, Sigmoidoscopy, and screens for Breast and Colon Cancer, Pre-marital, Driver, and Work Physicals are also offered.

The office is located at 172 Memorial Highway, Shavertown (former Magistrate's office, adjacent McDonald's). For appointment call 675-6588. Medicare, Blue Shield & most other insurance accepted.

Dr. Brady is married and lives with his wife and three sons in Franklin Township.