

## A history of missed deadlines

Since the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) agreed to install traffic lights at seven intersections and upgrade Routes 309 and 415 to accommodate increased traffic, it has come out with five different timetables for the work.

**April, 1993:** PennDOT expected to open bids in June and begin work on Route 309 between Harris Hill Road and Center Street by early fall, adding a center turning lane and new curbing. All intersections except for two on Route 309 in Trucksville were expected to be finished within a year. The Rte. 309 intersections at Carverton and Hillside roads would begin in mid-1994, with all work finished by mid-1995.

**July, 1993:** The new schedule called for work at Franklin Street, Main Street, West Center Hill Road, Dallas Corners, Hildebrandt Road and Rte 118 to begin in the fall. Carverton and Hillside roads were planned to start in mid-1994 and be finished by mid-1995. Minimal work on crossover drainage pipes on 309 in Shavertown, the first part of the construction of the center turning lane, was done that fall.

**April, 1994:** The addition of a center turning lane, new curbing and paving on Rte 309 between Harris Hill Road and Center Street began.

The new schedule called for work on all other intersections to be finished by mid-1995.

**August, 1994:** Work on 309 in Shavertown was finished by mid-month. According to another new schedule, work on 415/118 intersection was to begin in November.

The bid for the Route 309 intersections at Franklin St., Offset Paperback and Pioneer Ave. and the Route 415 intersection with Center Hill Road at Pickett's Charge was to be let in October, with work beginning by late fall.

Work on the Route 309 intersection at Church and Carverton roads was to begin in the spring of 1995. Work on the Route 309 intersection with Upper Demunds, Center Hill and Hildebrandt roads was scheduled to begin in October, 1995.

The jug handle at Hillside Road wasn't scheduled because of delays with the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission, which had to photograph the historically significant Harter's Dairy building before it could be demolished to make way for construction.

**November, 1994:** PennDOT announced that work on the Route 415/118 intersection would begin in mid-March, followed approximately six weeks later by Route 415 and West Center Hill Road at Pickett's Charge and the Route 309 intersections with Center Hill/Lower Demunds/Hildebrandt roads, Franklin Street and Main Road at Offset Paperback. Dallas Corners and Carverton Road weren't scheduled yet.

**June, 1995:** The bid for the 415/118 intersection is to be let "soon," with the start of work planned for mid-August. Bids for work at three other intersections are to go out in September, with work beginning in late fall, weather permitting. Bids for Route 309 at Carverton Road are to be let in January, 1996. The reconstruction of Dallas Corners and the Route 309/Hildebrandt Road intersection won't take place until 1997 at the earliest. There is no schedule for the jug handle at Hillside Road.

## Road work

(continued from page 9)

PennDOT must wait for money to hit the system, he added. The money is there, but it must be sent from the federal government to the state, which takes time because the state's fiscal year starts June 1 and the federal government's starts October 1.

"We're juggling constraints of time and money," Mattei said. "Our original work schedule was too optimistic. I'm now scheduling the work for a worst case scenario - we could let bids and begin work sooner than I'm projecting."

Mattei's revised work schedule for the highway improvement project now calls for bids to be let through 1997, the first to be for the Route 415/118 intersection.

Bids for installing traffic lights and upgrading intersections at Route 309 and Franklin Street, Route 309 and Main Road at Offset Paperback and Route 415 and Center Hill Road at Pickett's Charge will be let by September, Mattei said. Work has been delayed because PennDOT had to redesign the drainage pattern and add protected left turn lanes.

Bids for replacing traffic lights and realigning the Route 309 intersection at Carverton and Church roads in Trucksville will be let in January, 1996, Mattei said.

A major revamping of the Route 415 intersection at Dallas Corners is "out of our control," Mattei said. Part of it involves purchas-

ing a section of right-of-way in front of the Post Office from the federal government, which he said could take some time. He expects to let bids on it in January, 1997.

Bids for reconstructing the intersection of Route 309 and Center Hill, Hildebrandt and Upper Demunds roads in Dallas Township will be let in January, 1997.

No date for letting bids on construction of a jug handle and installation of a traffic light on Route 309 at Hillside Road in Kingston Township has been set yet. Design and construction have been held up by the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission, which must photograph the his-

torically significant Harter's Dairy building before it's demolished, Mattei said. The PHMC has a backlog of many similar projects to do throughout the entire state, he added.

The highway improvement project will be paid for with state and federal funding obtained by area legislators concerned about increased traffic through the Back Mountain after the opening of the Cross-Valley Expressway in November, 1991. Drivers seeking a convenient shortcut from Wyoming Valley and Route 80 to points north and west created conditions which Representative Phyllis Mundy described as "a mini-interstate."

## Merchants have close view of traffic tieups

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**BACK MOUNTAIN** - As improvements to seven intersections on Routes 309 and 415 promised by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation are once more delayed, area merchants are coping with another season of heavy traffic.

At the morning and evening rush hours - or at the slightest provocation - vehicles often back up on Route 309 at Carverton Road and Route 415 at Dallas Corners, and several other locations.

"We see cars backed up to the Pump 'n Pantry a lot, but the people are polite and usually let you through," said Dennis Beyer, owner of Dominor's Pizza in the

Dallas Corners building.

His drivers often use Machell Ave. to make deliveries. "Drivers usually don't block the intersection," he said.

Gina Scammacca, owner of Chili Willie's in the same building, has seen backups reaching to the new Dallas Agway, nearly half a mile down the road. "I've been stuck in traffic tieups reaching from Dallas Corners to Mr. Z's," she said.

Neither Beyer nor Scammacca is sure that new traffic lights and improved intersections will solve the problem. Too many cars use the highway, they said.

Customers often bypass Randy Loyd's shop, Dallas Photo, on Route 415 because they don't like to cross through oncoming traffic to enter or leave his parking lot.

"They say it's very inconvenient," he said. "I have seen drivers sneaking up the shoulder of the highway from Camelot Car Care to Mill Street to get around the traffic."

Fridays and Saturdays during the summer are the worst times, he said.

Construction worker Alan Raczkowski often travels Route 309 in the Back Mountain. During the evening rush hour, traffic on Route 309 backs up from Carverton Road south to Hillside Road.

"New traffic lights won't help much," he said.

Heavy traffic isn't the only problem. Terri Bynon, a secretary at Gordon Insurance on Route 309 and Franklin Street, has often heard brakes squealing. "There

have been quite a few accidents here, possibly because of traffic from the fast food places," she said. "At 5 p.m. it's sometimes safer to drive south to the shopping center and turn around at the light than to cross through traffic to go north."

She thinks installing traffic lights at Route 309 at Franklin Street and Main Road may help slow traffic a little. "We often see cars going through here very fast," she said.

Terence Meehan, operator of the Dallas Atlantic station at Dallas Corners, said the highway in front of his business is always heavy.

"Holiday traffic can be bad," he said. "My customers say it backs up quickly, particularly on Church Street by the supermarket."

## DUI

(continued from page 1)

released. Police said Moyer's vehicle crossed from the northbound lane into the southbound passing lane and split into three pieces after the impact. Police found its rear end at the point of impact and its front end 25 feet away in the northbound lane.

The dash and motor landed in the woods approximately 45 to 50 feet from the point of impact and caught fire, according to Kunkle fire chief Jack Dodson. Fire and

rescue personnel had to use the jaws of life to free Casey from the wreckage.

The rig flipped over and skidded on its side another 300 feet uphill from the point of impact, completely blocking the highway.

Before the truck could be righted, workers from National Freight and Martin's Mobile had to transfer its cargo, several hundred cases of paper towels, to another rig.

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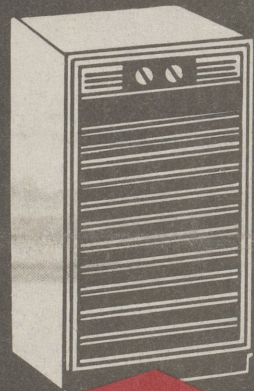
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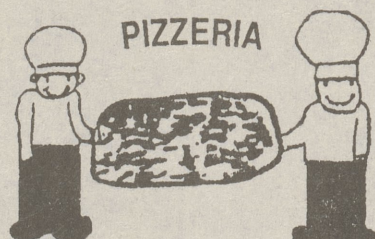
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