

RIVER DRIVE RESIDENTS DEMAND ACTION ON TRAFFIC ISSUES

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A serious crash on River Drive near Tenth Line has renewed residents' call for something to be done about traffic along the busy stretch of Georgetown road.

"There's always problems," said Campbell Rindfleisch, who lives near the intersection with his wife Tina, giving them permanent front-row seats to cars speeding through a 50-kilometre-per-hour zone, sometimes passing trucks along the way, and drivers continuously rolling through the stop sign. "In the winter it's a nightmare because trucks get stuck on the hill. I don't think there's another road in the town of Halton Hills that's been closed as much as River Drive."

The road, which winds its way through northeast Georgetown and ends at Tenth Line, was recently closed for a lengthy period due to a head-on collision between a westbound SUV and an eastbound fully-loaded dump truck hauling a trailer.

The truck ended up on the Rindfleisches' front

lawn, causing a substantial amount of damage, while the SUV landed on next door neighbours Helene and Peter Beecham's property where it burst into flames.

Peter said he helped the driver out the vehicle before the fire started. The lone male occupant sustained minor injuries in the crash and then left the scene on foot, but was later apprehended by police and transported to hospital.

According to the two families, River Drive has been plagued by traffic-related woes for many years. They say that often, they can barely pull in and out of their own driveways due to the heavy car and truck traffic and speeding vehicles tailgating them as they attempt to turn into their properties, sometimes forcing them to continue driving up to Tenth Line.

"It's become worse over the years and is just beyond crazy," said Helene, who has lived on River Drive for almost half a century. "It has to be addressed in a serious manner."

"It's been too long and we're all fed up."

While the residents acknowledged that police have been seen in the area



Helene Beecham photo

This significant collision between an SUV and dump truck is among the latest traffic-related issues on River Drive in Georgetown.

recently doing traffic enforcement, they say that more needs to be done, with speed bumps, truck traffic restrictions and the use of photo radar among their suggestions.

"The Town really should be doing something about it," said Peter. "People have got to be slowed down and made to abide by the rules."

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette told the Independent that over the last few years, town staff and councillors have been made

aware of River Drive residents' concerns about perceived speeding and truck traffic.

"During this time staff have been working with the residents to address their concerns as it relates to speeding," he said.

The head of council said the municipality has also undertaken a number of road safety initiatives on River Drive, including the installation of a vehicle-activated traffic calming sign west of Tenth Line to advise drivers of their speed

and the replacement of all warning signs between Tenth Line and Mountainview Road North to increase driver awareness.

In addition, he said the town has conducted a motor vehicle collision and sight line review, updated its speed studies and temporarily installed a radar message board, among other measures.

"River Drive is classified as a minor arterial road with the main purpose of moving traffic, which includes heavy trucks. As

such, speed humps on this road would not be considered," said Bonnette. "The restriction of trucks on this road is also not being considered due to the limited number of Credit River crossings. Unfortunately, we don't have many options to reroute or restrict the east-west truck traffic."

He noted the town has an excellent working relationship with Halton regional police and does regular safety blitzes to ensure the trucks travelling on local roads are safe.

In the case of the head-on collision, the driver of the SUV is facing a variety of charges. Garrett Stimpson, 26, of Orangeville was charged with impaired driving, having a blood alcohol concentration of 80 milligrams or more, failure to stop after an accident and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

Stimpson has made other headlines since the collision, first being reported missing for six days, followed by police apprehending him in South Stormont (southeast of Ottawa) for allegedly driving a stolen car, resisting arrest and causing damage to a police cruiser. He was later released.



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