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County survey finds fewer speeders in Barnesville

by Meghan Tierney | Staff Writer

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Speeding in Barnesville may not be as large a problem as town officials and residents have previously thought according to a county traffic study.

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Montgomery County Police recently completed an eight-day speed survey in Barnesville in response to a June survey conducted and financed by the town, said Capt. Thomas Dido, commander of county police's 5th District.

"It is clearly different," said Dido, adding that the final data is still being analyzed. They found that less than 60 percent of vehicles traveled over the speed limit while passing through the small town, he said, though he did not yet have exact figures. Barnesville's study, conducted over seven days by The Traffic Group Inc. of Baltimore, discovered that more than 60 percent of the vehicles were traveling at more than 10 miles over the speed limit.

Barnesville Commissioner Bonnie Brown said that the town had not yet received the results of the police study, but that the town had discussed the speeding problem at its monthly town meeting Monday.

Brown said that one issue of concern is that the police study, unlike the town's, did not take place during the summer.

"There's more traffic in Barnesville when school's in session," she said Monday. "...Traffic's going to be less during summertime."

Brown said the town would decide its next step in reducing speeding once it learned more about the results of the police's study.

Both studies assessed traffic on Barnesville Road.

The police conducted the survey after they received the data from Barnesville officials. The data contradicted an earlier



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county study, Didone said.

The town sent its results to the county and to City of Rockville officials in an effort to get more speed cameras.

A citizens advisory committee on traffic issues will assess the results of the county's study and decide whether the cameras are needed, Didone said. Speeding is not the only factor in the decision, he said, and the committee also looks at road design, pedestrian traffic and accident rates.

While Barnesville, which has a population of less than 200 people, has a high traffic volume during rush hour, officers who attempt to catch speeders tend to issue a low number of citations, he said.

"We are very cognizant and aware of our small communities," Didone said last week. "We can't commit to sending more resources if they're more needed elsewhere."

However, Poolesville's push for speed cameras has met with slightly more success. Speed camera enforcement is being conducted near the Western County Outdoor Pool on Fisher Avenue and on Tom Fox Avenue, Didone said, and the locations are recommended for the installation of speed cameras late this year or in early 2008.

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