

Shelburne needs a Police Advisory Board, says resident

By Michelle Janzen

Local resident and activist Gord Craig was at the Town of Shelburne Council meeting on Monday night to pitch a Police Advisory Committee to combat issues with traffic not stopping for pedestrians.

"After I came to Council about three weeks ago, I have had 56 comments, most agreeing with me and stating their experiences with near misses, regarding the crosswalk issues," said Mr. Craig on the relatively new crosswalk at Main Street East and William Street. "I got thinking we can do better than this, so it struck me, we can form a committee here."

"When speaking with a friend of mine, I was informed that it is actually called a Police Advisory Board where complaints can be brought through the board and we can begin to work on this project in town. It's not going to get any better on its own."

"My proposition is to bring this Board to life through the council and through whatever members you see fit to be on it."

Mr. Craig stated he personally would like to see all constables on this committee.

"They know what they are looking for and what we are dealing with," stated Craig. "Sundays seem to be the worst time for that crosswalk when people come blasting through there. Maybe we could put red lights at the crosswalk. That way it catches the attention of those people who don't see the yellow lights. People relate to red and it catches their eye. They may not know what it's for, but it will make them stop and get their attention and make them think."

"Cars are passing on the right like it's normal in the crosswalk when the lights are flashing. Why can't we block off the right lane there with pylons? When the pylons were there while it was being constructed, it worked. It's very cost effective and it won't stop emergency vehicles. They could simply remove them pylons when needed or drive right over them."

In closing Craig said "A lot of people are intimidated and won't come here so I'm their voice. I have all kinds of people getting in touch with me, crossing guards you name it, contacting me left and right. I'm here because we need to solve this crisis."

Mayor Ken Bennington questioned Mr. Craig on the composition of the board, asking if it was his intention it be made up only of police officers. That was Mr. Craig's personal preference, he said, "as they are here doing their job."

The Mayor went on to state that he was a little concerned with the make-up of the board if it's only Constables, but Mr. Craig said it could be made up of anybody but at least two constables should be on it.

In the end, Mayor Bennington said Ontario's Ministry of Transportation might have an issue with red lights at the crosswalk. Mr. Craig said he was aware of this, but insisted it is not something that couldn't be addressed as something needs to be done to combat a growing problem.

"I'm hoping we can at least get the ball rolling because it's just a matter of time before something happens, NOT if!" said Craig.