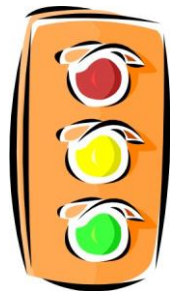


Whitehall Township Traffic Control Request Information Packet



Approved by motion by Whitehall Township

Board of Commissioners

8-14-17

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW
REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
ANY NEW TRAFFIC REGULATION**

So...you want to request that a traffic regulation be implemented... such as a stop sign, watch children sign, speed limit sign, traffic light or similar control....

Whitehall Township wants to advise you that there is a LOT of information you need to know when making such a request...such as:

1. The current Pennsylvania Vehicle Code takes jurisdiction and sets standards which **MUST** be followed by ANY municipality for national uniform and recognized traffic control signs and devices, including Whitehall, before any action may be taken by the Township to implement or post ANY new or revised traffic control regulations on public roadways.

2. This Code of Law requires that a Traffic Engineering Study be performed in accordance with the Federal (nationwide) Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (“MUTCD”) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation’s (PennDOT) Engineering standards to document that “warrants” are met to legally establish enforceable traffic regulations. If these regulations are not *legally* established, they are unenforceable, and useless. Since Whitehall Township does not have an *in house* traffic engineer to perform the required engineering studies, and the average Traffic Engineer’s consulting costs for the required study varies from **\$2,000.00 - \$5,000.00** on up, the Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners has established a policy to try and contain the costs of such studies. This policy requires that all traffic control requests are first reviewed through the Police, Fire, Public Works and Planning Departments to determine if the traffic requests are appropriate. If so, a recommendation including the estimated study cost will be submitted to the Board of Commissioners for their direction to proceed with the study. If the study **DOES** document that the required “warrants” are met, a Township Ordinance must be adopted by the Board at a public meeting to establish and implement the new or revised regulation. **Furthermore, any requests for controls on State roadways will require additional approvals and documentation, and the Township does not have the final say on these roadways.**

3. **The Township frequently receives requests for ‘curb painting’ to indicate restricted parking areas. Please know that the township does not paint curbs, primarily because this curb painting is not legally enforceable under current Pennsylvania Laws. Furthermore, it is the**

responsibility of all property owners to maintain their own curbs and therefore the Township does not have a curb maintenance program to assure proper markings. Please know that this does not preclude any driver from their obligation to know the current PA Vehicle Code with respect to minimum parking setbacks; all drivers are obligated to know the laws whether signed or not. Do you know these common required setbacks? (NOT intended to be an 'all-inclusive' list!) You must park:

- a. 30 feet from a Stop Sign, Yield, Flashing or Traffic Control Sign;
 - b. 15 feet from a Fire Hydrant;
 - c. 10 feet from a painted marked pedestrian cross walk;
 - d. 20 feet from a Fire Station Driveway
4. What are “warrants”? Warrants are federal and state wide standards that have been established and are recognized by the MUTCD and PennDOT as required criteria that must be met prior to implementing any traffic control regulation. There are different warrants for different controls, as we will discuss further in this publication.
5. The Township frequently receives many requests for traffic controls, ranging from stop signs to speed limits signs to handicap parking signs, watch children signs, etc. Unfortunately, however, too many signs cluttering the roadway has the opposite effect than intended, and causes the typical motorist to ignore more critical signs. That is why the requests must be judiciously requested and placed. The most commonly requested traffic controls are for multi-way stop intersections, 25 mph speed limits and no truck traffic signage. On the surface, these typically seem like “harmless” and “easy” requests. Nothing could be farther from the truth. These types of traffic regulations are no longer permitted to be simply established at the whim of the local municipality, but instead must first have the need documented by a Traffic Engineering Study which determines that the required warrants have been met. For your information, a brief listing of the required warrants for each of these requests follows, and appear as published in the MUTCD & PennDOT’s Traffic Engineering Regulations.....

MULTI WAY STOP SIGN WARRANTS *Requires a Traffic Engineering Study*****

PennDOT’s Warrant Manual specifically states that “....a multi-way stop intersection shall not be used for speed control”; and therefore may not be used as a measure to slow down or stop traffic on the major or thru street. The following are some of the warrants

- a. *Where traffic signals are warranted and urgently needed at high volume intersections, or where the side (minor) street has significant delays/congestion that meet the minimum traffic volume requirements;*

- b. *Where the intersection corner available sight distance on the side (minor) street is less than the stopping sight distance speed limit value on the major roadway, and there is no practical way to improve the available corner sight distance by restricting parking or reducing the major street speed limit;*
- c. *Where the past traffic accident history of five (5) or more “reportable” traffic crashes per year indicates a safety concern that may qualify for a multi way stop intersection.*

25 MPH SPEED LIMIT WARRANTS *Requires a Traffic Engineering Study*****

Pursuant to current PennDOT guidelines, a 25 mph limit may be posted ONLY under the following circumstances without the need for an engineering traffic study:

- a. *If the roadway is in a “residence district” as defined by the Vehicle Code (territory contiguous to and including a highway not compromising a business district when the property on the highway for a distance of 300 feet segments contains at least 50% residences having direct access to the highway); and*
- b. *If the highway [roadway] is functionally classified by the State as a local highway, and the highway [roadway] is not a numbered traffic route as defined in the Vehicle Code, and is NOT on the Federal Aid System.*
- c. *Short sections of reduced speed limits less than 500 feet in length should not be posted because they cannot be enforced.*

NO TRUCK TRAFFIC WARRANTS *Requires a Traffic Engineering Study*****

Since public funds (local, county, state and federal taxes) are used to maintain public roadways, the municipality may not prohibit or restrict certain types of licensed vehicles from using public roads, unless valid roadway restrictions exist, such as:

- a. *Where the existing road has a deficient bridge weight, height, or width limitations that restricts certain class vehicles;*
- b. *Where the existing road has experienced pavement damage / breakups due to its inadequate pavement structure to support truck traffic vehicle loads;*
- c. *Where the past accident history indicates a safety concern that may qualify for vehicle restrictions, such as inadequate available turning radii at narrow intersections, causing reportable accidents.*

ACCESSIBLE (HANDICAP) PARKING SIGNS

- a. *The Township will review requests for the posting of handicap accessible parking signs in the street on special request by the resident. There must be documentation of the need presented, including the handicap license plate information, or application information. All handicap parking space requests must be signed by the property owner.*
- b. *The Township will NOT erect handicap signs on private property, such as apartment complex parking lots, or commercial parking lots.*
- c. *The property owner is responsible to provide the appropriate accessible route to any accessible parking space(s). This includes, but may not be limited to, appropriate depressed curbing, handicap access ramps and associated landing areas, as well as an improved surface path to the unit or*

structure. Accessible routes never have curbs or stairs, must be at least three (3) feet wide, and have a firm, stable, slip-resistant surface. The slope of an accessible route shall not be greater than 1:12 in the direction of travel.

- d. It is important to note that once established, even though it was at the request of a specific individual, the space is not the property of the requestor and anyone with a valid handicap placard can park in that space, not just the requestor.*
- e. Establishment of an accessible parking space does NOT include Township snow removal of that space. The Township does not remove snow from any public on street parking spaces except if done as part of the normal course of plowing streets.*
- f. Accessible spaces on Snow Emergency Routes can NOT be used when a snow emergency is declared, similar to all other on street parking on the route.*

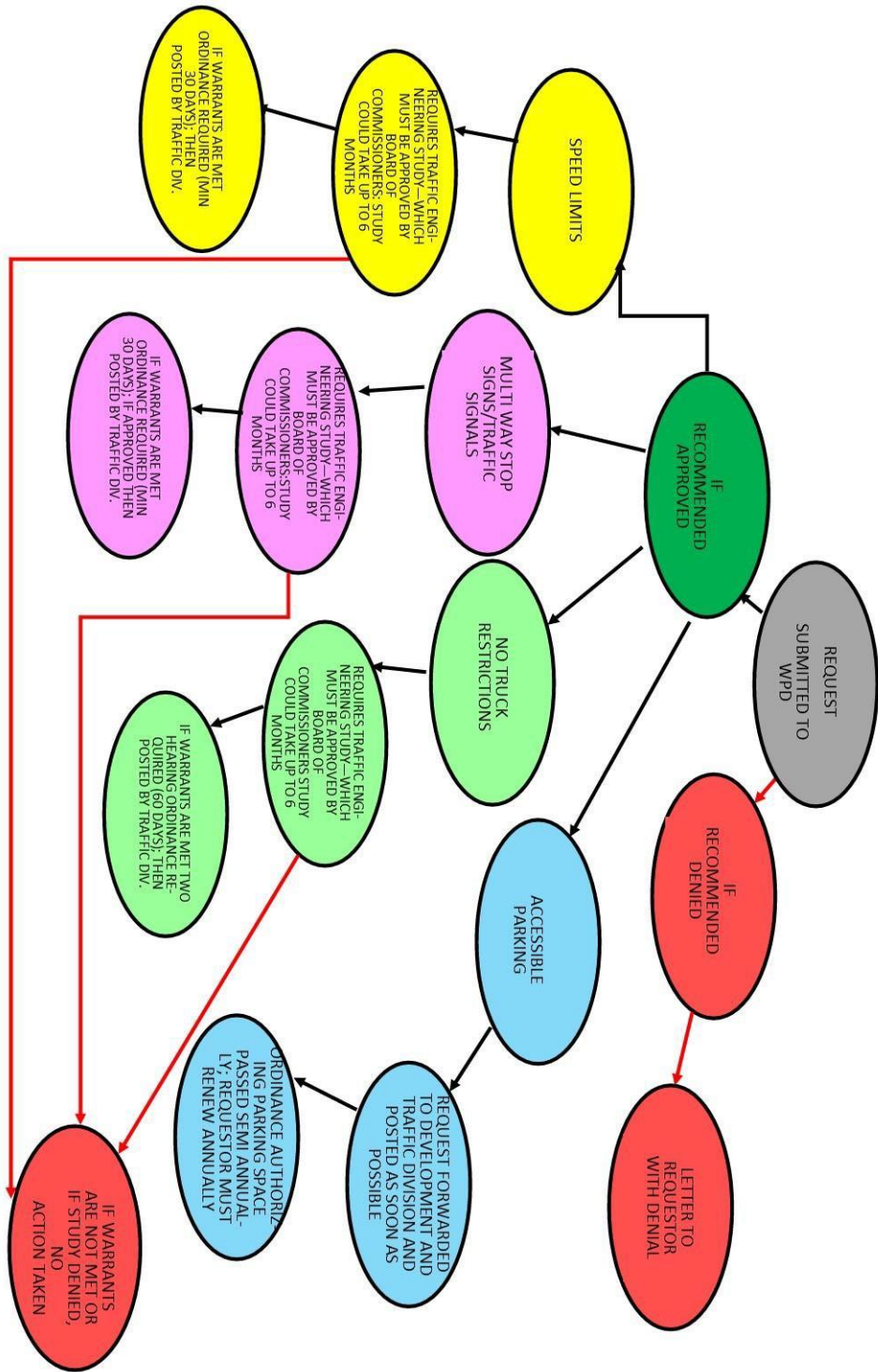
NO PARKING SIGNS, ETC

- a. No Parking, etc. signs are, as indicated previously, only placed under careful review. The Township is cognizant of the fact that establishing no parking zones will invariably inconvenience someone, so the utmost consideration is given before such a posting can be established, and there must be a clear need established for the limitation.*
6. There are so many existing traffic controls throughout the Township, and even, perhaps in your neighborhood, which do not appear to meet these qualifications. How did they get established??? You should know that the majority of existing traffic restrictions posted throughout the Township, such as many of the multi-way stops, and 25 mph speed limits, were implemented *prior to the PA Vehicle Code mid 1970's update.* As such, they were “grand fathered” under the updated PA Code regulations, and allowed to remain. This grandfather clause was provided so as not to burden municipalities with the tremendous engineering study costs which would be incurred for analyzing and documenting the established traffic warrants of all prior traffic regulations that existed and were implemented. Therefore, even though the Township has *many* existing multi-way stop intersections and 25 mph speed limits posted throughout our street systems, the PA Vehicle Code permits them to remain as grand fathered. However, in order for any new traffic control to be implemented or posted, it must be based upon the federal & state mandated warrants, and where required, documented with a traffic engineering study, to be legal and enforceable.

Following you will find a request forms for Street/alley traffic controls **and for a handicap accessible parking space.** If you wish to request any such controls, you must complete this form *in its entirety*, and return same to the Whitehall Township Police Department for consideration. We hope that you have read and

understand all of the information contained in this packet, and that it will be of assistance to you in your request. We trust that this brief overview for traffic control regulations provides you with a better understanding of our adopted policy and procedures on such requests.

TRAFFIC CONTROL REQUESTS FLOW CHART



REQUEST # _____

TRAFFIC CONTROL REQUEST FORM
COMPLETE ENTIRELY AND PRINT CLEARLY

RETURN TO: WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE POLICE CHIEF
3323 MACARTHUR ROAD
WHITEHALL, PA 18052
610-437-3042

Date: _____

Requestor Name: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone # _____ email: _____

Address: _____

Property Owner Name (if other than requestor) _____

Address: _____

Property Owner Signature (REQUIRED) _____

REQUEST FOR (Indicate Appropriate Item)

- Stop Sign(s) _____
- Traffic Signals _____
- No Parking Zone _____
- Speed Limit Signs _____
- Other Signs _____

(Describe Type)

REASONS FOR REQUEST:

SPECIFIC LOCATION (Name of Street & Nearest Intersection):

SKETCH OF LOCATION: (Attach Additional Sheets As May Be Necessary)

REQUEST # _____

TRAFFIC CONTROL REQUEST FORM
HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE
COMPLETE ENTIRELY AND PRINT CLEARLY

RETURN TO: WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE POLICE CHIEF
3323 MACARTHUR ROAD
WHITEHALL, PA 18052
610-437-3042

Date: _____

Requestor Name: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone # _____ email: _____

Address: _____

Property Owner Name (if other than requestor) _____

Address: _____

Property Owner Signature (REQUIRED) _____

REQUEST FOR (Indicate Appropriate Item)

Accessible Parking Space _____
(REQUIRES a Disability Registration Plate or Placard)
Plate/Placard # _____
(This information will be verified by WPD)

REASONS FOR REQUEST:

SPECIFIC LOCATION (Name of Street & Nearest Intersection):

SKETCH OF LOCATION: (Attach Additional Sheets As May Be Necessary)

PLEASE NOTE: IF APPROVED SPACE WILL BE VALID FOR ONE YEAR FROM DATE OF ISSUANCE, AND MUST BE RENEWED BY DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR BY CONTACTING THE WHITEHALL POLICE DEPARTMENT AT 610-437-3042