

UPDATE: Newman Springs Road speed limit to be revisited after fatal accident

Posted by the [Asbury Park Press](#) on 11/1/06

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MIDDLETOWN — The speed limit of the heavily traveled Newman Springs Road will be re-examined because of this morning's fatal accident there, Mayor Tom Hall said.

Neighbors near the scene of the accident said they have complained about accidents on the road for years.

"This is the nightmare that residents of Lincroft have actively tried to prevent for six years. It's just devastating," said Mary Ellen Hintz of Phalanx Road, which intersects with Newman Springs Road near where the accident occurred.

Hintz said she is one of the founders of the Lincroft Village Green Association, a community organization that she said has been fighting for reduced speed limits and "traffic-calming devices" on both Newman Springs Road and Swimming River Road.

Traffic safety is one of the biggest issues facing Middletown, and speeding is a concern, Hall said.

Debbie Nagel of Newman Springs Road said there have been many accidents on the road. Charles Hohenstein, also of Newman Springs Road, said the mayor has gone to "proper officials, but with the slow movement of government ... nothing has been done."

Hohenstein said that usually traffic is backed up on the road at about the time of the accident, but for some reason it wasn't this morning.

Barbara Thorpe, a 71-year-old woman who has lived on Swimming River Road for 39 years, said she and her husband began working in 1996 to get the speed limit reduced on swimming river road. After 8 years, said said, the limit was reduced from 40 mph to 35 mph. She said they also want the county to provide the thousands of Brookdale Community College students who use Swimming River and Newman Springs roads an alternate route.

"This road is like a raceway," Thorpe said about Newman Springs Road, "and Swimming River Road is like the turnpike with the trucks."