

Subject: Follow-up to 07/22/15 Mt. Hope traffic meeting
From: Michael Orman (ormanmf@yahoo.com)
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Date: Monday, July 27, 2015 11:01 AM

Hi Erik,

Thanks again very much for making the meeting happen last week. Since then, we have been discussing among ourselves which intersections/crosswalks to identify for study. Some specific questions have come up, and we are wondering if you could be available for a brief phone call sometime this week to discuss. With some notice, anytime today, tomorrow, or Wednesday morning would work well for us.

Also, below is a summary we put together to memorialize the discussion at the 07/22/15 meeting.

Thanks very much,

Mike Orman
554 Mt. Hope Ave.

07/22/15 MT. HOPE TRAFFIC MEETING SUMMARY

Attendees: Commissioner Norman Jones, City Traffic Planner Erik Frisch, South East Neighborhood Service Center Director Nancy Johns-Price, Senior County Traffic Engineer Terry Rice, County Traffic Engineer Jim Pond, City Councilmember Matt Haag, City Engineer Jim McIntosh, County Traffic Engineer Brent Penwarden, resident Lisa Reagan, and resident Mike Orman.

Erik Frisch made some preliminary comments referencing our prior meeting with RPD representatives and his history of involvement in assisting our area on traffic issues. Lisa Reagan then made some short remarks framing the issues presented by the petition, emphasizing the severe threat to safety posed by the excessive speeding. Mike Orman thanked everyone for coming together to address the issues.

At Commissioner Jones' urging, the petition's eight proposed action items were used as the framework for the discussion.

1. **POLICE ENFORCEMENT.** Erik Frisch noted that the RPD has implemented a weekly enforcement detail in response to the petition. Commissioner Jones expressed interest in having feedback on the results of that detail (number of tickets issued, etc.) Mike Orman noted that a brief detail this past fall produced over 150 tickets, but that we don't have results from the ongoing effort. Nancy Johns-Price undertook to obtain this information.
2. **INSTALLING ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC LIGHTS.** The petition identifies a number of

intersections along Mt. Hope Ave. (at Robinson Drive, Menlo Place, McLean St., and Linden St.) where traffic lights could be installed; in addition, Peter Psyllos has separately advocated installing a traffic light at the intersection of Mt. Hope Ave. and Stewart St. (where two of his businesses are located). Terry Rice indicated that traffic signals are designed to deal with traffic volume, not control speed, and that any new traffic light would have to be justified by studies of factors such as cross-street traffic volume, pedestrian and bicycle usage, and accident history. Commissioner Jones directed that we (the petitioners) identify two such intersections for study by the engineers. We indicated that we would do that following consultation among ourselves. The engineers indicated that such study would likely occur in the September/October 2015 timeframe.

3. **REDUCING SPEED LIMIT TO 25 M.P.H.** Erik Frisch referred to the street-specific initiatives in our area and indicated that discussions are underway concerning a City-wide reduction in the speed limit to 25 m.p.h. Erik indicated that any such move would probably include exceptions for arterials like Mt. Hope Ave., enabling the City to keep the speed limit on those streets at 30 m.p.h. Erik further indicated, however, that a reduction to 25 m.p.h. could still be considered for the historic district portion of Mt. Hope Ave. No timetable for action on this issue was provided.

4. **ENHANCING PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS.** This discussion addressed improving signage and crosswalk markings as well as and possibly installing a raised island on Mt. Hope Ave. at the McLean St. intersection (similar to what has been done on Joseph Ave.). The engineers indicated that upgrades and improvements can be justified where sufficient usage occurs (foot traffic, trails, etc.). There was also discussion about the possibility of installing a round-about on Mt. Hope near Robinson Drive, as had been suggested by some of the individual petition signers. Regarding the raised island concept, Commissioner Jones noted that snow removal issues should be considered. We (the petitioners) were directed to identify two specific pedestrian crossing locations for study, and we indicated that we would do so following consultation among ourselves. The engineers indicated that such study would occur in the September/October 2015 timeframe.

5. **INSTALLING SPEED MONITOR FURTHER DOWN THE MT. HOPE INCLINE.** Erik Frisch noted that the NSC had already followed through on this item by placing a portable monitor on Mt. Hope Ave. between Robinson Drive and Menlo Place. Nancy Johns-Price indicated, however, that the placement is not permanent, inasmuch as this and another portable monitor must be shared with other streets across the SE Quadrant. Mike Orman again raised the possibility that the Mt. Hope residents/stakeholders would put their own money together to buy a monitor dedicated to Mt. Hope Ave., as they believe that this tool has been useful. Nancy Johns-Price indicated that she would investigate whether that idea would be allowed by the City and get back to us. Lisa Reagan suggested that a dedicated donation might be considered, and raised the possibility of asking the U of R to place the monitor in one of its right-of-ways.

6. **INSTITUTING RED LIGHT CAMERA ENFORCEMENT AT THE MT. HOPE/CYPRESS INTERSECTION** (where there is an existing traffic signal). Jim McIntosh indicated that the City's red-light camera program is ongoing, that additional intersections will be considered for red light camera enforcement, and that this intersection will be added to the list in consideration for the upcoming round. He indicated that this analysis would likely occur before the end of 2015.

7. **ENHANCED "PLACEMAKING"** - banners, etc. Nancy Johns-Price indicated that she will investigate what kind of funding might be available for banners and the like. Brent Penwarden cautioned that the benefits of banners, etc. must be balanced against the risks of driver distraction. Positive comments were made, however, about the new banners along the cemetery. In addition,

Terry Rice noted that appropriate tree plantings can contribute to placemaking, and Erik Frisch indicated that he will coordinate with Jim McIntosh about potential new plantings. Lisa Reagan noted that some trees had actually been taken down recently, to our dismay. Commissioner Jones indicated that he wanted to know what happened to the trees. Mike Orman stated that new plantings would likely be very welcome by residents.

8. CAMERA SPEED ENFORCEMENT. Jim McIntosh indicated that this is not a possibility.

This concluded the discussion of the petition's action items. Lisa Reagan and Mike Orman both noted that they are not traffic experts, and urged the other attendees to use their professional expertise to suggest further ideas to address the Mt. Hope speeding problem. The discussion then provided brainstorming time. Terry Rice referred to three tools: engineering, enforcement, and education. He noted that a "Neighborhood Watch" program that had been used in some neighborhoods, which involved residents recording speeds using a hand-held device and reporting speeders and their license plate numbers to the police, who followed up with some kind of warning letter. Lisa Reagan indicated that concerned members of the Cypress Linden Block Club had previously been trained by the Crime Prevention Officers at the NSC to do this. There was also discussion of possibly narrowing the traffic lanes on Mt. Hope the next time the street is re-surfaced; using "continental" striping on the crosswalks; and painting a wider edge line on the existing lanes (although in Terry Rice's estimation, this last idea had been ineffective where previously tried). Hopefully, the promised further studies will trigger more ideas from the engineers.

Terry Rice asked whether we thought the Mt. Hope traffic issues resulted from the College Town development. Mike Orman indicated that the issues pre-dated College Town, and asked whether street any reconfigurations on the west side of the river might possibly account for some diversion of traffic volume to Mt. Hope. The engineers indicated that they did not believe this to be the case. Lisa Reagan suggested that increase of Highland Hospital traffic that required a new parking garage and increase in U of R undergraduate population may be contributing factors. Lisa requested that an analysis of changes in use in the area be performed.

Finally (after Commissioner Jones, Nancy Johns-Price, and Matt Haag had left), there was some discussion concerning the Mt. Hope-Ford St. intersection. Mike Orman noted that the outside southbound lane on Mt. Hope Ave. leading out of that intersection (the lane that abruptly terminates near the north entrance to the Episcopal Home parking lot) encourages aggressive and reckless driving, and there was discussion whether that outside lane could be eliminated. Jim Pond indicated that past analysis concluded that such lane is necessary to handle the flow of traffic. There was also discussion about the possibility of installing a round-about at this intersection.