

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL SUBCOMMITTEE BRADMOOR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Bradmoor Walk-Through

June 25, 2013

Report by Gwenn Klingler, Chair, Safe Routes to School Sub-Committee

Those participating in walk-through:

- Jean Gries: Engineer, Montgomery County, emphasizes school issues
- Joe Pospisil, Engineer, Montgomery County, emphasizes residential permit parking issues
- Gwenn Klingler, Bradmoor Traffic Committee
- Craig Lockard, BHES parent
- Melissa Lockard, BHES parent
- Rebecca Millin, BHES parent; PTA Safety Committee
- Ivette Rivers Hayes, BHES parent; PTA Safety Committee
- Stephanie Mantelmacher: Did not go on walk, but talked with Jean Gries when we stopped by her house about problems at corner of Hempstead and McKinley

In addition, four emails were given to the traffic engineers from residents who could not make the meeting but wanted to relay their concerns:

- Mark Hoder, BHES parent
- Jingxiu Forney
- Walter Smith
- Susan Labin, Bradmoor Traffic Committee Chair

Before we began our walk in the Bradmoor neighborhood, we met at my house and everyone took time to introduce themselves and tell the traffic engineers their specific concerns. I gave Jean Gries a large copy of the Bradmoor neighborhood map that we had earlier marked with traffic concerns. She referred to the map often during the walk.

A walk was conducted around the Bradmoor neighborhood leading to Bradley Hills Elementary School (BHES). Our initial stops were along Hempstead and McKinley and also Irvington and McKinley. Ms. Gries immediately noticed the problems of visibility at those intersections with the trees and overgrown shrubs. I told her that we had pointed out the problem on our earlier Traffic Committee walk-thru and that Kyle Liang thought they should be cut back. She said that she would talk with him about this matter and try to move it along.

Ms. Gries was not encouraging about getting stop signs on McKinley at either Hempstead or Irvington. However, she could see how fast some of the traffic went and Stephanie Mantelmacher talked extensively with her about the problem. Ms. Gries didn't rule it out, but wanted to do a speed study. She also said the curb "bump outs" might work at that intersection. She did think a painted crosswalk would help as well as yellow signs warning motorists. She also thought a sidewalk along the west side of Hempstead would be reasonable to pursue.

Options discussed for these intersections and area of high speed/high traffic driving included:

sidewalks, sidewalk extensions, curb extensions, crosswalk markings (or re-painting of faded markings), signs indicating that certain intersections do not have 4-way stops, signs indicating school crossings, stop lines painted, and the possible addition of speed bumps.

Ms. Gries indicated that some remedies such as signage could be implemented, but some other options require requesting feasibility studies, hearings, exploration of county right of way to add sidewalks, etc. Her recommendation was that the neighborhood should identify the trouble areas, such as sidewalks needed, and then prioritize a list.

Joe Pospisil recognized the problems that the commuter parking created with visibility, and will work with us if we want to pursue some type of restricted parking program. Montgomery County is moving away from the sticker program now used in many neighborhoods and are going to an on-line registry of cars belonging to residents. If we want to pursue this, perhaps we should deliver notices to houses in the immediate area and ask him talk to neighbors about the program. He mentioned the “migrating” problem if we restrict just one or two blocks, possibly commuters would drive further away from Suburban Hospital to park. I told him that we were arranging a meeting with the community liaison person at Suburban, and he thought that we should bring it up with her.

When we walked around Bradley Hills School, she noticed where crosswalks needed to be improved. She also took notes of intersections that did not have street signs since that it is important to responders.

We proceeded along Madison Street toward Bradmoor Blvd. and Ms. Gries immediately recognized the need for a sidewalk to connect Hartsdale and Bradmoor. In fact, she said that there was “no doubt about it” for the need of a sidewalk there. We have to go through the procedures set up by the county, but she did say that she would be supportive of this effort, either by writing or testifying in person. She also thought that we should list all our areas of sidewalk issues and include them in the petition.

As we walked along Bradmoor towards Roosevelt, we saw a lot of fast-moving cars, and she saw the need to have some speed reduction measures. She was going to talk with the engineers who were out here earlier. It was expressed that many parents have noticed cars observed to be driving at unsafe speeds appear to be parents with BHES stickers on their cars. Ms. Nadji Kirby at Montgomery County DOT is the educational coordinator for the Safe Routes to School program. She could be a resource for teaching about safe driving and safe walking to children at BHES.

We next moved on to the Huntington Terrace neighborhood to the streets just east of our Bradmoor Association. Ms. Gries wanted to look at that area on this walk, and not return for a second walk. Residents have observed drivers using Garfield, as well as other streets, as a cut-through from Greentree and Old Georgetown Road, and have frequently observed drivers to be driving at unsafe speeds or not fully stopping at stop signs. The residents are also concerned about increased cut-through traffic to enter the NIH campus and with the upcoming Suburban Hospital expansion. Garfield Street had a number of visibility issues and crossing walk improvements. Also, at the 3-way intersection of Garfield, Madison and Jefferson, Ms. Gries wanted to explore having the trees cut back and a raised concrete walk going around the curve where children must stand to cross Garfield to the walking path. The Huntington Terrace parents were very excited about this plan.

Another issue discussed was the new bus route patterns entering and leaving BHES and the impact on certain streets. The traffic engineers were interested in learning the exact new routes and the impacts on neighboring streets near the school, particularly with some of the narrow roads.