

Donna Conkling

From: Mayor
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 8:04 PM
To: Madelaine Eppenstein
Cc: Robert Cole; Greg Cutler; Clerk's Department
Subject: Re: FHI Studio Project

Madelaine, thank you for your extensive input. You are so dedicated and very knowledgeable. Best, Jane

Jane Veron

Mayor

Village of Scarsdale
Mayor@scarsdale.com
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On Sep 13, 2022, at 5:21 PM, Madelaine Eppenstein <meppenstein@eppenstein.com> wrote:

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Mayor Veron,

The safety of road users should be a “major component” of any road project in Scarsdale. The newly enacted 25 mph state authorization, Vision Zero, Complete Streets, and sustainability improvements on Village roads will hopefully become or remain the most critically important action items on the village’s agenda long after FHI has concluded its project here. Just one of many examples of the potential for enhancing safety on Scarsdale’s streets is illustrated in this article about a Vision Zero project in Hoboken, NJ:
<https://www.npr.org/2022/08/25/1119110757/traffic-deaths-car-accident-hoboken-new-jersey-vision-zero>.

That problems on village roads are longstanding and complex is well known. Yet some of the most important safety initiatives for road users can and should be prioritized and implemented immediately. Changes in signal timing might even be accomplished using existing equipment to (1) give pedestrians more time to cross intersections, referred to as leading pedestrian intervals, and (2) to delay green signals to prevent avoidable conflicts, such as are caused by left and right turning vehicles – regardless of whether right turns on red are

currently permitted at a particular intersection. Because most signaled intersections in the Village Center permit aggressive motorists to come into conflict with pedestrians, when both right and left turns are timed simultaneously with walk signals, this initiative should be implemented without delay.

Regarding the 25 mph legislation originally introduced by Scarsdale's Assemblywoman Amy Paulin and pending since 2019, the 25 mph speed limit should be implemented wherever needed as soon as possible. Many roads, not just Popham and Crane, Fenimore and Walworth, Fox Meadow, etc., might already have been so designated to achieve traffic calming. I refer you to Mr. Cole's excellent 2019 analysis (included as Exhibit B to the January 2020 Report of the Municipal Services Committee on Update to Scarsdale Forum 2015 and 2018 Traffic Reports, <https://www.scarsdaleforum.com/Reports/download/1167>).

The village should be focused on supporting these critically important safety initiatives and budget accordingly, even though additional traffic engineer consultancy fees are likely to be incurred.

Village traffic issues include but are by no means limited to rush hour, holiday and weekend bottlenecks, motorists blocking the box at primary signaled intersections, 40-vehicle backups into and out of town on Popham Road at its Post Road terminus, the lack of blinking crosswalk warning signage or the aforementioned delayed green signals to allow more time for pedestrians to navigate crosswalks, and unchecked speeding and moving violations including rampant U-turns and teens on electric bikes or scooters on the sidewalks that threaten public safety throughout our community. The dearth of sidewalks and bike lanes where they might be appropriate, even on non-arterial roads, presents additional challenges.

The gruesome pedestrian-involved incident on August 2, as related to me by an eyewitness, caused a woman entering the crosswalk at the SE corner of East Parkway to be struck and flung into the air by an allegedly speeding vehicle, perhaps the latest wake up call for action. Those who do not believe that reduced speed is a safety imperative that saves lives and prevents injury are simply misinformed.

At the podium on August 9, Mr. and Mrs. Clark referred to a notoriously challenging Popham Road crosswalk and chronic

speeding on that roadway in front of their residence. They did not mention this was the location in which a fatality over a decade ago was caused by a left turning motorist traveling from Chase Road onto eastbound Popham. That location still lacks blinking pedestrian warning signage to alert motorists to the existence of that nonconforming intersection's crosswalk. The Popham-Garth-Depot and Popham crosswalks overall, whether at Scarsdale Avenue or East Parkway, also pose trouble for safe pedestrian crossing. The same hazards are present elsewhere village wide.

I'm not the only resident convinced that speed and red light camera enforcement are the required solutions to curb speeding and dangerous driver behavior in Scarsdale. Curbing the equally dangerous failure of motorists to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, to yield to pedestrians mid-block where there are no crosswalks, to stop at stop signs, and to refrain from illegal passing and U-turns appear to be problems without apparent solutions.

FHI's suggested reconfiguration of Popham Road bridge lanes, purportedly for better user access to the Bronx River Pathway, does not reference one of the important reasons for the prior expansion of Popham Road bridge lanes aside from structural integrity: the bridge was deemed inadequate to accommodate actual traffic volume.

East Parkway is acknowledged as a parking lot without pedestrian crosswalks, where motorists speeding to the northbound Bronx River Parkway pose a daily public safety hazard. The odd addition of long term parking at the north end of the street may have offered convenience to a few people, but did nothing to alleviate the unsafe logjam caused by two rows of head-in parking on the east side of the street.

My family has resided in the Village Center since 1993. Our son graduated from Scarsdale High School in 2000. He and his family including our grandson who is now two and a half years old reside just over the Scarsdale line on Garth Road. This toddler attends weekday morning nursery school in Scarsdale and they all enjoyed the Scarsdale pool pass I purchased for them this summer. Yet they too have found it necessary to work out an elaborate plan to navigate only certain crosswalks to be able to safely shop and visit Chase Park in the Village Center with their son in a stroller. The

following is our son's review of the road safety issues Village Center traffic poses to his family, which he requested I forward to you.

Sincerely,
Madelaine Eppenstein, submitted as private citizen,
18 Autenreith Road

Addendum:

My son David Eppenstein and his family reside at 70 Garth Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583. He recently requested that I forward the following observations to Scarsdale Village.

1. On Popham travelling west, when turning left onto Scarsdale Ave both westbound and oncoming traffic have limited-sight distance, so it's dangerous for motorists to make a left turn while oncoming traffic drives uphill on the bridge with not much distance to stop by the time they see turning traffic in front of them.
2. On Popham travelling west, the sunset is blinding certain times of year. Consider adding strobe to traffic signals, activated midday to sunset.
3. On East Pkwy travelling south, turning left onto Popham is dangerous for pedestrians; the crosswalk is located so far away from the intersection that most drivers don't even notice the pedestrians crossing. The pedestrian crosswalk should be moved closer to the intersection, and all signals should be red the entire time pedestrians are crossing. The crosswalk should be raised, widened, and painted or paved in a highly visible pattern.
4. On East Pkwy travelling south, while turning right onto Popham drivers cannot see the "no turn on red" sign above the sidewalk/retaining wall. The sidewalk sign should be visible, and duplicated on the overhead traffic signal. Also, drivers turning right cannot see pedestrians in the crosswalk due to the high stone wall on the sidewalk parallel to the railroad tracks below. Even if drivers see pedestrians they often do not stop. Right turns should be delayed while pedestrians are crossing. The pedestrian crosswalk should be moved even closer to the corner of the intersection, and all traffic lights should be red the entire time pedestrians are crossing. The crosswalk should be raised, widened, and painted or paved in a highly visible pattern.
5. On Popham travelling east and turning left onto East Pkwy, traffic should not be allowed to turn while pedestrians are crossing. The crosswalk should be raised, widened, painted or paved in a highly visible pattern.
6. On Popham for motorists travelling east the sun can be blinding; consider installing strobe sunrise-midday.
7. On Popham Road travelling east, turning right onto Scarsdale Ave. is dangerous. There is limited sight distance impeding visibility of pedestrians over the hill. Turns should not be permitted while pedestrians are crossing. No turn on red" signage should be placed lower down the hill in advance of the intersection, and duplicated on the overhead mast arm.
8. On Scarsdale Ave travelling north, drivers turning right onto Popham cannot see pedestrians crossing because the crosswalk is too far away from the intersection. Also, the delayed green signal creates a dangerous situation where pedestrians are not noticed nor is their right of way acknowledged by drivers. A large majority of drivers do not anticipate the crosswalk so far away

from where they turn; the crosswalk needs to be moved to realign the corners of the intersection. While this increases the distance pedestrians must walk to effectively cross the street, it will increase their safety by putting them in direct line of sight. There is also limited sight distance as there is an uphill grade as on northbound Scarsdale Ave approach the Popham intersection. So, all traffic lights should be red the entire time pedestrians are crossing. All crosswalk at this intersection should be raised and widened and painted in a highly visible pattern. Multiple do not turn on red signage should be displayed prior to the intersection and hanging next to the traffic signal.

9. The Popham Road crosswalk at Garth Road on the west side of Popham are not wheelchair or stroller safe. All traffic lights should be red the entire time pedestrians are crossing. All crosswalk at that intersection including Popham, Garth, and Depot Place should be raised and widened and painted in a highly visible pattern.

10. On Garth Road travelling north, drivers turning right onto Popham cannot see pedestrians crossing because the crosswalk is too far away from the intersection. The delayed green and right turns there permissible on red create a dangerous situation for pedestrians who are not visible, and/or their right of way is not acknowledged by drivers. The crosswalk needs to be moved to align with the corners of the intersection. While this may increase the distance pedestrians must walk to cross the street, it will increase their safety by putting them in direct line of sight. The limited sight distance and uphill grade for northbound Garth motorists require all traffic lights should be red the entire time pedestrians are crossing. The crosswalks should be raised and/or widened and painted in a highly visible pattern. Multiple "do not turn signs" should be displayed prominently both prior to the intersection if possible where there are line of sight issues, such as approaching the elevated section of the bridge, and hanging on the overhead mast arm.

11. Generally, the traffic situation in Scarsdale's Village Center is dangerous for pedestrians because a significantly large number of drivers do not see / obey / comprehend crosswalk signals for pedestrians. Many drivers express anger and confusion when they encounter pedestrians in and around the village, often honking and gesturing to pedestrians who have the right of way (including when crossing with a "white" walk signal). Many crosswalks are so far away from the intersections that pedestrians are not in view while motorists are making turns. Crosswalks are generally too narrow and not visible due to hills, obstructed line of sight, or faded painted roadway lines. Drivers are often observed speeding toward the train station and the Bronx River Parkway northbound entrance at the end of East Pkwy, rushing to drop off or pick up someone at the train station, or illegally parking on the bridge. Generally, these are suggested actions:

1. lower speed limit to 25mph
2. install speed bumps or raised crosswalks at frequent intervals
3. allow pedestrians additional 7 seconds to cross all directions, do not allow right turns on red or any other vehicle movement during pedestrian crossing time
4. install speed cameras
5. install additional signage indicating pedestrians have right of way
6. install double yellow lines on the Scarsdale segment of Garth Road
7. increase speeding and other moving violation fines

From: Greg Cutler <gcutler@scarsdale.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 3:01 PM

To: Madelaine Eppenstein <meppenstein@eppenstein.com>

Cc: Robert Cole <rcole@scarsdale.com>

Subject: RE: FHI Studio Project

Hi Madelaine,

The session is available online here: <https://vimeo.com/721585684>.

We are still working out the schedule for the next couple of meetings, but I assure you mobility issues are a major component of this project. Unfortunately, there is only so much time available during each meeting. I will know more about the meeting topics over the next few days. In the meantime, I encourage you and your neighbor to submit comments related to mobility issues directly to me or through the <http://Scarsdalemobility.com> website so they may inform the consultant's concepts.

Best,

Gregory Cutler, AICP

Village Planner

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From: Madelaine Eppenstein <meppenstein@eppenstein.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 1:34 PM

To: Greg Cutler <gcutler@scarsdale.com>

Cc: Robert Cole <rcole@scarsdale.com>

Subject: FHI Studio Project

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Greg,

I learned from a neighbor who attended that the village brainstorming session held on Monday May 16, 2022 was devoted to "place making" rather than the "mobility" aspect of the FHI project. I'm interested in learning whether the village has held or intends to conduct a similar session covering mobility issues.

I'd also like to mention that the video of the Board's June 14, 2022 Work Session, <https://scarsdaleny.swagit.com/play/06152022-917>, seems to be missing the FHI presentation. The only video content I've found on the website covers the noise code discussion. The audio was poor during both segments in which I was able to login.

Sincerely,

Madelaine Eppenstein

Madelaine Eppenstein

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