

# **Intersection Improvement Project: Central Avenue/Third Street/Taylor Avenue Community Workshop #1**

April 30, 2013

## **General Group Comments and Questions**

- Proposed project goals/priorities: #5 “Improve student drop-off and pick-up” should be moved as the first priority.
- There are visibility issues for motorists stopped at Third Street traveling southbound.
- The green crosswalks are confusing and will not work for teenagers. Bicyclists may have a false sense of security. When going to Third Street in the green crosswalk, you are riding on the wrong side of Third Street. When bicyclists walk their bicycle in the green crosswalk, they are a pedestrian yet are not in the pedestrian crosswalk. Bicyclists need to follow vehicle rules.
- A marked crosswalk is desired along the eastern crossing of Central Avenue.
- Want to see traffic lights – kids would wait for the lights.
- In-pavement lighted crosswalks are desired.
- Red beacon lights are desired.
- Bicyclists can use limited access pedestrian walkway in the concept ideas.
- One lane of Central Avenue westbound is created with these concepts; need to move barrier to allow for two lanes.
- Install an exit driveway out of the westernmost parking lot at Encinal High School, and make this driveway right-turn only.
- Provide a mid-block crossing in front of Encinal High School entrance on Central Avenue.
- Provide in-pavement crosswalk lights for all crosswalks.
- Provide a westbound left-turn lane on Central Avenue at Third Street.

## **Break-out Group Comments and Questions**

### ***Break-out Groups – Table #1***

- Concern – Driving down Third Street toward the school – turning onto Taylor Avenue – visibility is very poor.
- Too many people are speeding on Central Avenue towards the former Naval Air Station.
- Visibility turning eastbound on Central Avenue towards Webster Street is poor if cars are speeding.
- Concern about right turn from Central Avenue to Taylor Avenue – dangerous for pedestrians.
- Can parking on Central Avenue be a drop-off zone?
- Why are no traffic lights proposed?
- Why is there not a crosswalk across Central Avenue from Taylor Avenue?
- Need a formal drop-off and pick-up of students – community service for students to help off load students.
- Green bike lane is too confusing for students – should they ride? Not ride? Walk?
- Install a bike lane on Central Avenue.
- Vote: Concept 1 = 0; Concept 2 = 0; Concept 3 = 1; Concept 4 = 1

### ***Break-out Groups – Table #2***

- The afternoon seems to be more of a congestion problem – after the afternoon school dismissal.
- Move the proposed project goals/priorities #5 “Improve student drop-off and pick-up” as the second highest priority goal.
- Consider a roundabout.
- Consider a stop sign on Central Avenue.
- Consider a traffic light that becomes a blinking yellow light during the midday.
- Green crosswalk: the majority of the group expressed concern about the green crosswalks, and felt that they could be implemented when others in town are installed in conjunction with a publicity and educational campaign. No other green bike lanes have pavement stop markings.
- Third Street is not an existing Class III bike route.
- Concept #1: the no left-turn restriction from Central Avenue is confusing because it is unclear if turning onto Taylor Avenue would be allowed.
- Concept #2 has free right turn issues yet is better than Concept #1.
- Concept #4 may cause issues on Fourth Street, which is narrow with parking on both sides. More motorists use it after the signal at Central Avenue/Fourth Street was installed.
- Restrict left-turn movements from Central Avenue traveling eastbound towards Webster Street only during student drop-off and pick-up.
- The concepts provide safer pedestrian crossings of Third Street due to more constrained westbound movements from Central Avenue.
- The intersection is not a problem during the midday.
- The smaller parking lot is easier to access; the larger parking lot needs a separate entrance/exit because it is too constrained.

### ***Break-out Groups – Table #3***

- Move the proposed project goals/priorities #5 “Improve student drop-off and pick-up” as the highest priority goal.
- Is the future bike lane on Central Avenue affected by proposals?
- Volunteers from the school to assist with pedestrian crossings.
- Double parking is an issue.
- Mornings are an issue for 30 minutes; afternoons are an issue for 15 minutes; lunch also is an issue.
- Add a crosswalk on the east leg of Central Avenue.
- Change/block access for the small easterly faculty parking lot during the mornings and afternoons.
- Add exit for the westerly parking lot to provide separate in and out driveways.
- Concept #1: Like the median at Taylor Avenue/Central Avenue but eliminate the crosswalk through it.
- Concept #2: Add hardscape to make clear right only – like at South Shore Shopping Center. What do the residents think?
- Concept #2 is less preferred than Concept #1.
- Concepts 3 and 4: Concern that cul-de-sac will encourage drop-offs at cul-de-sac within the intersection and will complicate pedestrian crossings and create confusion.
- Concepts 3 and 4: Move crosswalk on Third Street – north side – to the south to improve visibility.
- Support no left turns from Central Avenue to Third Street traveling eastbound in the mornings and afternoons.
- How do bicyclists on the north/south access the green crosswalks? Concerns about bicyclist safety.
  - The participants did not like any of the cul-de-sac options.
- Consider other options such as:
  - Traffic signal
  - Change parking lots at the school to improve student drop-off and pick-up
  - Traffic circle / roundabout
  - Make temporary improvement with wheel stop permanent

## **Individual Written and Verbal Comments and Questions**

### ***Crossing Guards***

- The only solution which will actually improve safety is one that the school or City has already begun to implement: putting a crossing guard at the crosswalks. The crossing guard---or two crossing guards---should handle foot traffic not only across Central to the high school but across Taylor. As is often the way with teenagers who are just beginning to express their independence, many students deliberately walk in front of cars trying to turn right from Central onto 3rd. To my knowledge (I've lived here 20 years) no one has ever been hit crossing 3rd (or Central) at this intersection but that is primarily due to driver forbearance, not student care. I think that a crossing guard could solve the problem...could because it is possible teenagers will deliberately disregard either him or her. (Bob Mandel) (Bob Mandel)
- Having the school resource officer there to continue to direct traffic in the mornings would help to encourage drivers to obey the new regulations. (Jerry Juhala)

### ***Green Crosswalks - Green***

- I think the existing crosswalks we have now are satisfactory and adding a new "Green Bike Lane" will only be confusing and potentially dangerous. The other option is for bicyclists to act as a motor vehicle and proceed through the intersection with the cars and then turn left into the school parking lot with the other vehicles. Of course that leaves them vulnerable to oncoming traffic as well. (Jerry Juhala)
- Painted signs do not work - after the first time, it will be ignored. (Susan Hodges)

### ***Crosswalks / Street Crossings***

- But one thing we have not discussed is the pedestrians crossing at the other end, Lincoln Avenue and Central Avenue. If more cars go to Central and Main, they will also be conflicting with the pedestrians crossing at Lincoln and Central, which currently has no traffic controls. So we are just moving the problem from one intersection to another. (Jerry Juhala)
- I'm surprised that the city is not suggesting adding a crosswalk across Central on the southern end of the intersection. Without a crosswalk there, some pedestrians are forced to go way out of their way to get to the southwest corner, and I'm sure there's a fair amount of jaywalking that occurs anyway because of that. (Robert Prinz)
- Install crosswalk from Taylor Avenue across Central Avenue to Third Street. This is the easier crossing. (Mark Dieter)
- Do you really expect the kids to walk across three streets to go to school? No way - they will go straight across the street to school. (Susan Hodges)

### ***Concept #1 – Island Median***

- Eliminate free right turn. (Mark Dieter)
- Bicycle movement may be impaired westbound on Central Avenue. Bicyclists would need to share the lane and merge with vehicles. (Lucy Gigli)

### **Concept #2 – Limited Access, Taylor Avenue**

- Add a parklet. (Donna Eyestone)
- Bicycle movement may be impaired westbound on Central Avenue. Bicyclists would need to share the lane and merge with vehicles. (Lucy Gigli)
- Is best for Taylor Avenue residents. (John Piziali)

### **Concept #3 – Exit Only, Taylor Avenue**

- Add a crosswalk on the east side of Central Avenue (Donna Eyestone)
- Is livable - not my favorite. (John Piziali)
- Perhaps have Westbound Taylor be a one way street between 4th and 3rd, and with a right-turn-only at the corner of 3rd. (Susie Brown)

### **Concept #4 – Taylor Avenue Cul-de-sac**

- Absolutely not – would cut off access – prefers the grid system. (John Piziali)
- Removes nine movements - less traffic. (Steve Tung Le)

### **Concepts – General**

- I will assume that the “Raised Curb Island” that is shown near Taylor Avenue is not something that can be driven over. This creates a choke point for vehicles traveling to school where about 30 percent of them are turning left onto Third Street to go to the rear of the school. If this Raised Curb cannot be driven over, then it will only take one car wanting to turn left to bring all the traffic to a halt. (Jerry Juhala)
- The answer is to make a dedicated left turn lane to allow cars to stay separated that want to turn left onto Third Street. (Jerry Juhala)

### **Enforcement**

- Increase traffic enforcement on Central to slow traffic. (Mark Dieter)
- I like the enforcement. (Steve Tung Le)

### **Immediate Improvements – Hatch Markings Triangle Area**

- I think that the grid that has been painted on Taylor Avenue is a bad idea and will increase congestion. It is too wide. Its current configuration means that anyone trying to turn right from Central Avenue onto Third Street must stop and wait for all traffic which is backed up as drivers wait for students to walk across Central Avenue so it actually increases inconvenience. I think the grid (if it is necessary at all) should be narrowed so that there is actually a right turn lane available. However, I surmise that the intent of the grid is exactly to slow traffic and actually force people to stop if there's a backup on Central Avenue. I can understand that from the perspective of student safety. (Bob Mandel)

### **Immediate Improvements – Raised Curbs/Hatch Markings**

- Congestion of vehicles leaving the parking lot has increased due to the inability of vehicles to pass when at least two vehicles are attempting a left turn onto Third Street. So conflicts are reduced but congestion is increased. And along with congestion comes driver frustration. (Jerry Juhala)

### ***Student Drop-off / Pick-up***

- Construct a new driveway at northwest Encinal High School parking lot. (Wendell Stewart)
- My early morning observation is seeing illegal u-turns on Third Street, IN the intersection of Santa Clara Avenue and Third Street, but also in the short block of Third Street between Santa Clara Avenue and Central Avenue. (Susie Brown)
- I like the school drop-off zone using the school front parking lot. (Steve Tung Le)

### ***Traffic Circle / Roundabout***

- Consider a traffic circle/rotary (Donna Eyestone)
- Consider a traffic circle or roundabout (Tim Rumrill)

### ***Traffic Signal or Stop Sign***

- I would suggest also adding a push-button or detector-actuated HAWK beacon ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HAWK\\_beacon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HAWK_beacon)) be installed there to give both pedestrians and bicyclists a clear and legal right of way and to ensure that car traffic stops and yields to them. (Robert Prinz)
- Stop sign or light to stop traffic along Central at a minimum, during school traffic hours. (Alex Dannenbaum)
- Consider a traffic signal. (Tim Rumrill)
- Consider a traffic light. (Wendell Stewart)
- I like the traffic lights. (Steve Tung Le)
- The safest way for the students, and to keep the flow of the cars , install a three-way traffic light like we have at Encinal - Sherman- Alameda St. (Caroline Ardourel)

### ***Turn Restrictions – No Left Turn from Central Avenue***

- A No Left Turn Sign would greatly help this area. Placement of the sign would be key so that it can be seen by the drivers at all times. (Jerry Juhala)

### ***Visibility***

- The curve to the west on Central Avenue makes it difficult to see. (Donna Eyestone)