

West Windsor Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance

Mayor Shing-Fu Hsueh
271 Clarksville Rd.
West Windsor, NJ 08550

November 14, 2006

Dear Mayor Hsueh,

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Robert Kenny,
Esq.,
Counsel

This letter regards proposed recommendations for pedestrian improvements to Clarksville Road in the vicinity of the Avalon Watch apartment complex and the Village Shoppes. The West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance (WWBPA) conducted an educational walk at this location on Thursday November 9th during the evening rush hour to focus awareness and attention on this dangerous pedestrian crossing. Joining us on this walk were Mercer County Engineer Greg Sandusky, Mercer County Transportation Engineer George Fallat, Township Council Members Heidi Kleinman and Linda Geevers, eight WWBPA Trustees and members, and ten residents of Avalon Watch. Several residents of Avalon Watch who had just disembarked from the NJ transit bus #976 from the Princeton Junction Train station also joined in the discussion.

Being out in this location during the evening rush hour was very informative, particularly as we had many members of the Avalon Watch community sharing their concerns and experiences with us. While there, we watched a number of residents attempt to cross Clarksville Road, including passengers of the #976 bus. Avalon Watch residents who take the #976 bus are let off in two locations in this area, across from each of the two entrances to the apartment complex. The dark conditions of the road together with the constant flow of traffic moving at or above 45 mph made clear the dangers of such a crossing. The residents shared their concerns with Greg Sandusky and George Fallat, and we all brainstormed about potential solutions to the problem. It was effective to have Mr. Sandusky and Mr. Fallat present during this walk and it was obvious that they are receptive to the need to remedy this dangerous situation.

I'd like to share the recommendations and course of action that we came up with as a group that evening. It was clear to everyone that a safe crosswalk is needed. The optimal location for the crosswalk would be from the existing curb cut on the Village Shoppes side of Clarksville Road (which aligns with a sidewalk that leads into the parking lot) to the Avalon Watch side of the road, just south of the entrance road to the complex. (Please see attached photograph). The crosswalk would have pedestrian-activated lights embedded in the road surface (similar to those the county has installed in Princeton). The embedded lights would be coordinated with lighting to warn oncoming automotive traffic from either direction. The road would be narrowed in this location by the installation of a median/pedestrian refuge island. It was also recommended that the shoulders of the road be more clearly striped.

The West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance is a private non-profit organization whose mission is to promote bicycling and walking in West Windsor Township, emphasizing access, education, mobility, and safety

P.O. Box 625, West Windsor, New Jersey 08550
www.princetonol.com/groups/wwbpa

In order to construct a crosswalk in this location, the County will need to convince the NJDOT that there are compelling reasons for a mid-block crossing. The County would like our help in providing these compelling reasons by providing a package of support material. In this package would be a letter from the WWBPA, addressed to Mr. Sandusky, stating the need for the crosswalk. Mr. Sandusky felt that having the letter come from a group of concerned residents would have significant impact. Also included would be any supportive data we could provide, including the number of apartment units at Avalon Watch (512 units we have since determined) and the number of Avalon Watch residents who take the #976 bus to the train station. Mr. Sandusky also suggested that a letter of support for the crosswalk from Chief of Police Pica would be also important to include and that it should state that the West Windsor Police Dept. would enforce the law requiring motorists to stop for pedestrians within the crosswalk. We also think a township resolution in support of the proposed improvements would be helpful, and would like to include a resolution in this package. We are now working on a draft of this resolution, which we will submit for your review.

There is another recommendation and it is one that the Township can act on right away. It became clear that poor lighting contributes to the dangerous crossing of Clarksville Road during the evening rush hour, particularly at the two locations where the #976 bus lets off passengers. We recommend that the Township request the installation of streetlights on the utility poles in each of these locations (utility poles A62737 and B62742). This can be done immediately, without the need for county or state approval. Improved lighting will greatly increase the safety of residents disembarking from the #976 bus and attempting this dangerous crossing.

We know you share our concern about this dangerous pedestrian crossing. We look forward to working with you, your staff, Chief Pica, and Township Council in helping to initiate a process for improving pedestrian safety on Clarksville Road. The improved street lighting would be a first important and early step, to be followed as soon as possible by the installation of a safe pedestrian-activated crosswalk and pedestrian refuge island. Clearly, we all want the same thing- to ensure the safety of pedestrians in our town. Let's work together to expedite and implement these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Ken Carlson
President

Cc: Chris Marion, Business Administrator; Pat Ward, Coordinator of Community Development; Jim Parvesse, Township Engineer; Linda Geever, Town Council Member; Heidi Kleinman, Town Council Member; Will Anklowitz, Town Council Member; Franc Gambatese, Town Council Member; Charlie Morgan, Town Council Member; Greg Sandusky Mercer County Engineer; George Fallat, Mercer County Transportation Engineer; Joseph Pica, Chief of Police; and Trustees of the WWBPA

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Proposed location of crosswalk



1st stop of 976 bus & utility pole A62737

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