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# The Times

## **A close call spurs push for crosswalk to protect walkers**

**Apartments across from shopping center**

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**BY KEVIN SHEA**

WEST WINDSOR -- At dusk during a rainstorm Monday evening, Junyue Li and his wife, Xiuyuan Xiao, started across Clarksville Road from the Village Square shopping center while pushing their granddaughter Amanda in a stroller.

The couple, in their 70s, were headed to their apartment in Avalon Watch, directly across the street, after picking up Amanda, who turned 4 on Wednesday, from the Happy School child care center.

At the same time, Alan Edenzon pulled his car out of the shopping center and headed north on Clarksville Road.

Seconds later, Edenzon struck the adults in the northbound lane, and in a moment of sacrifice, Xiao pushed Amanda's stroller forward, out of the path of the car, police said.

Xiao broke a leg in the impact, and Li suffered scratches and a minor head injury when the car's mirror clipped him and knocked him to the ground. The stroller tipped over, but Amanda was unharmed. Edenzon was not hurt.

If the circumstances had been a bit different -- had Edenzon been driving at full speed or if Xiao hadn't saved Amanda from injury -- the accident could have been a tragedy, Police Chief Joe Pica said. "This accident could have had devastating results," he said.

Township resident Ken Carlson wants to prevent such a scenario from ever occurring for pedestrians and motorists.

He wants Mercer County to construct a crosswalk in the area for the residents of Avalon Watch, and others, and he wants better lighting.

Township officials agree and say a plan is in the works.

"This has been a dangerous crossing for years," said Carlson, president of the West Windsor Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance.

Carlson said there is a 550-unit apartment complex right across from a shopping center with a child care center, and the nearest official crossing is about a half-mile away. And, an NJ Transit bus makes a stop at the shopping center.

The accident "underscores the problem," Carlson said. "This just points out the absurdity of the situation."

Carlson was not yet aware of the crash on Monday night when he presented the township council with a letter updating the group's effort on attaining the crosswalk

Township Engineer James Parveese said plans include a pedestrian-activated crossing, and at least a center island for pedestrians to seek refuge halfway.

Parveese said the township also is working on installing lights.

"There's a lot going on (with this)" Parveese said.

One of the major steps, the officials say, is the backing of the police department.

Pica said he's all for the changes.

"You do have people that naturally cross that street," Pica said. "In my opinion, with lighting, there's no downside to that."

"As for the crosswalk, on the surface, it looks like a very good idea. I have my traffic officers looking into it, but so far it's very legitimate," he said.

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