

West Windsor Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance

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

April 26, 2007

Dear Mayor Hsueh,

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On Tuesday, April 17th, twenty-one West Windsor residents took part in an educational walk of Canal Pointe Boulevard in the vicinity of Princeton Market Fair. The walk was organized by the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance (WWBPA) to examine conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists along this busy roadway. Participating in the walk were seven residents who live in the communities along Canal Pointe Blvd, several elected officials, and Trustees and members of the WWBPA. The group met at Market Fair, and went on a 40 minute walk along Canal Pointe Boulevard between the Marriot Residence Inn and Meadow Road, crossing the roadway several times and generally observing the pedestrian and bicycle conditions firsthand.

The group agreed that Canal Pointe Boulevard has serious flaws regarding safety and mobility for pedestrians and cyclists and is in need of immediate short-term amelioration as well as long-term reconstruction. Conditions for pedestrians crossing Canal Pointe Boulevard are dangerous and in fact represent a real lost opportunity, since the neighborhoods along Canal Pointe Boulevard contain a high density of residents living near significant retail and business centers, yet there is a clear lack of safe pedestrian crossings and bicycle facilities.

The group fully endorses the recommendations from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan developed for West Windsor by the Transportation Planners Orth-Rodgers and the Mayor's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, for placing Canal Pointe Boulevard on a "road diet". Such a road diet would reduce the automobile travel lanes from two in each direction to one in each direction with a middle turning lane, would include a grass median (which would put the "boulevard" back into Canal Pointe Boulevard), and would include high visibility pedestrian crossings and bicycle lanes, all of which would result in reduced automobile travel speeds, safer pedestrian crossings, and safe bicycle facilities. The Township has budgeted a traffic analysis of Canal Pointe Blvd. this year.

Following are observations of existing conditions and proposed recommendations:

Existing Conditions

- Existing crosswalk at Mayfair Drive. This is the only crosswalk along the entire length of Canal Pointe Blvd from Alexander Road to Emmons Drive; it is inadequate in multiple ways:
 - No curb cuts, making this ADA non-compliant and impossible to use with a baby stroller or shopping cart

- The crosswalk is not directly linked to the sidewalk- there is an intervening grass median
- Inadequate lighting. There is a single light that is not at the correct height to illuminate pedestrians in the crosswalk
- The crosswalk is not correctly situated- it should be located closer to Mayfair Drive
- The local residents do not feel safe in the crosswalk, particularly without the option of safely stopping halfway in the crosswalk
- This crosswalk is used by some Colonnade Pointe residents but not by Canal Pointe residents- it's located too far south for Canal Pointe residents
- Intersection of Canal Pointe Blvd. with Meadow Road. This intersection is completely pedestrian unfriendly and currently dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists:
 - There are no crosswalks whatsoever at this intersection
 - No signage to alert motorists of pedestrians
 - No curb cuts
- Intersection of Heritage Drive:
 - No curb cuts
 - No crosswalks
 - This would be a good location for an additional crossing of Canal Pointe Blvd and is where many people cross already
- Need for additional safe crosswalks at:
 - Farber Road
 - Carillon Blvd.
- NJ Transit 600 Bus Route
 - Stops at Carillon Blvd but there is no safe way for commuters to cross Canal Pointe Blvd at the bus stop
 - Need for a bus refuge
- Lack of bicycle facilities along Canal Pointe Blvd- cyclists have no choice but to bike in the road
- Lack of curb cuts through the islands at either entrance to Market Fair, making it difficult for pedestrians to navigate these entrances
- Automobiles exceed the 35mph speed limit making conditions unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists

Recommendations:

- Adopt recommendation of Orth-Rodgers Planners and The Mayor's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and place Canal Pointe Blvd. on a road diet
 - Reduce travel lanes from two in each direction to one in each direction, with a middle turning lane and bicycle lanes
 - Construct pedestrian refuge islands at all pedestrian crossings
 - Create high visibility crosswalks with pedestrian activated signals
- Create pedestrian crossings at intersection of Meadow Road and Canal Pointe Boulevard
 - Stripe crosswalks
 - Install signage alerting motorists of pedestrian crossings
 - Install appropriate lighting for pedestrians
 - Medium term: install pedestrian-activated signal crossing
 - Longer term: install a traffic signal at this location

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- Improve existing crosswalk at Mayfair Drive
 - Make curb cuts and connect crosswalk to existing sidewalks
 - Install appropriate lighting for pedestrians
 - Install signage to alert motorists to pedestrians
- Create new crosswalks across Canal Pointe Blvd
 - Heritage Drive
 - Farber Road
- Improve intersection of Carrillon Blvd and Canal Pointe Blvd
 - Install crosswalks and signage
 - Install a bus shelter for commuters who take the NJ transit 600 bus
 - Install a traffic signal at this intersection
- Paint crosswalks parallel with Canal Pointe Blvd at:
 - Heritage Drive
 - Farber Road
 - Carrillon Blvd
- Make islands at entrances to Market Fair pedestrian friendly
 - Cut out paths in islands so pedestrians can walk from sidewalk straight through intersections
 - Paint crosswalks

We know you share our concern about bicycle and pedestrian safety in our town and we look forward to working with you to make Canal Pointe Blvd a bicycle and pedestrian safe roadway. Due to the dangerous current conditions, we urge the Township administration and the Township Council to take the appropriate actions to make Canal Pointe Boulevard a bicycle and pedestrian safe roadway. We owe it to the thousands of residents who reside in the communities along Canal Pointe Boulevard. This is especially true in light of the current discussion of “smart growth” development in the redevelopment area- we have attractive high density housing along Canal Pointe Boulevard; now let’s be smart and provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between this housing and nearby retail and business centers.

Ken Carlson

President of the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance
8 Wilson Way South, West Windsor

Cc: Chris Marion, Business Administrator; Pat Ward, Coordinator of Community Development; Jim Parvesse, Township Engineer; Linda Geevers, Town Council Member; Heidi Kleinman, Town Council Member; Will Anklowitz, Town Council Member; Franc Gambatese, Town Council Member; Charlie Morgan, Town Council Member; Joseph Pica, Chief of Police; and Trustees and Advisors of the WWBPA