

## Volunteers inventory WW intersections to assist cyclists, walkers

By Greg Forester, Staff Writer Friday, May 27, 2008



Road and Woodmere Way. From left are Scott Belouin, a volunteer, Chris Scherer and Joe Albanese. Staff photo by Mark Czajkowski

**WEST WINDSOR** — Members of the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance, volunteers from McGraw-Hill, and Mayor Shing-Fu Hsueh took to the streets Thursday and completed an inventory of 199 of the township's intersections.

Called the Safe Routes Inventory, Thursday's efforts concentrated on gathering information about the deficiencies of various intersections and how those deficiencies affect the travel of pedestrians and cyclists.

McGraw-Hill employees got involved as part of the company's fifth annual Global Volunteer Day. Following the completion of the inventory by company employees and WWBPA members, WWBPA President Ken Carlson said it was clear the township's intersections need a lot of work.

"We didn't find a single intersection that passed muster," Mr. Carlson said. Intersections were assessed on the basis of whether they had crosswalks, curb cuts complying with

the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, walk signals, the timing of walk signals, and the existence of pedestrian signage, among other things. Many of the deficiencies are the result of ever-changing laws, different municipal administrations, and the gradual development of the township, according to Mr. Carlson.

"It's really not the township's fault," he said.

Chris Scherer, a WWBPA vice president, a McGraw-Hill employee and former West Windsor resident, helped organize the partnership between his company and the WWBPA.

He said the group plans to incorporate the data into a geographic information system. That will allow people who bicycle or walk around town to plan their routes, with an idea of what they can expect when navigating township intersections.

"We hope to take the process and use it as a model for other communities," Mr. Scherer said.

The uploading of the inventory data onto the WWBPA's computer system and the creation of online walkability maps will be the first operation of its kind in the nation, Mr. Carlson said.

About 18 McGraw-Hill employees volunteered their time Thursday, with activity taking place between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Mr. Scherer said. Mr. Carlson said the group included about 12 WWBPA members and West Windsor residents, with the entire group gathering at McGraw-Hill in the morning for an orientation.

Following the meet-up, participants were broken up into groups of two that fanned out across the township, armed with checklists to compile intersection data.

The WWBPA plans to share the compiled data with municipal, county and state authorities as the group continues its efforts in identifying problems and getting the appropriate entities to address them, according to members.

Intersections will get attention from the group based on their proximity to schools, the Princeton Junction train station, and employment centers, according to Mr. Scherer, because of how those places correspond to increased bicycle and pedestrian activity.