

WEST WINDSOR & PLAINSBORO NEWS

WalkSet for May 13 May 2, 2008

Members of the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance and residents who live along Bear Brook Road in the Windsor Haven and Estates at Princeton Junction developments are hoping to draw attention to the dangerous road conditions pedestrians and bicyclists experience as they try to make their way to the train station during the next walk in the West Windsor Walks series.

The walk, which will be held on Tuesday, May 13, from 5:30 until about 7 p.m. is intended to give participants — including township and county officials — a pedestrian's eye view of what it is like to walk along Bear Brook Road, and at the crossing of the Alexander Road at Bear Brook Road/Vaughn Drive on the way to the train station. Selecting rush hour as the timeframe for holding the walk will give an accurate idea of what it's to travel to and from work on a regular work day, says Ken Carlson, the alliance's president.

The idea for this particular route came from Windsor Haven resident Dan Damon, who contacted the alliance after speaking with members at the farmer's market last year, said Carlson, who points out there was a pedestrian fatality at the intersection a few years ago. He said a woman was walking back from the train station and was struck and killed by a car speeding through the intersection. "Motorists are trying to get to the train station, invariably in a hurry," Carlson says. "That crossing is dangerous."

Carlson says the route is heavily traveled by residents in both developments, but the intersection lacks the proper accommodations for those traveling by bike or foot. He says there are no bike lanes crossing Bear Brook Road, and that the one pedestrian crossing across the road near Windsor Haven is faded. There is no pedestrian refuge island, and there is a lack of signage to alert motorists to share the road.

At the end of the walk, the group's members will brainstorm recommendations based on input from residents and commuters. "We're doing it in the evening rush hour so we can actually interview commuters as they pass Bear Brook Road," he says. "That's when you hear the horror stories."

Carlson also says traffic calming improvements could be part of the recommendations, as the group has been campaigning for such measures for a lot of the roads in the township. Those recommendations, in many cases, call for reduction in travel lanes from two lanes in each direction to one in each direction with bicycle lanes.

In the past, the alliance has held walks along Alexander Road s-curve, Clarksville Road, and the Cranbury/Wallace/Route 571 intersection. "Recommendations are usually on the money, and they are usually followed up on," Carlson says.

Members of the alliance worked with the Windsor Haven homeowner's board, and the homeowner's associations at the Estates of Princeton Junction. "The local residents know these problem spots the best," he said. "Township and county officials drive by, but sometimes don't know what it's like to walk and bike in these areas."

The walk will begin at the Estates at Princeton Junction, run along Bear Brook Road through the Windsor Haven development, and end at the intersection of Bear Brook and Alexander. Participants can park on Devonshire Drive (off Winthrop Way) and meet the group at 5:30 p.m. at the intersection of Bear Brook and Winthrop Way.

Carlson said this month is also National Bike to Work month, which would also include walking to work, or walking or biking to the train station. More information can be found on the alliance's website — www.wwbpa.org.

