

**CITY OF NEWARK**  
**Newark, Delaware**

**TRAFFIC SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**CLEVELAND AVENUE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT MEETING**

**AUGUST 16, 2016**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:** A. Stuart Markham, Councilmember District 6  
Jennifer Wallace, Councilmember District 3  
Maureen Feeney-Roser, Director of Planning & Development  
Fred Nelson, Lieutenant of Newark Police Department  
Mark Luzszc, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Matt Buckley, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Joe Hofstee, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Tom Parkins, Newark Traffic Committee  
Karl Hassler, Newark Bicycle Committee  
Amy Roe, NAACP/Newark resident  
Eve Slap, Matt Slap Subaru  
James Wilson, Bike Delaware  
Vince D'Anna, Newark resident  
Jim McKelvey, Newark resident

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Coleman said the committee will be reviewing the results of DeIDOT's various analyses. Mr. Coleman said the second part of the meeting will be a discussion on the off-road trail alignment options. He asked each attendee to take one of handouts in the back of the room that provides details on the various off-road alignment options.

**2. PRESENTATION**

Mr. Buckley said one of the main locations DeIDOT was asked to review is the existing pedestrian phase at N. College Avenue and Cleveland Avenue. Mr. Buckley said this intersection is similar to Delaware Avenue at S. College Avenue where all pedestrians may move at the same time in all four directions on an exclusive phase (ie: Scramble Phase). Mr. Buckley said DeIDOT was also asked to review the option of split phasing (ie: staggered phasing or sequential phasing) on N. College Avenue where northbound and southbound would not operate simultaneously as it currently does. Additionally, as a long term improvement, DeIDOT was asked to look into whether the road could be widened to provide a right turn lane in the northbound direction.

Mr. Buckley said at the public workshop one suggestion was for DeIDOT to consider if you are exiting White Clay Drive or Ray Street forms in the southbound direction providing a green arrow at the end the signal cycle. The request was to review the a.m. and p.m. peak times. Mr. Buckley said the counts indicate we are serving less than 20 vehicles in the a.m. and p.m. peak that could potentially benefit. Mr. Buckley said it is likely there would be a benefit for the southbound delay, however the model indicates this would create major repercussions at the intersection.

#### N. College Avenue – “Scramble Phase”

- If pedestrians had an exclusive phase the delay at the intersection would improve. The delay would increase from 80 seconds per vehicle to 90 seconds per vehicle. The level of service would be an “F”.
- DeIDOT would likely need to implement a no right turn on red with time restrictions.
- Mr. Buckley said if both options were implemented it is likely there would be no increase in delay.

#### N. College Avenue – “Split Phasing”

- This would not allow northbound and southbound traffic to move at the same time.
- The delay is presently 90 seconds per vehicle and would increase to an average of 150 seconds per vehicle. This delay would add an additional minute of delay for each vehicle.
- If a Scramble was implemented there would be an average increase of 215 seconds per vehicle.

#### Wilbur Street

- In the Fall of 2016 (September-October), DeIDOT would like to conduct vehicular and pedestrian counts to review if a traffic signal or a full color pedestrian traffic signal is warranted.
- Joe Hoffstee is a former DeIDOT Highway Designer and Project Manager that will be responsible for updating all ADA requirements along the Cleveland Avenue corridor. DeIDOT is currently reviewing the options on Wilbur Street from an ADA standpoint due to the many constraints that exist at this location. Mr. Buckley said the traffic counts will help to determine the appropriate type of traffic control at this location.
- A pedestrian refuge island is being considered
- Parking on the south side of Cleveland Avenue will need to be addressed

### 5-leg Intersection (Margaret Street/Paper Mill Road/N. Chapel Street)

- Convert Margaret Street to one-way northbound and eliminate signalized access. This would divert traffic to Paper Mill Road to be accessed via Creek View Drive or Cleveland Avenue could be accessed to the east at Christopher Lane.
- The level of service would improve from a level “F” to a level “E”. The reduction in delay would be approximately 20 seconds.
- If signal access from Margaret Street was eliminated DeIDOT would evaluate signalizing Paper Mill Road and Creek View Drive.
- Round-a-bout – The p.m. peak was the time frame that was analyzed. It is a single lane round-a-bout. The volumes on the 4 legs of the intersection (not including Margaret Street) are almost 2 times too high from a volume standpoint. The volume delay would create a 420 second delay on average per vehicle. Mr. Buckley said with traffic volumes this high it is important that this issue is not viewed as only an a.m. peak issue or a p.m. peak issue. There would be feasibility with implementing creating a round-a-bout.

### McKees Lane

- Request for a traffic signal or accommodations for pedestrians. Mr. Buckley said this location doesn’t meet the volume criteria that would warrant a traffic signal.
- The volumes are extremely low. The level of service is an “A”.
- There is an issue with the queues. Mr. Buckley said if a signal was installed at McKees Lane to accommodate a pedestrian crossing from the north side of Cleveland Avenue to the south side, the queue in the westbound direction would extend and block off movements along Capital Trail. The queue at Capital trail extends back through McKees Lane. From a queuing standpoint this is not ideal for many reasons.

Mr. Coleman said at a recent Bike Committee meeting there was a request for a pedestrian signal further west. Mr. Buckley said the concepts provided on the presentation boards can be changed if necessary. Mr. Buckley said there may be some logical locations once the road diet is further reviewed. Mr. Buckley said if a final design was approved, the group would strategically review where pedestrian accommodations would make the most sense.

A resident asked if pedestrian and vehicular traffic was reviewed at McKees Lane. Mr. Buckley confirmed both were reviewed. Mr. Buckley said they modeled activating the phase. If this was pursued further they would need to obtain more recent counts as those used were from December of 2015. Mr. Buckley said DeIDOT would request direction on the best times to obtain these counts from the task force. A resident asked if the modeling was based on the assumption there would be no road diet and pedestrians would have to cross four lanes of traffic. Mr. Buckley said this doesn’t change the crossing distance from sidewalk to sidewalk that the pedestrian must walk.

A resident said this committee is supposed to have a representative from the Newark Housing Authority attending the meetings. The resident said the Newark Housing Authority representative previously attending the meetings has stepped down from the board. The resident asked if we have reached out to the Newark Housing Authority to replace this person. Lt. Nelson said he reached out to Maureen Jordan and she has been invited to the meetings. A resident said Don DeCollo has been replaced by the Mayor on the board.

A resident asked if anything specific has been studied or reviewed at McKees Lane. Mr. Buckley said the only item would be to obtain the current vehicular and pedestrian traffic counts at this location. Mr. Buckley said DeIDOT would need to know the best time to obtain these counts.

A resident said there appears to be no concern for pedestrians from Alder Creek crossing Cleveland Avenue. Mr. Buckley said currently pedestrians exiting Alder Creek would walk 500' to the east and cross at Porter Chevrolet. Mr. Buckley said as discussed at previous meetings, DeIDOT has modeled a pedestrian crossing at this location.

Mr. Luszcz said CSX has expressed an interest in closing the underpass at McKees Lane which happens to be their right of way. Mr. Luszcz said DeIDOT attended this evening and they care about all of these issues. He said DeIDOT realizes in accommodating pedestrians, vehicles and bicyclists along the corridor is a difficult task. Mr. Luszcz said upon implementing a traffic signal there is signal warrant criteria that must be met in order to install a traffic signal. Mr. Luszcz said it is not recommended to install a traffic signal against this guidance as it has been proven to increase collision. Mr. Luszcz said based upon DeIDOT's experience assuming Alder Creek was fully occupied based upon its size, it is very unlikely this location will meet the criteria for a traffic signal. Mr. Parkins added he frequently walks the sidewalk in front of McDonald's and although it may not be ideal he's never had a problem.

#### Capital Trail/Library Avenue/Woodlawn Avenue

- Effect of eliminating the signal at Woodlawn Avenue. Mr. Buckley said if a "Florida T" is implemented the level of service would improve from a level "F" to a level "C".
- Possibly eliminate the new double left and reduce to a single left or run a continuous through lane.
- Remove right turns on red eastbound turning off of Cleveland Avenue. This would create a slight increase in delay.
- Southbound Capital Trail turning in front of Porter Chevrolet. This Fall DeIDOT will move the stop line forward.

Mr. Buckley said with the Florida T option, the right most lane coming from the library would continue straight without having a red light. Mr. Buckley said left turns coming from Cleveland Avenue would turn into a physically separated concrete location to merge with the through lane down the road. This eliminates several signal phases that create delays.

A resident feels that Cleveland Avenue has turned into Newark's bypass. His speculation is that if the intersection efficiency is increased it is likely it will encourage more motorists and would like to see more long term solutions. Mr. Buckley said there is not much more excess capacity on the secondary intersections and would create upstream bottlenecks. Mr. Buckley said we will see people that have diverted eventually return.

### **3. OPEN DISCUSSION**

A resident asked for clarification regarding the intersection delay calculation. Mr. Buckley said it is the sum for all the delays of all the cars that want to get through the intersection in one hour during the p.m. peak.

A resident said if you're on Cleveland Avenue and turn right on to Christopher Lane and Margaret Street becomes one way, would like to know how Matt Slap delivery drivers would exit. Mr. Buckley asked if they could pull onto Margaret Street by making a right and turn down Christopher Lane heading out to Cleveland Avenue.

A resident asked for the reason as to why pedestrian scramble delays differ at various intersections. Mr. Buckley said it is the result of traffic and pedestrian volumes being different at each intersection. Mr. Buckley said N. College Avenue is one of the most congested pedestrian volume locations in the state of Delaware.

A resident said the pedestrian scramble and bicycle scramble was explained and asked why the bicycle model wasn't reviewed at all intersections. Mr. Buckley said the bicycle scramble is solely associated with the request to look into a more straight line connection to the Pomeroy Trail. The resident asked how the bicyclists would travel and where they would go. Mr. Buckley said a cyclist was time from how long it took to travel from the island at Wood Fire Pizza Shop to Matt Slap Subaru connecting the diagonal to the Pomeroy Trail.

A resident asked when the pedestrian signal button is activated how many other intersections are effected. Mr. Buckley said the pedestrian push buttons are local to that particular intersection and do not effect surrounding intersections.

A resident said at 4:30 a.m. from his house and I95 he will encounter nine (9) out of fourteen (14) red lights. Mr. Buckley said DeIDOT will provide their contact information and will review each intersection as to why this is occurring.

A resident asked if it is true that there are “dummy” pedestrian push buttons. Mr. Buckley confirmed they are not “dummy” push buttons, however this may be perceived this way depending on where it is in the signal cycle when the button is pushed.

A resident asked if there is anything that can be done with the traffic that exists exiting Newark Shopping Center heading north on Chapel Street due to the heavy volume at this location. Mr. Buckley said DelDOT has asked CSX to make it full wide throat to provide more space for a wider right turn lane, a wider left turn lane and a wider through lane.

Mr. Markham in regard to the conversation regarding replacing the bridge, removing the bridge obstructions and providing a longer left turn lane asked if it is known how this would affect the intersection. Mr. Buckley said one option would be to unconstrain the left turn lanes and look into the queue blockage within the traffic model. Mr. Buckley said once the funds for this project are resolved, DelDOT would provide the traffic numbers at the table. Mr. Markham said it is very important to replace and fix the bridge as many are very frustrated with this. Mr. Buckley said Chapel Street and Casho Mill Bridge are the two worst bridges in Delaware.

A resident said according engineering literature it's been proven that round-a-bouts can actually increase the level of service when compared to signaled intersections, however he understands that it only applies up to a certain level of volume and once the threshold is surpassed then this is no longer the case. Mr. Buckley said once you get to a volume to capacity around 70-80% they express caution. Mr. Buckley provide the example of a gear that will lock up.

Mr. Buckley said with the road diet one through lane would be eliminated in each direction, leaving one through lane in each direction with a two way turn pocket in the middle. Mr. Buckley said as the final design progresses we would look for locations where a single left turn pocket would be beneficial. At Winner Boulevard for example, the two way left turn lane becomes a striped median and left turn lane to turn onto Winner Boulevard. The road diet will reduce the amount of rear end collisions. A resident asked if motorists making right turns have been considered. Mr. Buckley said confirmed right turners have been considered and said there are far less conflicts with right turn movements compared to left turn movements. A road diet is designed to serve all type of modes of travel and has proven to reduce the amount of collisions.

Mr. Buckley said the level of service at the signalized intersections were a level of service C and would expect it to stay a level of service C. The road diet is much more beneficial from a bicycle/pedestrian standpoint. This concept would provide on street bicycle lanes with the benefit of a two way left turn lane. As the design progresses, it would be best to look for locations where the two way turn pocket could be eliminated and pedestrian refuge island could be installed that would allow pedestrians to cross shorter distances across the road.

Mr. Buckley said the model doesn't currently reflect this, however in the near vicinity of McKees Lane a mid-block crossing treatment could be added. Mr. Buckley said if you use the "Florida T" option, a double left isn't necessary needed and a pedestrian refuge island could be installed at McKees Lane.

A resident asked what the time frame is for construction and when decisions would need to be made for recommended designs. Mr. Buckley said the striping plans for road diet are often the last element in the process. Mr. Buckley said hypothetically speaking, if construction were to begin in Summer or Fall of 2017 they would need striping plans completed several months prior in order to be included in the contractors bid package. Mr. Buckley said if a solid recommendation is approved by the Traffic Committee and City Council they would need final recommendations by the Winter of 2016.

Ms. Feeney-Roser asked if the slides would be available on the website. Mr. Coleman said they will be able to be viewed on the website.

A resident asked what specifically was being done to address the traffic on Cleveland Avenue between Paper Mill Road and N. College Avenue. Mr. Coleman said this is not a DeIDOT decision and result there has been no modeling associated with this issue. Mr. Coleman said the plan is to reach out to the two homeowners have handicap parking spaces on the street to determine what accommodation could be made, if any, for parking in the rear of the house in order to determine if parking could be eliminated on the street. Mr. Coleman said if the parking spaces were eliminated this would provide enough space for a 4' bike lane with a 3' buffer that would be used to store refuse carts.

Mr. Coleman said there is another option aside from the road diet which is the construction of an off road trail. Mr. Coleman over the past few months, the Public Works Department has developed alternative alignments for an off road trail. All alignments are located north of Cleveland Avenue.

- Alignment 1 - South of White Clay Creek (along backside of dealerships)
- Alignment 2 - North of White Clay Creek (cross at McKees Lane to Karpinski Park)
- Alignment 3 – Crossing over White Clay Creek running down on the north side of creek to the Old Paper Mill Park.
- Dorothy Miller Park - Alternate Alignment (could be attached to all three alignments)

#### Alignment #1 - Pros

- Utilizes the back of dealerships and comes out at the mill at white clay and utilizes the exiting parking lot and drive aisles to get out to Paper Mill Road
- Shortest alternative to Cleveland Avenue and more likely to be used by commuters
- Requires the least amount of new construction
- Provides easy access to Alder Creek residents
- Wouldn't require a new bridge over the White Clay Creek
- Synergy's with changes to Margaret Street

#### Alignment #1 – Cons

- Requires private property owner cooperation (Porter Nissan and Mill at White Clay)
- Porter Nissans back parking lot fence is approx.15-20' from the creek. This would require an elevated boardwalk and may not be allowed by the National Park Service
- Portions of the path are within parking and drive aisles at the Mill at White Clay
- Would require the signal at Paper Mill Road
- Doesn't provide connections to points north
- Does utilize onsite facilities at McKees Lane

#### Alignment #2 - Pros

- Utilizes Old Paper Mill Road and Karpinski Park
- Doesn't require private property owner cooperation
- Wouldn't require the signal at Paper Mill Road
- Provides connections to points north
- Provides easy access to Alder Creek residents
- Gets to utilize existing infrastructure

#### Alignment #2 – Cons

- Longest alternative to Cleveland Avenue
- Does require the bridge and may require widening or additional facilities along the reservoir frontage
- Does utilize on street facilities within McKees Lane and Old Paper Mill Road

### Alignment #3 - Pros

- Wouldn't require the signal at Paper Mill Road
- Provides connections to points north
- Provides easy access to Alder Creek residents
- Most scenic and lowest street route trail users
- Can be coordinated with Old Paper Park master plan

### Alignment #3 – Cons

- Longer than alignment 1, however shorter than alignment 2
- Does require private property owner cooperation
- Does require the bridge and may require widening Old Paper Mill Road
- Does utilize on street facilities from McKees Lane and Old Paper Mill Road

### Dorothy Miller Alternative - Pros

- Can be added to all three other alignments
- It is more scenic and lower stress

### Dorothy Miller Alternative - Cons

- Would require a spur route over to McKees Lane to connect to Alder Creek
- More costly than utilizing existing McKees Lane
- Require two small additional bridges in Dorothy Miller Park

A resident asked if the off road paths would become part of the city parks. Mr. Coleman confirmed they would become part of the city parks.

A resident asked if there would be public access points in residential neighborhoods. Mr. Coleman said they could connect Karpinski Park and could approach a resident that may agree to having a path to access.

Mr. Markham asked if there are erosion issues along the creek. Mr. Coleman said there are some erosion issues specifically off of Ranch court and would give an opportunity to clean some of this up. Mr. Coleman said he is aware of some small tributaries that would require bridges.

Mr. Luszcz suggested a meeting within a month to discuss solutions. A resident would like to schedule a site visit. Mr. Coleman will send out a doodle poll for the committee to pick dates that would be best for everyone's schedule. Mr. Coleman agreed to scheduling the site visit and meeting on the same date.

Mr. Coleman asked if there were any further questions or comments. There being no further questions or comments the meeting adjourned.