

**MARIEMONT PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 13, 2013**

The Mariemont Planning Commission met Wednesday February 13, 2013. Mr. Stich called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Mr. Miller, and Mr. Sturtz and Mayor Policastro. Also in attendance was the Building Commissioner, Dennis Malone.

The Public Hearing was to discuss the inclusion or the exclusion of 'bump outs' on Wooster Pike as part of the Safe Routes of School grant application. Building Commissioner Malone said Code regulations in the Village state that the Planning Commission has the authority to approve or disapprove of any changes in the right-of-way of the street systems.

Ms. Caroline Duffy, Project Manager with Barr & Prevost, indicated she has been working on the Safe Routes to School with the Village of Mariemont. The Village has received \$321,000 in construction funds from the State of Ohio and the Federal Government for the Safe Routes to School improvements. We have to make a decision on the striping along Wooster Pike. The traffic lanes on Wooster Pike run between 15 and 18 feet in width. A standard travel lane along Wooster Pike is 12' for automobiles. We wanted to put a 5' bike lane but we do not have a consistent 5' on Wooster Pike. She cited documentation from ODOT that correlates impact speed with pedestrian injuries. The lower the speed of vehicles the less chance of pedestrian fatalities. With Safe Routes to School we focus on reducing speed. As traffic lanes are narrowed speed of vehicles decrease. She did a short presentation to give the members background information on what other communities, such as Pickerington, Ohio, Oakley, Ohio and areas along Galbraith Road have done such as implementing the proposed curb extensions or bump-outs. The striping is to visually narrow the lane and discourage vehicles from traveling within. The purpose of the curb extension is to shorten the path the pedestrian has to walk on. A crash happens when there is a conflict point. By shortening the pedestrian path the chances of a crash go down because there is not as much pavement to cross. She showed two proposed plans for implementation one being brought forward by Councilman Scheeser.

The first proposal has the travel lane next to the median with the excess being striped on the outside. It will shorten up the length crosswalks. The other reason the crosswalks are made the way they are is for the blind residents so it is straight to cross and therefore more safe. She read from Federal Highways Administration regarding pedestrian safety impact with curb extensions which said curb extensions contribute to significant reduction in the average number of vehicles that pass a waiting pedestrian before yielding to the pedestrian. This reduction is best explained by the increase visibility offered by the curb extension. Pedestrians tend to take more risks the longer they have to wait. The curb extensions increase vehicles stopping by 20% to allow pedestrians to cross. It is a safety aspect. Safe Routes to School is about increasing walking and riding to school which means improving our infrastructures to make them safer so parents feel safe allowing their children to walk and ride to school.

The second option, which was brought forward due to questions presented by Councilman Scheeser, presents the curb bulbs on the median on the inside lanes. The striped lanes would also be on the inside lanes next to the median. She and Engineer Ertel met with bike coordinator representatives from OKI and presented them with both options. The OKI representative preferred with the second option. She also made contact with the Planning Engineer of District 8, Jay Hamilton, who also preferred option two. It is preferred because vehicles will be able to maneuver around the bicyclists.

Police Chief Hines said the vehicle would have to drive in the striped area which they are not supposed to be in. Ms. Duffy agreed but said the travel lane is 14' and should be wide enough that the vehicles could go around the bicyclists without having to go in the striped area.

Mayor Policastro said he thought some of the idea behind this proposal was to get bike through the Village. Ms. Duffy said the traffic lanes are 14' which does allow for bicyclists as a shared lane use. On both proposals the bicyclists will travel on the right side of the road. The only difference is where the striping will go for the excess pavement. Mayor Policastro said he would like to do without the bumpouts and go with striping. Mr. Sturtz concurred.

Mr. Stich said the primary advantage of the bumpouts is to shorten the distance a pedestrian has to walk and it provides a platform on which someone can stand and see the traffic in addition with slowing traffic down. Ms. Duffy said the Village has been very lucky to not have had a serious incident along Wooster Pike and why she is recommending the Village install the curb extensions. It is an extremely busy roadway with 21,000 vehicles going through daily.

Mayor Policastro said it has been his experience that the closer the child gets to the roadway the worse it is. He does not want to put them in the middle of the bike path.

Police Chief Hines said Councilman Wolter wanted him to express concerns that Mr. Wolter had was a child being hit by a vehicle coming up over a curb if they are standing out on a curb extension. It is more dangerous than being back on the sidewalk waiting to cross.

Mayor Policastro said for years we have tried to have a separate lane for bicyclists but do to lack of width we are going to have to share. That is what we have been doing anyway. He asked what we are gaining. He does not buy the idea that the curb extensions will make it safer for pedestrians crossing Wooster Pike by reducing the length that needs to be crossed. He does not believe this is what we asked for.

Engineer Ertel said the original plans submitted does include the curb extensions. Ms. Duffy said ODOT approved the submitted plans with the curb bulbs and striping and any changes will likely affect future funding. If the curb bulbs are removed it would be changed to all striping.

Mayor Policastro moved, seconded by Mr. Sturtz to approve the design with the striping on the curb side of the road and to eliminate the proposed curb extensions. On roll call; four ayes, no nays.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Mr. Dick Savage  
Secretary

