

Compilation of Traffic Calming Comments on Plantation Acres Neighborhood Google Group

We're in the 300 block of Carol. I'm out of town so can't attend the meeting tomorrow, but I believe Walter (sans Mabel) will. He may agree with me but here I'm not necessarily speaking for him as well.

About changes along Carol: Closure at Fayetteville would certainly add inconvenience to our routine and challenge deeply ingrained habit of 30+ years. HOWEVER, I would much prefer this change to the nightmare of significantly increasing traffic on our narrow and once peaceful street. I have always enjoyed watching runners, walkers, baby strollers! out the kitchen window so would hope that friendly allowances for them would remain. If it's closed off, it seems we wouldn't need sidewalks in the 300's (and perhaps 200's as well?).

On the issue of speed humps I'm all for them – big, lumpy ones – on the 100 block. I see less need for them on 200 (maybe I'm wrong here) and even less on 300, assuming the Old Fay connection is closed. Would need more between James and Main, too.

Does anyone else worry about people parking on Carol and Lisa to access HT World via the pedestrian entrance? It may seem crazy, but, it may be very appealing to some.

[--jvt]

As my wife and I are less affected than most, we would support the views of those living along Carol, Lisa and James streets. Would like to suggest that as we live near Hillsboro Rd, and see many McDougale kids riding bikes to and from school, that with the addition of the new Park, mainly for kids, the speed limit from say Lorraine St to other side of McDougale school be reduced from 35 to 30 MPH.

Ted and Marjorie Busby
103 Rainbow Dr

Thanks for the email Tim. One of us will try to be there on Saturday.

I think it would make a huge difference to dead end Carol Street at Fayetteville Road, leaving it open to bicycles and pedestrians. I don't know if there is much that can be done about James Street at this point. A sign indicating no through traffic would probably help deter vehicles from going down Carol Street as well. I hope they don't have plans to allow the new development to access the Post Office and then drive through the Post Office onto James Street. In the town meetings I recall one of the planners talking about a pedestrian/bike trail between the existing houses on Carol Street onto Lisa. They also mentioned leaving that open to maybe being a road one day. I certainly hope it's never a road - just add to the traffic.

Aja
303 Rainbow Drive

Thanks Tim, I plan to come and drag the kids along. I'm all for closing Carol St at that end, and would love sidewalks as well (but maybe that's hard to get signed off on?). We have so many young families in the neighborhood now, many of whom will be walking and riding to McDougale in the coming years. Didn't

someone recently do a count of all the children on Carol St? If so, I'd love to know the number as maybe it will help our case.

I hope as many of you all can come as possible!

~amy [Weller]

Thanks, Tim et al. I'm planning to come and would appreciate hearing from more Carol and James Street residents (and those connecting streets) as they will be most heavily affected. A few questions come to mind:

1. If Carol is closed at Fayetteville, what would that mean for the bus traffic that currently travels down Carol?
2. What impact would closing Carol have on emergency response access for police and fire? Could they still get through from Fayetteville somehow or is that not a concern?
3. Assuming Carol is closed (or even if not,) would a roundabout on Fayetteville solve some of the problem of traffic exiting onto Fayetteville Road who want to get back to 54 but can't turn left out of the development? We want to avoid traffic using McDougale as a turnaround point.

I think sidewalks on Carol and Lisa would help kids navigate more safely to school and just around the neighborhood. I'm also wondering if a pedestrian activated traffic light at Hillsborough and James would be a good idea given how many kids are using the new park facilities. Cars go too fast, especially when coming down hill, and many don't stop for people crossing there, in my experience. At least have pedestrians be able to activate a caution flasher, if not a full traffic stop.

Thanks all,
Lucy Gorham
Dove St

I am also for closing Carol St at Old Fayetteville. The bus can reroute. Emergency vehicles can come from James St. I think leaving Carol open at all, even one way, will invite massive traffic.

Pat Gingrich
200 Carol St

Neighbors,

Will try to come to the meeting Saturday. Not much notice. Been trying to think through the traffic problems from the coming development.

1. Having long favored connecting streets, I hate to see Carol closed off completely, especially as a result of this stupid development! It becomes a long way around from the neighborhood to the schools. And I don't think that right turns OUT of Carol will be a problem. So blocking just the left lane might be sufficient.

The main source of additional traffic from Lloyd Farm to Carol will be TURNING RIGHT ON OLD FAYETTEVILLE coming out of the shopping center and then RIGHT again ON CAROL to come through our neighborhood to James or Lorraine.

Making the intersection of Carol and Old Fayetteville going out of the neighborhood RIGHT TURN ONLY (toward the schools), and BLOCKING OFF THE LEFT LANE, so people can't turn in from Old Fayetteville would seem to be at least a good first step.

2. I also agree that we should advocate for BLOCKING traffic from coming out of the shopping center THROUGH THE POST OFFICE. Neither the PO parking lot nor James St could handle that.

When the post office was first proposed it was required that even the PO trucks couldn't go through the parking lot when exiting the PO. I believe that condition was invalidated when the USPS decided to own rather than rent their building (the feds don't have to follow local rules). Lloyd Farm does have to follow our rules.

Hope this is helpful; be interested in any feedback.

Allen.

Allen Spalt
300 James St

Any changes other than speed tables and sidewalks on any streets will have to be weighted against the impact to the adjacent streets. I know the Neighbors of Carol St. are losing a lot with this change. I know this because I lost all these things when the post office went in. My quiet street, my pastoral views and watching the sunset over the hill instead of a chain link fence. I argued and tried to have them kill the James Street entrance but I lost. So all ask is when you consider solutions you consider the impacts to the next street over. I am not happy about any of this and I wish each one of us had a stronger voice in this... situation. Don't get me wrong I perfectly understand the appeal of a street closure.

John [Van Fleet]
403 Lorraine Street

Yes, it has occurred to me with one change and another, that my street James Street is a lot busier!
[Philip Kosden]

A few thoughts....

--As a Carol Streeter, I do appreciate John's encouragement to consider the impact on other streets of any Carol Street changes.

--I like the drift of Allen's ideas about the Carol/Old Fay intersection. I think closing the left lane (as you go out) of Carol and allowing a right turn only from the right lane would be effective. Maybe add a sign reading "Do Not Enter." This would be less inconvenient to folks in the 300 block than a complete closure. The advantage to folks on that block, seems to me, would be much less traffic by their houses.

--I think speed tables/humps on Carol will be important regardless of whatever else is done. And pretty much the more and the bigger the better. They also might be appropriate for other streets.

--I think "horizontal deflection" measures also are worth considering on Carol and maybe elsewhere. On the Federal Highway administration traffic calming site, these include things like "chicanes" (putting some slight squiggles in a straight road or adding a median at some point on the street that traffic has to slow down to negotiate), and "lateral shifts."

--Consider lowering speed limits on all our streets.

--Lucy's idea about a roundabout at Old Fay and the entrance/exit to the development is a great one. But we pushed for it already and the NC DOT nixed it.

--Sidewalks sound good, but the trade-off is that we lose a whole lot of beautiful trees and they eat into front yards. There are alternatives, though, to standard sidewalks--like making them out of something other than concrete (check out Cameron Ave.) and/or letting them meander some to avoid trees.

--Tim West

The cost of maintaining Cameron ave sidewalks either brick or chapel hill gravel has been high during my 30 + years with chapel hill. With out median on Fayetteville people will right out and the u turn historical data on this.

[mc]

I would like to push to have the Lorraine/Carol intersection adjusted to be a hard turn instead of the exit ramp style it is today. I believe this would have a significant impact in driver speed in the 100 block of Carol.

Jason

106 Carol

I think making the Lorraine/Carol intersection a hard turn is a great idea. Also, having traffic calming strategies for the entire length of Carol and anywhere else people feel that prevailing speeds are too high. Drivers also use Rainbow, especially between Lorraine and James [I meant Rainbow between Hillsborough and James. Going in both directions, actually. Apologies for any confusion], as a through-cut and drive too fast. It's a gravel road for the middle half, as is Dove Street, so any traffic calming would probably be limited to the paved portion. I haven't seen a big uptick in traffic on Dove since the new park opened and the town, I think, has planted traffic cones along the first stretch of Dove to prevent park overflow parking.

[Lucy Gorham]

That's a good point, Jason. I'm always very alert walking or running around that area. People do take that turn very quickly. It reminds me of the intersection in front of my house at James and Main. Anyone who walks, runs, or bikes knows that James and Main is a very common place to cross the street. Unfortunately, it's terribly designed for pedestrians. When this project is completed, I'd expect that there will be more traffic of all kinds which seems like it increases risk.

As far as traffic calming, I think my biggest issue is cars coming off of Main. They turn very quickly and left-turning cars from Main (and often 54 before that) seem to go especially fast. On top of that, they have limited visibility to traffic on James but often drive through the oncoming lane as they enter James. We also have no speed bumps on our block of James for some reason, so cars can continue going fast. Speed bumps seems like an obvious place to start.

I don't understand why the post office needs to have an entrance in our neighborhood because it adds a lot of volume but I can't imagine the Town would close that. I'd be very happy to get a few speed bumps on the 100 block of James and hopefully some better conditions for walkers and runners in the future.
[Gordon and Melissa Chadwick, 100 James Street]

Update the the above message (3/9/2020):

As a result of the traffic calming meeting it sounds as if the funds to build traffic calming devices will be next to non-existent. Speed bumps for the 100 block of James (or anywhere else) are not going to in the cards in the short term. If plastic impediments like what were proposed for Lorraine and Carol could help turning vehicles have to slow down, I think that would really help with pedestrian safety and potentially be low-cost.

I also think that if we go the direction of closing or changing traffic direction flows on some streets, it will be worth looking at the 100 block of James in the same regard. Traffic will go somewhere else and, unless we're careful, we might wind up sending all of through this block (squeezing the balloon as Allan said).

Zach is going to try to collect data for our block soon so I am curious to see what he finds (I'm a little disappointed they didn't have that already). I'd expect the volume to be as high as anything in the neighborhood but I'm not sure what to expect on average speed.

Gordon Chadwick and Melissa Chadwick, 100 James Street

There is a steady stream of post office trucks on Lorraine into/out of that PO entrance. I'd like to see them exit onto Main.

Dave [Cottingham]

In addition to a sidewalk on Carol, one on Lorraine would also be nice. I realize that this eats into yards, but with increased traffic, it would make it safer to walk our kids to school.

Kara LaFleur

Melba Circle

Gordon I agree 100%. Yesterday I stopped short some 20 feet of the James Main corner because the I saw the driver getting ready to turn and was going to fast. He severely cut the corner and would have hit my Daughter and I if I had not seen it coming.

Experience saved me what's going to save the guy who has never been here before visiting the new stores?

Those same drivers by the way do not stop at the stop sign! Right turns on to Lorraine are a joke and are taken at top speeds. I get beeped at regularly by people who didn't stop at the sign, because I almost back up into them out of my driveway. Had they stopped that wouldn't be the case! I'd put speed bumps at the stop signs, thin ones that if you are stopped and then go do nothing, but if you don't stop are a real wake up call. In the options I reviewed I saw a raised intersection which is far to expensive \$60,000.00, thin square strips work just as well. I saw some on a trip abroad and ask what they were , the answer was "Sleeping Police men". I like that.

John VanFleet
403 Lorraine

That would, however, significantly impact the property owners at that corner. Maybe speed bumps close to that intersection would be a more practical solution.

Michele

I agree that squaring off the intersection of Carol and Lorraine is a good idea.

Allen.

300 James

I plan on attending the meeting.

I had been working on traffic calming measures (talking to Carrboro) since we've moved in. There are over 10 kids on Carol St, between Lorraine and James. Drivers avoid the effective Lorraine traffic calming measures by flying down Carol (I know because friends from other neighborhoods tell me that's what they do).

[Lucas Paulsen]

Hi Neighbors!

In discussing measures to control the traffic brought on by the Lloyd Farm project, it'll be important to determine for certain the plans for using the Post Office parking lot for ingress and egress to/from the development.

I may have missed something but the BOA never seemed clear about its, or the developer's, plans for traffic through the PO. I remember at one meeting it came up that no one from the town had spoken with the PO officials. I also don't recall the developer's "traffic engineer" accounting for traffic through the PO parking lot.

However, at the very last meeting when they gave the development the go-ahead, I spoke with the main presenter at the meetings for Argus Development during a break and asked him. He said there would be four entrances to the development: one from James St through the PO parking lot; the current "stub road" entrance off 54 that leads to the back of the PO (or though which drivers can access the front PO parking lot; a new entrance along 54; and a new entrance from Old Fayetteville road.

He also said that all of these also would be used to exit the development, except possibly the route through the PO parking lot out onto James Street. He said that he "hoped" a median strip would be placed in the middle of the "stub road", running some few hundred feet in from 54, which would prevent cars exiting the development through that road from turning left into the PO parking lot and heading out to James Street. Instead, those cars would have to go out to 54 and turn right. But he emphasized that those plans had not been finalized. In fact, he said there had not yet even been any drawings of that median strip.

Being able to access the development through the PO parking lot will encourage drivers to cut through the neighborhood in general, and James and Lorraine Streets from Hillsborough St in particular, to get to the development. Drivers will also be able to use James St. from Main St. for access. It will obviously have a negative impact on the already-stressed PO parking lot. While the possibility of the median strip preventing development traffic from exiting through the PO parking lot would make a bad situation better, the best solution would be to prevent the use of the PO parking lot as a gateway to the development.

It'll be important, I think, to find out what the PO's position is on all this. It sounds like Allen (and his valuable institutional memory) has some insight into how the town has in the past dealt with the PO with respect to the parking lot and maybe that could be brought into play.

Just as traffic exiting the development will be very harmful for Carol St and the neighborhood, traffic entering the development through the PO will have a similar negative effect. Let's see what can be done to minimize the harm.

Merle Thorpe
202 Lorraine Street

Thank you Merle for your clarification about the Lloyd Mall's ingress-egress plans and a clear-eyed analysis of their impact.

I would add that from James and the post office area, many cars already turn off of Lorraine through Mary Street to cut over to Simpson or Main Street back to downtown.

I request that we ask to add Mary Street to the list of streets that will be impacted.

It should at least be considered for the some form of speed bumps to slow speeders down. There are children at play, and neighborhood families need to get safely walking to and from Simpson Park.

Many thanks,
Lorraine

I remember the post office talk the same way and it will become a mess I think no matter what the do but at the very least they need to try.

Mary Street and all other connectors need to be involved. The term Traffic Flow stems from the path of least resistance between point A and B like water. Without a holistic approach any effort will fail from a neighborhood perspective. I don't want to have a victory at the expense of the next street over.

John VanFleet
403 Lorraine Street

I also worry a lot about spillover into adjacent streets, and would ask that Mary street be added to the list of affected streets. There are currently families with children on Mary Street, and it is a frequent path for dog walkers, pedestrians of other causes, bicyclists, and children playing.

Dale Hutchinson
102 Mary Street

Neighbors,

We are chiming in from your neighbors at Lloyd Square: Deer, Lisa and Quail Roost streets. We do have some significant concerns and observations and want to be able to support OUR Neighborhood and OUR Neighbors! Firstly, We are VERY grateful for the abundant knowledge and expertise amongst you all, our neighbors. ONCE we give the access, privileges and resources of our little neighborhood away to the town and the developers we will never get it back. The developers have their interests in wanting to get their buildings up as expeditiously as possible, to make money without being too concerned about what is in the BEST interest of OUR neighborhood - our and our neighbors' homes, children's safety, traffic flow and water runoff... We know that this development will proceed and we want to be included in the planning and it's impact.

OUR goals are 1. to keep the traffic impact and car impact to a MINIMUM for these residential streets - how do 54 and Old Farmington absorb the vast majority of this traffic without adverse impact on Plantation Acres streets and lives of the families directly affected? and 2. to protect as much of the natural beauty of this corner of earth including protecting those ancient oaks and by, for example, keeping the walkway from Carol into the mall to a narrow walk/bikeable path! And the ponds need to remain as a buffer to the area & and the ongoing wildlife refuge that they are! And 3. To limit the impact of this development and it's infrastructure: from lumens to consumption (water,electric..), from possible gas-leaking pollution from a gas station to the traffic impacts on the children/dogs/strollers, and on WATER runoff with stormwater mitigation that could/should include requiring development of a rain capture and green water infrastructure to use to support the development's life. I could go on.

But closure for Carol Street at Old 86 is much better for the neighborhood than One Way traffic would be. In One Way Traffic there are problems with:

- Livability: vehicles stop less on one-way streets, which is harder for all other 'traffic', bikers and pedestrians.
- Navigation: one-way street networks are confusing for drivers, which leads to more vehicle-miles traveled; they also make it tough for bus riders to locate stops for a return trip.
- Safety: speeds tend to be higher on one-way streets, and some studies suggest drivers pay less attention on them because there's no conflicting traffic flow.

Excerpted from

<https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2013/01/case-against-one-way-streets/4549/>

We must further be very concerned about the routing around the USPS and James x Main Streets and include impact on Lorraine, Mary ... The city needs to explain, with the developers, exactly where, how quantity (X #) of cars would move through the area without extreme adverse impact on Plantation Acres on up through to Old 86 and McDougle's Dropoff and pickup times and other affected roads.

All said, we continue to have major concerns about how this development moves forward from traffic flow to water runoff and WANT to be included in the planning process all along the way. With great regret I am personally unable to attend Saturday's meeting though we hope to have representation there. We would be most grateful if this letter can serve to support the advocacy for the neighborhood and want to be included in further planning.

Thank you.

Elyza

Kohenet Elyza Richmon HaLev
President Lloyd Square HOA (sub neighborhood of Plantation Acres)

Dear Mr. Hallock,

I am unable to attend today's meeting but I have participated with many of my neighbors' discussions and am sure they will convey our hope that solutions will be considered holistically because changes to one neighborhood road will affect adjacent ones.

In particular, Mary street where my family and I live was not on the list in your letter but now is a key cut-through connection between Simpson and Lorraine. Cars, trucks, and even school buses race through our short street.

Mary street not only is home to small children but is presently the safest street (among several unsafe streets) for neighborhood families walking or biking to and from Simpson Street Park.

Mary street is used heavily by dog walkers and runners, as well as by a pedestrian neighbor with macular degeneration who can no longer drive.

I can't speak for people who experience different conditions on other Plantation Acres streets but I imagine that adding speed bumps on Mary street would be the best solution to a difficult problem we are facing.

When my family with a third grader and outdoors pets moved to a curvy one-block-long Carrboro street nearly 20 years ago, we could not conceive that our rural edge neighborhood would be retrofitted into a massive drive-through mall development.

Thank you for doing whatever you can to keep our once-wonderful neighborhood livable for the young families and the elderly who now live here.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Aragon

102 Mary street
27510

· I would like to submit for your consideration the installation of 1 or 2 new speed tables on the north end of Simpson St near the intersection of Hillsborough Rd, Carrboro. The south end of Simpson St is equipped with 2 speed tables and it appears that this helps to alleviate the speed at which cars run through our neighborhood. The excessive speed of cars on the north end of Simpson St is a significant noise nuisance as well as safety hazard for pedestrians (no sidewalk on Simpson St) and cyclists alike. Given the extremely sharp turn in the middle of Simpson St, I think the reduction of speed on both ends if appropriate, not just the south end.

· In addition and unfortunately, Simpson St is often used as a commercial truck "cut through" although it is clearly a residential street. Simpson St is clearly marked "no trucks" with signs at both the intersections of Main and Hillsborough but this does not seem to alleviate the noise/traffic nuisance. I have yet to see a police officer respond to my request to the Carrboro PD for them to monitor this obvious violation. I personally feel the issue is that the "no truck" signs are posted too far away from the intersections of Simpson St on both ends, not allowing trucks the opportunity to see the no truck zone until they are already on Simpson St. Many of the truck drivers have told me that once they are on Simpson St in error, there is no way to turn around since most if not all areas to do so are residential driveways and too small. They simply say that this is the way their GPS/maps told them to travel, which is another issue all together but notable for future development plans.

Jason Moon
703 Hillsborough Rd

Of course it would be wonderful to have safe, dedicated walk or bike lanes. But to cut more trees in the effort to retrofit our residential neighborhood into the mall's commercial zone risks a trade-off with the neighborhood's other big problem: flooding.

We all have watched sadly as some of our neighbors have suffered terrific damage. Meanwhile tree removal for development, and even by neighbors seeking more sun or lawn, continues to increase the run off.

The Town allows more impervious surface for sidewalks at the potential detriment of downhill neighbors, something we saw with the Lloyd Square development and we see again with the otherwise engaging new MLK Jr. Park. The surroundings become swamped.

In short, Traffic calming measures that add no more impervious surface are the safest for our lowland creekside neighborhood, as well as kindest for what local Piedmont nature remains intact.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Aragon
102 Mary street