

14 Shady Brook Lane
Old Greenwich, CT 06870
January 6, 2006

First Selectman James Lash
Town of Greenwich
Town Hall
Greenwich, CT 06836

Dear Mr. Lash:

As an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen, The Selectmen's Pedestrian Safety Committee is bringing to your attention a request for the reconstruction and new safety improvement on Byram Rd. from Frontage Rd. to Richland Avenue.

This sidewalk is very narrow, with no shoulder. The roadway is hilly, has sharp curves, a railroad overpass, metal guard rails along a small length, and the volume of traffic is very, very high. This road is a direct connector to I-95, with the exit from the north/east and the entrance to the south/west. Speeding is a common problem and cars are often seen making quick, violent steering adjustments as they navigate this roadway. We have done this walk three times in the past year, and have done it several times in past years.

Our committee is very concerned about the sidewalk on this road which is the walking route for New Lebanon students going to Western Middle School and for the students going from the neighborhood to that school. Some students also walk from this neighborhood to New Lebanon School even though the crossing at Byram Rd. and Frontage is dangerous. We know that crossing is going to be changed in the near future (see Mr. Garabedian) and hopefully a pedestrian island will be part of the its redesign. At our last meeting on January 3, 2006 Mr. Michael Bocchino, President of the Byram Neighborhood Assn. was present and he reminded us strongly that the New Lebanon School is a walking school with no bus service. In order to walk to school safely these improvements must be made, and made ASAP.

Knowing that the '06-'07 budget is currently underway with another major reconstruction project being considered, we recognize, though regrettably, that '07-'08 might have to be the budget that could include this request. If there is any chance of fast forwarding this project, we would urge you to consider doing so.

We have taken pictures of the students walking on Byram Rd. and, it is frightening from a safety standpoint. One thing we have noticed (and I knew it as a teacher leading students on field trips to Byram Park) is that students tend to step off the sidewalk where the curbing is practically non-existent, and walk in the roadway. This is due in part to the narrowness of the sidewalk and the slope of the hilly terrain. It has been suggested that a post & cable fence or metal guardrail be installed from the RR bridge to Richland Rd. – the area which is steep and winding. This is where the accident potential exists.

This is the second request for safety improvements in the Western Middle School area. This and the W. Jr. Highway – Henry St. request are all part of a continuous network used by this, and the New Lebanon, community. We cannot stress strongly enough the dangers we see along this route, and we are urging you to consider this request very seriously. We know these projects take years, but in this case and the previously mentioned case, we can not afford to wait for a protracted period of time. Anything you can do to alleviate this situation would be appreciated.

I am enclosing some Xerox photos that will show you graphically what we have tried to describe. We offer this recommendation in the best interests of the citizens of Greenwich and particularly of its youth population whose safety is uppermost in our work. We trust you will advise us of your thoughtfully considered decision.

Respectfully yours,

Arline Lomazzo, Chairman
SPSC

cc: Mr. Peter Crumbine, Selectman
Ms. Penny Monahan, Selectman
Members of SPSC
Mr. Robert Kalm, Acting-Comm. DPW
Mr. David Thompson, Chief Engineer
Mr. Garo Garabedian, Traffic Engineer
Mrs. Jo Ann Messina, Chairman, Parking & Traffic
Mr. Donald Strange, Principal, WMS
Mr. Michael Bocchino, Pres., Byram Neighborhood Assn.