City of Birmingham

Laura Pierce <lpierce@bhamgov.org>

FW: Proposed changes to West Maple

1 message

James Ryan <jamespatryan@gmail.com> Wed, Mar 25, 2015 at 12:05 AM
To: Laura Pierce <lpierce@bhamgov.org>

Dear Laura

The letter below was sent today to both Larry Ruhehlen and Lisa Brody.

I respectfully request that you copy each of the Birmingham City Commissioners.

My name is James P Ryan and I have lived with my wife Rose at 822 Shirley Rd. for the last 32 years. I am aware of the overwhelming percentage of homeowners in opposition to any West Maple Road street layout changes. I also want to go on record against any narrowing of W. Maple, installing any bike lanes adjacent to motor vehicle traffic lanes, and removal of the critically needed traffic signal at Lake Park.

Both my wife and I have driven safely in this neighborhood, turning to and from West Maple onto Shirley Rd., Arlington St. and just about every street entering or exiting West Maple from Cranbrook to Southfield without harm or occurrence over the last 40 years. Our previous home was on Pilgrim. Although the traffic has increased over the years, the traffic signals at Cranbrook, Lake Park and Southfield have been adjusted to allow adequate time for lanes to clear, to enter or exit W. Maple. Proposing to narrow W. Maple to 2 lanes with bike lanes adjacent, is potentially very dangerous.

Planners must admit that bottlenecks will occur when residents try to enter W. Maple from any of the side streets at peak morning and evening hours, especially if the traffic light at Lake Park is eliminated! Public Bus transportation will cause further congestion at passenger stops. This domino of congestion will cause (already burdened) side streets to be used as "traffic relief" routes. This is especially true for Arlington and Shirley Rd. as drivers heading East on W. Maple to turn South on Southfield, even today use these streets, (at way above posted speeds), to cut thru to Lincoln, then to Southfield. Arlington and Shirley's extra width is like a expressway to non resident drivers.

My wife and I are bikers and share the belief with the 5 neighborhood majority of 92%, that any type of biking on W. Maples adjacent to vehicle, bus, and trucks would be suicide. In today's litigious world it would not take long for this proposed change to prove costly for the City.

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Driving East or West on W. Maple today is as safe as any Urban street that leads to a city in Michigan can be. Although, drivers exceed the speed limit by a wide margin, removing the light at Lake Park would not slow traffic, and it would be very dangerous for homeowners exiting streets like Aspen and Linden or pedestrians trying to cross W. Maple, encouraged by narrower Lanes. Without the Lake Park traffic signal, bikers, walkers, strollers, etc would have to cross at intervals where the proposed traffic plan narrows for crossovers, albeit against faster traffic!
I do not want the Lake Park light removed, W. Maple narrowed to 2 lanes, or bike lanes on W. Maple.

It's not ironic that over 94% of existing homeowners who are very current, educated, and very familiar with their areas roads and traffic patterns, would unanimously bond in the unanimous opinion and from experience, (not statistics), would vote to leave W. Maple as it is.

Respectfully, James P Ryan AIA