

This is a summary of our traffic discussions with Ed Ellis. The black text is the summary that I provided to him after it was vetted by the meeting's participants (me, Andrew, Ron, Maureen, Linda, and Elizabeth). The blue text is clarification of several items provided by Ed. The green text is additional clarification provided by me.

### **General Observations:**

1. You indicated that you did not think that the city would approve any plan that resulted in travel lanes being less than 11 feet wide on thoroughfares (Northside Dr. and Howell Mill Rd.) or connector streets (Bellemeade), but that plans involving lane width reductions to 11 feet would not be problematic for the city's traffic planners.
2. You do not think that topographic features inside travel lanes such as cushions, humps, tables, or raised intersections would be likely to be approved for thoroughfares or connector streets, but could be used on the remaining streets inside the residential core of Berkeley Park.
3. You're opinion of stop signs is that they are not an effective means of traffic calming unless there is sufficient traffic on the cross street to convince drivers that the sign needs to be obeyed. You did not indicate a specific criterion for this in terms of traffic counts. We discussed possible stop signs on Bellemeade at Buchanan, on Antone at Bowen, and on Berkeley at Bowen. You did not think that any of these showed sufficient cross traffic to justify a stop sign at the time of the tour.
4. You don't like warning strips/rumble strips/ripple strips because they are not an effective means of traffic calming – they just make noise and annoy people.
5. You believe that city is averse to pavement texture and color changes to delineate intersections and that some sort of maintenance agreement would need to be worked out with the city if we wanted something like that.
6. You know of no local examples of traffic cushions but see no reason that they could not be implemented on emergency vehicles' primary response routes.
7. You said that we should get accident statistics for all the intersections in the neighborhood from the city traffic folks to see if our impressions are consistent with official observations.
8. We looked at many areas where curbs had disappeared because of repaving over the years. You implied that curb restoration should be a part of any project that we undertake.
9. You indicated that the city should have sufficient funds available to implement modest traffic calming measures inside Berkeley Park and that our resources could best be used by moving these projects through the design phase, where the city is notoriously slow.

### **Specific Locations / Problems:**

1. Bishop St. at Howell Mill and Trabert Ave: We discussed improving east-west connections outside of the residential core of the neighborhood by improving the intersection of Bishop St. and Howell Mill (possibly by adding a signal light to reduce peak hour queuing due to left turns). We also discussed the benefits of extending Trabert Ave as an alternative east-west route. I do not recall that you made any specific suggestions with regard to either of these projects.

Extending Trabert Ave. looks to be fairly difficult – main problems are design standards and right of way. The horizontal and vertical alignments would need improving on the existing portion and r/w for the new portion could be difficult and expensive due to damages to existing businesses. Of course, this is based on a three minute look. If you want to pursue this, I suggest that you make a formal request to the City to do an engineering study.

An extension of Trabert and a rebuilding of the street grid in its vicinity have been put forward in several city plans (the Upper West Side LCI, Northside Drive Corridor Study, Beltline Redevelopment Plan, and Berkeley Park Blueprints plan). I doubt whether any of the folks who wrote those plans spent as much time looking at the site as Ed did. I don't think that anyone has discussed this with any of the local business owners.

2. Fire Station:

- a. You did not seem enthusiastic about a dedicated emergency demand light and crosswalk in front of the firehouse. It was unclear whether the problem here was the concept itself or whether you thought that it was not the sort of thing that the city would agree to.

I really don't have a strong opinion about a signal at the firehouse. If the firemen can't get people's attention with all their noise and lights, I'm not sure what a signal can add. As to a pedestrian crosswalk, I think there is certainly value in making provisions for pedestrians in advance of heavy pedestrian activity to encourage more walking, but I'm not sure that is where I would start – I think sidewalks need to be improved first.

- b. You agreed that emergency vehicles having signal light preemption along Howell Mill is a good idea. You also agreed that a good first step to implementing this would be to bring the idea up with Selig in conjunction with the light synchronization project.

3. Antone St.:

- a. You liked alternate side of the street parking here with four or five parking spaces along the north curb followed by about the same number along the south curb. These could be shielded by 7 ft. triangular bulb-outs with plantings. We measured the road width at 26 ft curb to curb and ~19 ft parked car to curb.
- b. You thought that a median feature like a 4 foot wide planted thing would be appropriate for the intersection with Bowen St., but you don't think that a stop sign would be effective there.

4. Verner St. and similar locations elsewhere: You think that the best way to eliminate unwanted and/or unused curb cuts is by constructing sidewalks. In the case of lots that can be used to shortcut corners, like the one at Verner, the best way to implement this is to wrap the Howell Mill sidewalks one lot deep around the corners. This should be done as soon as possible before new development forces the issue.

5. Holmes St.:

- a. Holmes at Howell Mill: You weren't sure whether a bulb-out was appropriate here since the left turn movement is already forbidden and the straight through movement will be forbidden when Howell Mill is widened. You indicated that the need/feasibility would be determined by the traffic counts. The latest data that we have on this is from the Selig study, which indicates that the peak hour is noon. The base condition then is 4 vph with 2% heavy vehicle traffic. The future prediction is 7 vph. At this hour 79 vph exit at the other end of Holmes in the base condition. So this right turn movement is probably a source of 5-10% of our current cut-through traffic on Holmes.
- b. We did not specifically discuss this, but the used car lot lacks a curb along Holmes St. and has essentially one long curb cut. This implies that a solution similar to the one that we discussed for the lot on Verner would be appropriate here.
- c. Holmes at Buchanan: You described this intersection as "the perfect place for a raised intersection".
- d. Holmes at Tallulah: Here you were recommending an intersection that is raised for three approach directions but at grade for southbound traffic on Tallulah because of the way that storm water drains.
- e. Holmes at Northside: We discussed the Blueprints plan for a bulb-out here and you agreed that it was a bad idea. We also talked about the sidewalk and median extensions recommended in the Northside Dr. plan. Other than those, you had no specific suggestions to address the line of sight problem at that intersection.

6. Bellemeade Ave.

- a. Median: We measured the width of Bellemeade at a fairly consistent 24 ft., which was less than you expected. You recommended the reduction of travel lane widths to 11 ft. by adding a 2 ft wide median down the entire length of the street with breaks at each of the intersections. I got the impression that this would be a hard surfaced hump-like median as opposed to one with curbs and grass.

My idea for a median on Bellemeade is something made of concrete that can be driven over for access to driveways, but something that you wouldn't want to drive on if you are traveling down the street. An example would be a 2' wide concrete band raised about 2" with ribbed scoring that would be easy to drive over, but irritating to drive any distance on. Could be something a little like the median on Piedmont south of Peachtree, but legal to drive over. The concept is to narrow the lanes in order to slow people down without creating a safety problem.

- b. Bellemeade at the Kroger driveway / White St.: We talked about various sorts of traffic restrictions here. You did not have any specific suggestions.
- c. Bellemeade at Buchanan: We talked about a stop sign here, but you doubted that there was enough cross traffic to make that effective. I don't think that this intersection was analyzed as a part of the Selig study, but that study shows an enormous volume of cross traffic at the Kroger driveway. It seems like a stop sign there on Bellemeade would serve a similar function as one at Buchanan would for slowing traffic on Bellemeade. We did not specifically discuss this, but in light of your other comments, it seems like an idea that you would endorse.

A three-way stop at the Kroger driveway doesn't seem to be needed from an operations standpoint from what I have seen, so, unless there is a history of accidents that the stop signs would help, their only purpose would be to slow traffic on Bellemeade. Such a request is reasonable to make of the City - I'm just not sure if they will approve an all way stop with a private driveway. My suggestion is that you wait on this one until the Selig development opens and we see if traffic increases to the point that the all way stop is easier to justify.

I do not think that Ed is aware of the legal status of the Kroger driveway (It is private, but it will be made public). He is also probably not aware of the discussions regarding this that took place on the BPNA electronic mail list after the neighborhood tour.

- d. Bellemeade at Commerce/Tallulah: You had no specific recommendations for this intersection. We talked about the bus stop location and you said that it was well situated. We talked about renaming Commerce to Tallulah and you indicated that that was a reasonable idea.
- e. Bellemeade in front of Sizemore: We talked about a chicane here of the type with a widened median and a roadway that bulges out on the sides (you thought that "chicane" might be an inappropriate name for this because it is not serpentine, but you did not have another name for it). You were not enthused about this project because of the way that the widened roadway might encroach on utility easements. As a concept, you thought that this configuration was better than a serpentine chicane.
- f. Bellemeade at Northside Dr: We talked about the sidewalk along the north side of Bellemeade at the corner. You indicated that a 6 ft wide sidewalk with a 2 ft buffer would be sufficient there and that you thought that this was Coro's intention. Since this is still under construction it is difficult to tell how it will be completed.

7. Forrest at Berkeley: This is the wide triangular intersection with a stop sign that is often ignored. You recommended a raised circular cobblestone thing (hump?) in the center of the intersection 1 to 2 ft high and 3 to 6 ft in diameter that could be driven over at low speeds. This would create a small roundabout.
8. Berkeley Ave: You mentioned the possibility of a median here similar to the one that you recommended for Bellemeade. Recollections on what you said with regard to this vary somewhat within our group – whether you were actually recommending a median or not and whether it would be partial or continuous if you do recommend it.

We talked about a number of treatments that might help on Berkeley and I can't remember anything that really seemed like the perfect solution (of course, traffic calming is never perfect). Seems to me that we were leaning towards small medians that would work with the parking, i.e., alternating parking with short medians similar to, but maybe a little more aggressive than the ones on Bellemeade. These might even contain some small plantings.

9. I-75 at Northside: We talked about the poor configuration of the freeway off ramps. You agreed as to the problem, but did not make specific recommendations for the solution or for how to pursue this with GDOT.

I think you will see a significant improvement in operations and safety at the I-75/Northside Drive ramps when a signal is installed for the exit ramp and the signal is modified at Bellemeade/Northside. The two main problems are back-ups on the ramp and the limited sight distance/right on red from Bellemeade southbound onto Northside. Both of these should be corrected with the signal changes.

My impression from Ed's comment was that he was aware of a plan to install a signal light at Northside and the southbound I-75 off ramp. I asked him about this and he told me that he thought that he had heard this, but he could not remember the source and was not certain.