

To: Jill Juliano, Public Works Dept., Village of Oak Park (via email)
From: Residents of the 400 block of Berkshire Street
Re: Petition for traffic calming measures
Submitted by: Tom Garvey, [REDACTED] Berkshire St.
Date: 09/24/20

Greetings,

The undersigned residents of the 400 block of Berkshire Street, who represent 13 of the 15 of the block's residences, are submitting this petition to request traffic calming solutions for our block. Over the last several years we have seen a dangerous situation get worse. We are on the north border of Taylor Park, so there is a lot of both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Unfortunately, people also use Berkshire as a westbound alternative to Division St., and many drivers accelerate up the hill after they cross Ridgeland and speed through our block as well as the block west of us until they reach the stop sign at Fair Oaks Ave.

All of us have witnessed alarming and hazardous behavior. Here are accounts of a few specific incidents:

[REDACTED] Berkshire: On the evening of September 13 I was putting out my garbage cans when a car coming from Ridgeland accelerated up the hill and was going 40 to 50 mph by the time he reached me in the middle of the block. I gestured to him to slow down by putting my thumb down and he did a u-turn at Elmwood and sped back eastbound. I called 911, but unfortunately he was going too fast for me to get a license plate number.

Approximately a month ago [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Berkshire witnessed and [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Berkshire was injured by a reckless driver who made a u-turn by driving up on my lawn. The car then drove into the park and also hit a parked car.

[REDACTED] Berkshire: We have observed speeding since we moved here in 2014. We have also seen increased recklessness. Someone raced by our house at high speed with no lights on at 10PM one Saturday a few weeks ago. I have had difficulty backing out of the driveway after waiting for numerous cars to pass, seeing that all is clear, and then being passed in a dangerous way by someone tearing up the hill so fast that they weren't visible when I finally reversed. We are also worried about the kids getting on and off the bus to go to Brooks.

[REDACTED] Berkshire: People who are West bound on Division and then have to make the Northbound turn onto Ridgeland avoid the light at the intersection by going North on Elmwood and then West on Berkshire. They travel at a very high rate of speed. In my estimation, as fast as 50 miles per hour. I also have seen people speeding in the opposite direction down Berkshire to go East. This occasionally happens even on weekends, despite the fact that there are many children walking on the street to get to the soccer fields and other amenities in the park. Late at night I often hear engines gunning as these cars quickly accelerate down the block. Something has got to be done.

The speeding is a daily occurrence. This is not about people going 5 mph over the limit, it is about people regularly driving at 35 to 40 mph. For example, it has gotten so bad that [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Berkshire will no longer allow their two young daughters to play in front of their own house.

Taylor Park gets a lot of use, which is great. For example, it's good to see the many walkers in the mornings and the kids playing soccer on Saturday mornings. But, given the amount of pedestrian traffic and all the cars slowing down to park and slowly pulling out of their parking spaces, speeding cars are a real hazard and, in the absence of meaningful safety measures, there will inevitably be more accidents and injuries, or worse.

We know that the Village's policy is only to install speed bumps/tables in the 1200 North and 1150 South blocks. We request an exception to that policy. Given our situation – the natural tendency to accelerate to get up the hill heading west from Ridgeland, the fact that drivers use Berkshire to avoid the set of traffic lights at Ridgeland and Division, and the fact that we are the border of a well-used park – we request that the Village make an exception to that policy.

If that can not be done, we request that the 400 and 500 blocks of Berkshire be added to the Slow Streets program. We know that one of the criteria that was used to include Thomas St. was the amount of pedestrian traffic that makes it hard to socially distance. We have that same issue, even more so due to the amount of pedestrian, foot and bicycle traffic created by being on the park, as well as significant vehicular traffic, probably more than Thomas St.

We know that Slow Streets is in its pilot phase until October 16, and that after that the Village Board will evaluate the program to decide whether to continue and possibly expand it. We request that we be added to the pilot or, at a minimum, be evaluated for inclusion if the program is continued.

If you have other options that would provide a significant and permanent solution to this problem, please let us know.

Several of us would be happy to meet with Village officials to discuss this matter and/or participate in a Village Board meeting. Please advise us as to what the appropriate follow-up steps are and when we can look forward to a response to our petition.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

- Lisa Green, [REDACTED]
- Kathleen Berardino, [REDACTED]
- Carlos Rivera, [REDACTED]
- Anna Bradley, [REDACTED]
- Ann Platzer, [REDACTED]
- Jamie Lopresti, [REDACTED]
- Tom Garvey, [REDACTED]
- Jan Teetsov, [REDACTED]
- Nyr Ashrafi, [REDACTED]
- Nick Albuquerk, [REDACTED]
- Bennett Weaver, [REDACTED]
- Alison McKinzie, [REDACTED]
- N. Elmwood – Jeff Cogan, [REDACTED]

June 7, 2021

To whom it may concern:

I Oscar Blanco submitted the petition to review traffic on the 400 block of Greenfield Street. I have lived on Greenfield since 1989 and love the community but in that last several years traffic has gotten worse.

When I sit in my front yard and look at traffic on Greenfield Street, I see people taking the stop sign on Elmwood, Speeding as high as 50 MPH. The concern first of all is children safety, many children walk to school and even playing in their front yards.

We thought that maybe a speed table on Greenfield would help slow down traffic. There is a 4 way stop on Greenfield and Elmwood, there is a single stop sign on Russell and the next stop in on Ridgeland. I do not know where the traffic is coming from could only imagine it would be bypassing North Ave.

I am available to answer any questions. The rest of the individual that signed the petition are attached.



Oscar Blanco

