

Juliano, Jill

From: Alison McKinzie [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 4:13 PM
To: Juliano, Jill
Subject: 400 block of Berkshire

Categories: MUST KEEP

Hello Jill,

I hope this note finds your well. I am sharing this story via Tom Garvey's referral. I live on the 400 block of Berkshire where he has been advocating for some help to reduce speeding traffic on our street.

In addition to speeding and witnessing "near misses" over the years, I had an incident coming back from dropping my son at OPRF this morning.

There were elementary-aged kids crossing our driveway on their bikes. I was on Berkshire facing East to turn into my driveway. After the kids crossed, I was about to turn when someone passed me on the right coming within a few inches and very definitely in my blind spot. Very upsetting as I came very close to turning right into them. The construction seems to be making people aggressive and nuts!

On February 15, someone drove into our parkway and barely into our garden. They drove over and killed the new maple tree that Oak Park planted and that we tended so carefully. I cried as I had begged for them to put that tree in after the previous tree blew over in a storm. We do have a police report; I don't have the number handy.

All this said, we are very much opposed to having a stop sign in front of our house. Our house feels very exposed to the street and having exhaust from idling traffic in front of our house would be tragic. We hope that speed bumps of some kind would be more likely solution. I believe I recall when this topic first came up that the idea of a stop sign wouldn't work at the offset and T-shaped intersection of Elmwood and Berkshire. I hope that is true.

Best wishes to you and thanks for your help!

Alison McKinzie
(Shawn Calvert)
[REDACTED] Berkshire St Oak Park



From: [Jovita Miranda](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Subject: Traffic calming devices
Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 3:51:02 PM

Hi,

This is regarding the meeting to review petitions for traffic calming devices on the 400 blocks of Berkshire and Greenfield.

I live in the area and am hoping this meeting results in some DRASTIC measures to curb the unruly traffic situation here.

Impatient drivers use our residential streets to bypass traffic lights and congestion on thoroughfares like Ridgeland, Division and North Avenue. Most of this traffic appears to be commuters passing through Oak Park vs. residents. With so many kids in the area, I cannot understand how this has gone unnoticed for so long.

I understand this isn't on the agenda but the street behind Hatch Elementary School (Harvey) should also be examined - please consider making it a one way to avoid traffic bypassing Ridgeland and Division. Reckless drivers on this street don't give a second thought to all the little kids in the area.

Four way stop signs could be a good deterrent, you could consider adding one on the intersection of Elmwood and Berkshire and at multiple points on Greenfield. Additionally, consider making both streets one ways to avoid additional access. I'd like to see you make it difficult for outside traffic to carelessly commute through these streets where our children play.

Thanks

Jovita Miranda

Sent from my iPhone

From: [O Azam](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Cc: [ayesha akhtar](#)
Subject: We support Traffic calming devices on Berkshire and Elmwood
Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 4:29:51 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hello,

We have been residents living near the Elmwood and Berkshire intersection for 10 years, and we have always felt that since this intersection is commonly used by children to access Taylor Park and school bus stops, and since there is no Berkshire stop sign for cars for the almost-quarter-mile between Ridgeland and Fair oaks (see attached image), and since cars drive above the speed limit, and since there is a hill limiting visibility, and since many cars fail to see pedestrians, and since I have personally seen near-collisions, there is a real need for 4 way stop signs and thick crosswalk stripes to be installed.

We support Traffic calming devices on Berkshire and Elmwood.

Thank you,
Omar Azam and Ayesha Akhtar

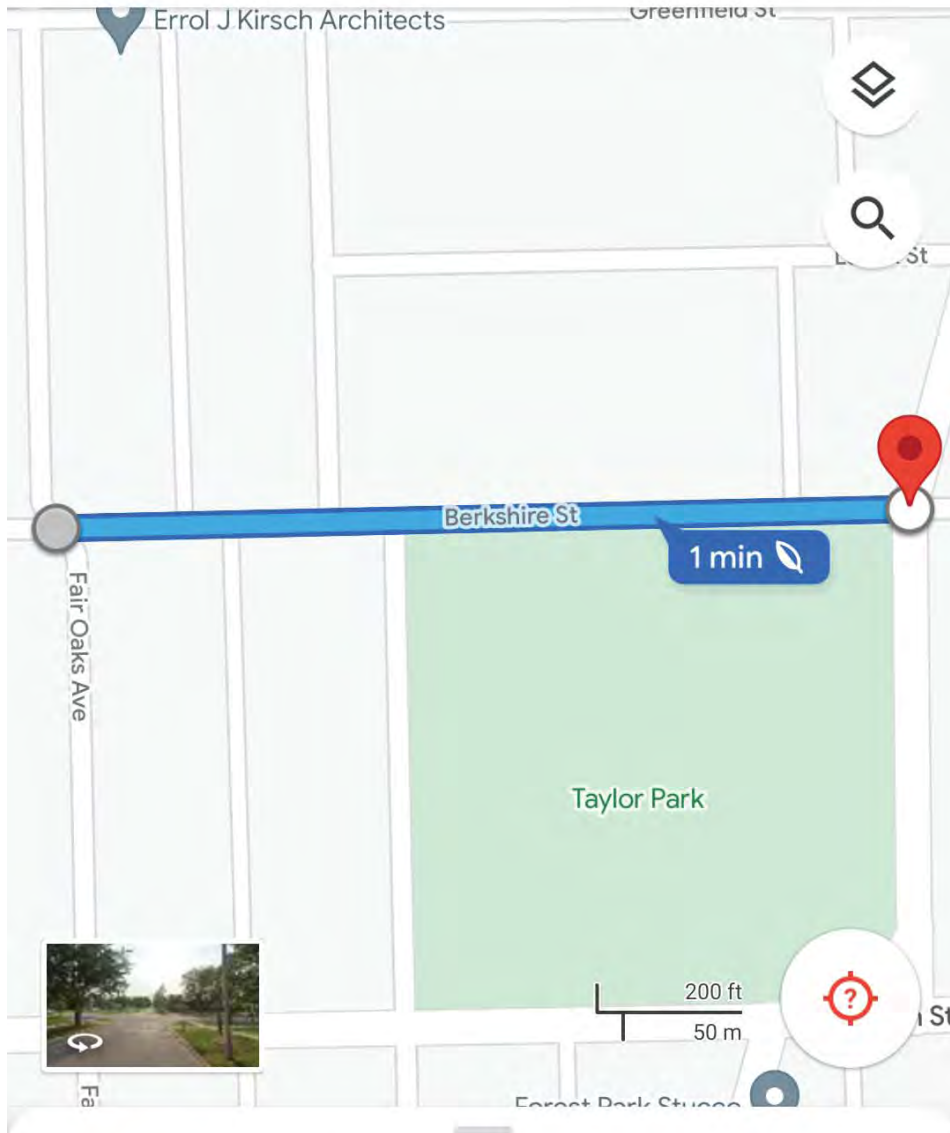
← ○ Berkshire Street & Fair Oaks Ave... ⋮

⋮

📍 Berkshire St & Ridgeland Ave ↕

🚗 1 min 🚏 4 min 🚶 4 min 🚲 1 min

🚧 Avoiding highways



1 min (0.2 mi)

Fastest route now due to traffic conditions

➤ Preview ≡ Steps 📌 Pin

From: [Rohan Fernandes](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Cc: [VOP Board](#)
Subject: Petition for Traffic Calming Devices on 400 blocks of Berkshire and Greenfield (Testimony below)
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 12:09:39 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Dear Members of the Transportation Commission of Oak Park,

I am writing below to voice **STRONG** support for immediate installation of traffic calming devices on the 400 blocks of Greenfield and Berkshire Ave. and in North-East Oak Park, in general.

We are all witness to impatient drivers using Oak Park residential streets to bypass traffic lights and congestion on thoroughfares like Ridgeland, Division and North Avenue. Most of this traffic appears to be reckless commuters passing through Oak Park vs. residents.

Recently, I was passed by a Kia driving west on Berkshire at 40-50 mph or more - who then proceeded to blow through the stop sign on Linden while there was oncoming traffic, kids playing on the sidewalk and a family biking (see attached photo). This is sadly, only one of several daily incidents that my family and I personally witness in our neighborhood as idiots behind the wheel almost kill children because they DNGAF about anything but themselves and their slight "time savings" by coming through the neighborhood at reckless speeds. At this point, we no longer feel safe to bike on these streets, let our children play in the yard, or even walk to school - its absolutely **UNACCEPTABLE!**

I am particularly concerned about the traffic around Taylor Park and Hatch Elementary School - seems like a bad story, waiting to happen!

Regarding any proposed mitigations, I find that our elected officials have conveniently selected pre-canned excuses in-favor of preserving the status quo, as I have found through different discussions over the last several months, which is frustrating at best:

- Speed Tables: Bad for vehicle suspensions (spoiler: only bad if you fly over them) and emergency vehicles
- Increased Enforcement: Limited police staff etc.
- Entry restrictions and cul-de-sacs: Not "pro-business" (I strongly believe that being pro "keeping our children alive" is greater than being "pro-business")
- One ways: Not convenient to residents(!?)
- Any mitigations or solutions?: A "Vision Zero study" was commissioned back in 2017 and the results should be imminent (this is the best one, by far!)

I strongly advocate the following mitigations for the 400 blocks of Berkshire and Greenfield:

- We need a speed-table on Berkshire - given its proximity to Taylor Park. There are families and children and pets cross this street into Taylor Park all the time. An exception needs to be made given the circumstances.
- We need additional stop signs at the following intersections:
- On Berkshire, at Elmwood
- On Greenfield, at Edmer and Rosell (these may seem excessive, but will be a strong

deterrent to reckless commuters)

I also believe the scope needs to be broader to better address the issue. Some of the ideas I STRONGLY advocate for:

- Every intersection on Berkshire, Greenfield and LeMoyne and cross streets should be 4-WAY STOPS! Infact, this should be extended throughout Oak Park! I really cannot understand why we have “Cross Traffic Doesnt Stop” intersections (seems so OPAF!...) as these can be dangerous in the best of times.

- The “half-entrance” to North Ave from Elmwood Ave, Harvey Ave and Lombard Ave should be cut-off completely - i.e. implement a full cul-de-sac, similar to Fair Oaks. North Ave can be easily accessed by commuters via Ridgeland, Oak Park, Columbian and couple other streets, and by residents via their alleys. This will greatly deter the commuters using Elmwood, Harvey etc. to bypass Ridgeland on their way to North Ave (which accounts for a lot of the traffic on these streets). I know some are not “fans” of cul-de-sacs, but the issue here is of personal safety and not of “fan-hood” preferences! For residents trying to access businesses on North Ave, cul-de-sacs are absolutely NOT a deterrent - so that argument is as ignorant as it is out-dated!

- Traffic going east on Berkshire and Greenfield should be forced to turn right on Ridgeland Ave (and maybe even on Oak Park Ave) - i.e. remove the “straight-shot” access from Austin to Harlem along these streets (e.g.: LeMoyne already has such an island at Oak Park Ave). This will deter plenty of commuters from using these streets as a means to avoid North and Division. The Village of River Forest recently blocked entry into RF via Greenfield, LeMoyne etc. from Harlem and via several streets from North Ave. Some folks complained initially, but everyone is now living a relatively safer life!

- Bring back the bike-only zones we had in Oak Park a couple years ago. Not only were those safer for bikes, children and pedestrians, but they also served as deterrent to reckless commuters using those streets!

- Last, but not least, school zones should be one-way streets for atleast a couple blocks. i.e. Harvey and Greenfield/Berkshire immediately east of Ridgeland. Other schools have mitigations - e.g.: cul-de-sacs for Longfellow and Holmes, one-way with restricted entrance for Whittier and Mann (Mann, because the median on Kenilworth is effectively one-way) - yet Hatch School streets are wide-open for drag-racing!

The goal should be to allow people to responsibly use these streets (respecting speed limits, right of way and life, in general) and strongly deter the ones that are using them as an alternative Expressway. Some of these measures can even be temporary - kept in place until sufficient people (and Google/Apple Maps etc.) re-route and modify their commuting habits away from OP residential streets. For example, the recent addition of the STOP sign on East/Greenfield appears to have a big impact - cars used to speed through that intersection to get to/from North Ave and now they are forced to stop (atleast most of them slow down somewhat).

To be honest, I have little understanding of why these issues are not discussed and addressed in a broader sense - rather discussed and addressed on a block-by-block basis. Most of these proposals do not need extensive meetings, reviews and testimonies while residents risk their

lives every day - they can be implemented in short order? We do not need more bureaucracy here - especially given its a rather significant safety issue.

I hope all of our individual anecdotal instances of reckless driving do not escalate into personal tragedy, as a result of inaction.

I will plan on attending the meeting on July 11th in person - and I look forward to hearing your responses and discussing the above points holistically.

WE NEED ACTION NOW!

Sincerely,

Rohan Fernandes

■ Lenox



From: [Jessica Schreiber](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Subject: Traffic calming measures
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 2:06:42 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hi,

I live at [REDACTED] N Elmwood Ave, Oak Park, the corner of Lenox and Elmwood. Cars speed northbound on Elmwood regularly, I assume because Elmwood goes through to North Ave. The T intersection in front of my house does not have any stop signs or cross walks. My son and other children play here and I am very concerned about the possibility of an accident. I have seen many cars narrowly avoid accidents with other cars at this intersection.

I am in favor of ANYTHING that the village can do to address this dangerous situation.

Thank you!
Jessica Schreiber

From: [Julie J. Olenn](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Subject: Tuesday hearing on Berkshire traffic petition
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 3:53:09 PM

I understand that you are collecting comments in advance of this hearing. I'll be brief:

1. If something is not done to slow drivers in the Berkshire block between Ridgeland and Elmwood, it is only a matter of time before a child is struck by a speeding/careless driver. Please don't let that be the reason to take action. It's astonishing to me that this petition has been slow-walked, as it is.

2. I don't see any measure being effective other than a speed bump. (Preferably, more than one!) I understand that is not among the offerings, but it needs to be considered. Perhaps some combination of chicanes, bulbouts and/or chokers would work, but that seems more extreme and poses the same issue for emergency vehicles. I'd rather opt for extreme than be ineffective, however.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Alison McKinzie](#)
To: [Transportation](#)
Cc: [Shawn Calvert](#); [Tom Garvey](#)
Subject: 400 Block Berkshire Traffic Calming
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 1:39:18 PM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hello,

I was referred to you by Tom Garvey, a neighbor from the 400 Block of Berkshire. I'd like to submit the following comments/anecdotes from our home at [REDACTED] Berkshire. Thank you for the opportunity to make our voices heard. Because I am a faltering public speaker, I am opting to email my comments.

Sadly, I think we all have anecdotes about rampant reckless driving with disregard for children, adults, pets, and bikes. The problem was certainly exacerbated during the pandemic.

I would like to submit two supporting instances of reckless driving.

- This winter, we were leaving for school/work and found our driveway blocked. Someone drove over our beloved newly planted parkway tree, killing it. The car drove into our garden and was stopped by a large rock. The car was probably coming North on Elmwood at a high rate of speed. I was heartbroken at the loss of this beautiful maple tree. Police report number. 23-0916 Officer 377 A Alvarez.**
- Another frightening event occurred this spring as I was turning in to my driveway. While I have had numerous incidences of people going East and passing me on the left as I signaled to turn into my driveway. The most egregious occurred as I waited for 5th-7th grader biking West bound on Berkshire. The car came within inches of mine and only then braked nearly missing the child. That could have been a tragedy.**

Because we must back out of our driveway, the high speeds in conjunction with park and school traffic, bikes, (and in our particular case nearly 4 years of contractor vans surrounding our drive and blocking our view) makes for a treacherous daily commute.

We are in favor of most of the traffic calming options including speed bumps or tables, a narrowing of the EB street entry, adding bike lanes or parking lines. We are in favor of anything but a stop sign or flashing lights directly in front of our homes. We feared a stop sign in front of our home was being proposed by neighbors from other blocks. We believe now that that would not be feasible as we would not be able to exit our drive. Idling cars and emissions would be ruinous to our quality of life.

It seems we have a unique situation on Berkshire as an East/West park-facing street becomes a route to bypass Division. Perhaps an exception is warranted?

Thank you,

Alison McKinzie

