

This is my request to Wilmington Area Planning Council on the Transportation Improvement Program for fiscal years 2010 to 2013 in support of the Shipley Road Bike/Ped Planned Improvements Study Project.

The Shipley Road Pedestrian Project is described by DELDOT as a study project. Surveys conducted by DelDOT evidenced over 80% community support.

Interconnectivity between neighborhoods and various recreational and educational facilities had been identified as a desire within the community.

I urge continued funding of the planning study for Shipley Road, a two lane road with the "country feel" and no mostly shoulders. Based on community comments, the design should be meandering where possible to provide an aesthetically pleasing walk that contributes to the country feel of the roadway corridor. High visibility crosswalks should be provided across side streets and Shipley Road to make connections between housing developments and the proposed context sensitive designed pathways.

I urge continued support for funding construction of phase 1 of the Shipley Road context sensitive designed pathway from Weldin Road to the Rockwood Greenway. This link is the first of 4 proposed phases. Phase 2 would extend the Shipley Road pathway from Weldin Road to Wilson Road. Phase 3 & 4 would extend from Shipley Road along Baynard Boulevard and Weldin Road.

The Shipley Road Pedestrian Project should be viewed as a "Corridor Project". As such, additional phases linking Alapocas State Park via Weldin Road and Marsh Road via Baynard Boulevard should be included in the planning study.

The Shipley Road corridor now provides access to the following public amenities and destinations: Alapocas (Blue Ball) State Park, Talley Day County Park and Library, the future Talleyville Girls Softball League at the Old Mill Lane School site, Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Shipley Heights County Park, Rockwood County Park and the Northern Delaware Greenway. A safe and sensitively designed Shipley Road pathway is needed now more than ever. There are now many more desirable destinations for pedestrians. However, as traffic has increased, the challenge of designing a safe pathway along Shipley Road has also become even greater. Roads like Shipley Road, Grubb Road, Baynard Boulevard and Weldin Road still maintain much of their "country road" feeling. The pathways along these roads should be sensitively designed to reflect and enhance this "country road feel". As traffic has increased over the years, the general dangerous conditions have worsened for our school children and adults who would otherwise chose to walk or bike along these roads if only we could do so without endangering our lives and the lives of our children.

I have attached two prior essays in support of context sensitive designed pathways along Grubb Road and Shipley Road. Both of these projects emanated from the Brandywine Hundred Bike/Ped Study about five years ago. Shipley Road can serve as a safe commuter bike route as well as providing interconnectivity as between neighborhoods are various recreational and educational facilities. "Safe Routes to Schools" should be considered as a funding source.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Robert S. Weiner
Council District 2, New Castle County, DE
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Louis Hinkle, aide to Councilman Weiner 302-395-8362

ShIPLEY Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Project :

http://www.deldot.gov/information/projects/shipley_rd_bike_ped_plan/

Project Limits

From the intersection of Shipley Rd. and Wilson Rd., extending south to the intersection of Shipley Rd. and the Northern Delaware Greenway.

Project Need

Interconnectivity between neighborhoods and various recreational and educational facilities had been identified as a desire within the community.

Project Overview

Presently DeIDOT is working to develop a concept for bicycle/pedestrian facilities in this area. In developing such a concept DeIDOT is seeking to receive community input and feedback via surveys, written comments, and public workshops. Additionally, DeIDOT and the supporting contractor have been identifying right-of-way, and gathering information on roadside conditions.

Future actions in concept development will be based on the input and feedback DeIDOT receives from the community.

Project Start Date

April 2007

Anticipated Completion Date

Undetermined

Current Construction Schedule

This is a planning study; any construction that may be necessary would be scheduled in a separate project following the conclusion of this study.

Contractor

CHPlanning

"Brandywine Hundred Pathways Needed"

Essay by Bob Weiner

The State Department of Transportation (DELDOT) has embarked on an initiative to work with our community to develop a concept plan for a bicycle and pedestrian path along Shipley Road. Later phases of this path ultimately might extend along Weldin Road, Baynard Boulevard and Wilson Road to connect to Talley Day County Park. The public has been invited to DELDOT's 2nd Shipley Road Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Workshop at Immaculate Heart of Mary, 1000 Shipley Road on Thursday November 8, 2007 from 4 to 7 PM. The first segment of Shipley Road to be studied is from Baynard Boulevard south to the intersection of the Northern Delaware Greenway a Shipley Road. Interested persons are invited to express their views in writing, giving reasons for support, or in opposition to the proposed plan. Comments will be received during the workshop or can be mailed to DeLDOT Public Relations, P.O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903. For further information contact DeLDOT at 800-652-5600 or write to the above address.

Construction funding for Shipley Road is currently not available but DELDOT does have limited funding to work with the community on "concept design".

DELDOT invited the community to a meeting at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on June 4, 2007 at which time representatives from DELDOT provided the community with initial draft of 3 options for a path:

1. Adding a sidewalk separated from the road by a grass buffer,
2. Adding a multi-use trail, also separated by a grass buffer,
3. Adding a 5 foot shoulder to the road with no buffer.

I recently met with DELDOT in advance of the upcoming second community meeting. DELDOT reports that the community consensus by two-thirds of those responding was to support a 4th option. The 4th option is a meandering context sensitive designed pathway which respects and leaves in place the mature trees and bushes to the extent possible. Such a pathway would preserve the existing vegetation as both a visual and safety buffer between the cars and the pedestrians. DELDOT representatives listened to the community preference and revised its presentation for the 2nd community meeting on Thursday November 8 to reflect this strong community sentiment.

The project has been broken into 3 phases, and it is possible that a fourth phase might be added:

Phase 1: Shipley Road from Weldin Road to the Rockwood Greenway;

Phase 2: Shipley Road from Weldin Road to Wilson Road;

Phase 3: Weldin Road from Shipley Road to the Blue Ball State Park;

Possible Phase 4: Baynard Boulevard from Shipley Road to Marsh Road.

The Shipley Road corridor now provides access to the following public amenities and destinations: Alapocas (Blue Ball) State Park, Talley Day County Park and Library, the future Talleyville Girls Softball League at the Old Mill Lane School site, Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Shipley Heights County Park, Rockwood County Park and the Northern Delaware Greenway. A safe and sensitively designed Shipley Road pathway is needed now more than ever. There are now many more desirable destinations for pedestrians. However, as traffic has increased, the challenge of designing a safe pathway along Shipley Road has also become even greater. Roads like Shipley Road, Grubb Road, Baynard Boulevard and Weldin Road still maintain much of their "country road" feeling. The pathways

along these roads should be sensitively designed to reflect and enhance this "country road feel". As traffic has increased over the years, the general dangerous conditions have worsened for our school children and adults who would otherwise chose to walk or bike along these roads if only we could do so without endangering our lives and the lives of our children.

DELDOT previously worked collaboratively with residents living along the Grubb Road corridor. The Grubb Road context sensitive designed pathway is a DELDOT approved concept plan, which has been approved for detailed design funding in FY 2010 and construction in FY 2011 by the State Department of Transportation. Once completed, the Grubb Road pathway will match the existing small sections of pathways which previously were built at both ends of Grubb Road (near Naamans Road and Foulk Road).

New pathways make our communities more livable. When these pathways are connected to the Delaware Greenway network, residents will be able to walk or bike from the Brandywine River to the Delaware River. Delaware Greenways, CCOBH representatives and I have collaborated to map the Brandywine Hundred pathway network. The maps are now available. I am pleased to have assisted both the planning and funding of the Brandywine Hundred pathway maps.

Citizens should not be held hostages to always having to use a motor vehicle. Lacking pathways, we have been forced too often to use motor vehicles in order to safely leave from and return to our communities. Residents ought to be able to safely walk so that might enjoy the out of doors, to exercise, to walk to visit friends and neighbors, as well as to walk to our schools, churches, shops and parks. We will all enjoy happier, healthier and longer lives if are able to walk regularly.

It would enrich our lives if we could enhance our current limited walking options to locations outside our immediate subdivisions. It is ironic that many of us are compelled to drive to locations where we can find a safe pathway or park within which to walk. We live in a mature community where due to

poor planning and narrow shoulders along our roads, we are limited as to how much we can retrofit to create pathways. These pathways are the “missing links” that we must challenge ourselves to create. Although the challenge is great and the options are limited, we must strive with determination to connect our communities, schools, parks and libraries with pathways.

It is much less expensive to build pathways than to build roadways. A safe network of pathways will encourage many citizens to shift some of our short excursions to these pathways. Pathways pay for themselves when a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis is performed; when factors include controlling healthcare costs, attacking obesity, encouraging healthy lifestyles, minimizing rush hour traffic congestion, fostering public safety and general traffic congestion management are included in the analysis.

I look forward to seeing all of you soon walking along our Brandywine Hundred pathways.

Bob Weiner News

7/15/2005

Greenways, Sidewalks Add to Livable Communities

Opinion Letter to the Brandywine Community News

By Robert S. Weiner
2nd District Councilman

I consider building pathways, greenways and sidewalks for pedestrians and bicyclists to be one of my most important goals as a public official.

Having heard from many citizens who share my concern, have requested that our friends in the Delaware State Department of Transportation (DELDOT) initiate a series of Shipley Road context sensitive design workshops to survey the community's preferences.

I have been asked by many concerned citizens to seek DELDOT support for pathways along Weldin Road and Baynard Boulevard as well.

With the addition of Blue Ball State Park amenities, Talley Day County Park enhancements (i.e. the library and bark park whose location at the park was as a result of my initiatives), the future Talleyville Girls Softball League at the Old Mill Lane School site (whose location at the site was as a result of my initiative) and the general dangerous conditions that exist for our school children and adults, there is a great need to address the challenge of designing a context sensitive pathways along these roadways and others.

"Context sensitive designed (CSD) pathways" by definition are narrower than sidewalks. CSD pathways curve around existing trees and bushes. CSD pathways recognize that we live in a mature community where we must make every effort to preserve our trees and bushes along the sides of our roads. CSD pathways protect the scenic and historic character of our community roads.

I had previously championed the construction of a context sensitive designed pathway along Grubb Road. We now have received confirmation from the State Department of Transportation that funding has been approved for the engineering design of the Grubb Road context sensitive designed pathway. However, there are still no funds appropriated for the construction of the Grubb Road pathway.

I had previously requested that the missing section of sidewalks along Foulk Road between the Lombardy School and the planned Blue Ball Park be constructed. I am pleased to advise that DELDOT is committed to build this missing sidewalk section despite recent budget cutbacks.

The addition of more pathways, greenways and sidewalks will make our community more livable. Citizens should not be held hostages to their motor vehicles with no other recourse to exit their subdivisions; being forced to retreat to the confines of a motor vehicle in order to safely leave and return to our communities.

We ought to be able to enjoy our environment, breath fresh and clean air, exercise, walk to visit friends and neighbors, walk to schools, churches, stores and parks.

I have recently received a letter from the State Department of Transportation supporting my efforts in implement pathways along Shipley Road, Baynard Boulevard and Weldin Road.

The most effective thing that each citizen can do in support of pathway construction is to e-mail or write to Ralph Reeb, director of Planning, State Department of Transportation and also to write to your State Representative and State Senator to express your support for context sensitive designed pathways along Shipley Road, Baynard Boulevard, Weldin Road and Grubb Road. They are all very supportive of pathways but it will make their job easier to obtain support for these projects if they receive e-mails and letters of support from citizens.

Also visit www.wilmapco.org and express your support to our regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by e-mailing or writing to Heather Dunigan and Tigist Zegeye.