



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

August 10, 2018

Ms. Katherine Ward, Co-Chair
The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Inc. (MVCCA)
P.O. Box 203
Mount Vernon, Virginia 22121-9998

Subject: MVCCA (Tran) 2018-03 Resolution MVCCA Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Safety Improvements

Dear Ms. Ward:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding safety concerns along Mount Vernon Memorial Highway between Richmond Highway and Old Mt. Vernon Road. Fairfax County is currently working on two projects, the Richmond Highway Corridor Improvement Project and the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail, which will address many of the issues highlighted in MVCCA's letter.

Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements Project:

The Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements Project will widen Richmond Highway (Route 1) from four (4) to six (6) lanes, add separated bicycle lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, and reserve median width to accommodate future dedicated bus-only lanes from Jeff Todd Way to Napper Road. All pedestrian and bicycle facilities will be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act, turn lanes will be extended to improve safety and capacity, and traffic signals will be optimized. The implementation of this project will address the traffic backups and safety concerns outlined in the MVCCA resolution.

Currently, the northbound Mount Vernon Memorial Highway lane configuration at Richmond Highway consists of dual left turn lanes and a shared thru-right lane. As mentioned in the MVCCA resolution, the shared thru-right lane backs up to a point that all traffic trying to approach Richmond Highway is stopped. As a result, drivers are forced to make unsafe maneuvers, including driving through local businesses or cutting through neighborhoods, to access Richmond Highway. To alleviate traffic queuing at this intersection, the Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements Project will add an exclusive right turn lane on this approach and convert the shared thru-right lane to a thru lane. The proposed configuration will consist of dual left turn lanes, a thru lane, and an exclusive right turn lane, which will provide greater capacity and improve traffic operations at this intersection.

Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail Project:

The Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail Project, Project No. 2G40-088-026, proposes the installation of a ten foot shared use path to complete the missing walkway segments from Richmond Highway to Southwood Drive. The proposed shared use path will meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, serve pedestrians and bicycles, as well as provide connections to existing transit facilities. Stopping Sight Distance for each pedestrian crossing within the project limits will be evaluated. Pedestrian crossings at Southwood Drive, Forest Haven Drive, Grist Mill Park, Old Mill Road, and Patton Boulevard will be enhanced with this project. Improvements proposed at each intersection consist of the following:

Fairfax County Department of Transportation

4050 Legato Road, Suite 400

Fairfax, VA 22033-2895

Phone: (703) 877-5600 TTY: 711

Fax: (703) 877-5723

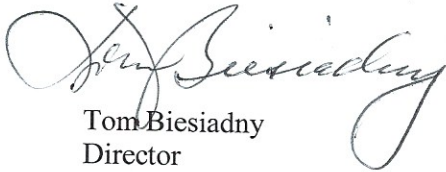
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot



- **Southwood Drive:** Proposed improvements include the installation of new curb ramps, new pedestrian signing that complies with the latest design standards, installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), and the installation of curb and gutter to reduce the crosswalk length crossing Mount Vernon Memorial Highway.
- **Forest Haven Drive:** The project will review and upgrade pedestrian warning signs and upgrade curb ramps.
- **Grist Mill Park:** Curb ramps will be installed and pedestrian warning signage will be upgraded.
- **Old Mill Road:** A new crosswalk will be marked across Old Mill Road (southbound approach) at the intersection of Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Curb ramps and pedestrian signals will also be installed.
- **Patton Boulevard:** The trail project will propose a new crosswalk at this intersection which will include new curb ramps and pedestrian warning signs.

For further information regarding the Richmond Highway Corridor Improvement Project, please contact Ajmal Hamidi at 703-877-5828 or Ajmal.Hamidi@fairfaxcounty.gov. For further information regarding the Mount Vernon Memorial Trail Project please contact Mark VanZandt at 703-877-5745 or Mark.VanZandt@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Biesiadny
Director

Attachments: MVCCA resolution/list of concerns

cc: The Honorable Dan Storck, Supervisor, Mount Vernon District
The Honorable Scott A. Surovell, Senate of Virginia
The Honorable Kathy Tran, Virginia House of Delegates
The Honorable Paul E. Krizek, Virginia House of Delegates
W. Todd Minnix, Chief, Transportation Design Division
Mark Van Zandt, Section Chief, Transportation Design Division
Chris Wells, Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Manager, CPTED
Eric Teitelman, PE, Chief, Capital Projects and Traffic Engineering Division
Ajmal Hamidi, Capital Projects and Traffic Engineering Division



The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Inc.
P.O. Box 203, Mount Vernon, VA 22121-9998

<http://www.mvcca.org>

Supervisor Dan Storck
Senator Scott Surovell
Delegate Kathy Tran
Delegate Paul Krizek

June 28, 2018

On behalf of The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Association's the attached resolution/list of concerns is forward for your support and action. This resolution and its accompanying list of safety concerns was approved by the MVCCA General Council unanimously on June 27, 2018.

Thank you for your support.

Katherine Ward

Katherine Ward
Co-Chair
MVCCA

Enclosed: MVCCA (Tran) 2018-03 Resolution MVCCA Mount Vernon Memorial Highway
Safety Improvements including the list of safety concerns

cc: Tom Biesiadny FCDOT
Allison Richter VDOT

**MOUNT VERNON COUNCIL OF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS (MVCCA)
RESOLUTION (TRANS) 2018-03 SUPPORTING IMPROVED SAFETY FOR DRIVERS,
PEDESTRIANS, AND BICYCLISTS ALONG THE MOUNT VERNON MEMORIAL
HIGHWAY (MVMH) AN APPROXIMATE 3.4 MILE ROAD FROM RICHMOND HWY
TO THE INTERSECTION WITH MT. VERNON HWY AT GEORGE WASHINGTON'S
ESTATE.**

- 1. WHEREAS:** Many Mount Vernon District residents live along the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and are deeply concerned with traffic challenges along this important commuting route that threaten the safety of drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists and advocate a better understanding of traffic volume, accident statistics, and options for safety improvements to make this important artery safer for all users, and;
 - 2. WHEREAS:** Citizens are very concerned that excessive speed and distracted driving has resulted in a significant increase in crashes involving both vehicles and pedestrians on the MVMH, and;
 - 3. WHEREAS:** Citizens are worried that the current safety signage and line of sight at all pedestrian crossings and intersections along the MVMH are not adequate as demonstrated by a recent tragic traffic accident involving a 15 year old jogger, who was first hit by one car and then run over by a second, all while in a crosswalk, causing significant injuries, and;
 - 4. WHEREAS:** Citizens believe it may be time to reduce the speed limit on the MVMH due in part to increasing traffic volumes due to many factors including the increased workforce at Fort Belvoir which is projected to have yet another major workforce increase in the 2025 time frame, and;
 - 5. WHEREAS:** Citizens have compiled and attached a detailed list of Safety Concerns and Proposed Improvements to aid in the addressing of the safety issues on the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway.
- A. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations ask Supervisor Dan Storck, Delegate Paul Krizek, Delegate Kathy Tran, State Senator Scott Surovell, to encourage the Virginia Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation to conduct a safety study of Mount Vernon Memorial Highway at the earliest possible time, and;
- B. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** When the safety study is completed that the results be shared with the Supervisor Storck, the MVCCA, and the citizens of the Mount Vernon District, and;
- C. BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:** After the completion of the safety study VDOT and FCDOT develop and implement a corrective action plan to improve safety for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists on all of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway.

Citizen List of Safety Concerns & Proposed Improvements

Mount Vernon Memorial Highway (MVMH)

Richmond Hwy to the intersection with Mt. Vernon Hwy at George Washington's Estate
Approximately 3.4 miles

Citizen Safety Concerns:

Residents are being severely injured on and along this road: A tragic example is a recent accident when a middle school-age jogger while in a cross walk near Southwood Drive was hit by one car and then run over by a second. This accident triggered action and a demand to look at this entire road for ways to make it safer.

1. Dangerous pedestrian crosswalks across the MVMH at Southwood Drive, Forest Haven Drive, Grist Mill Park, Cherrytree Drive, and Patton Blvd all have safety issues:
 - a. Poor line of sight at Southwood Drive
 - b. Road markings inadequate or non-existent
 - c. No safety lighting
2. Increased and still increasing volume of traffic
 - a. Witnessed all day but severe level at morning and evening rush
 - i. Increased by years of gradual population growth
 - ii. Dramatic increase after BRAC and is due for another increase
 - iii. Increased recently when the National Geospatial Agency consolidated its several locations to move some 5,000 personnel to that location and many had come from locations in Maryland where they had their homes.
3. Speeding and tailgating
4. Distracted driving
 - a. Weaving and near head-on are often observed
5. Cut through traffic increases
 - a. Old Mill Road is a favorite
 - i. SB segment from the light on MVMH leading to Lukens Lane
 - ii. SB segment from the light near Grist Mill Park to Cooper Road
6. Passing on right in right turn only lanes
 - a. North Bound: at Patton Blvd
 - b. South Bound: before Peartree Landing
7. Bureaucracy is slow to respond: When VDOT, FCDOT and the Fairfax County Public Schools must work together to solve a safety problem. Example: When asked about a request for a marked cross walk that took eight months to succeed.

Action requested:

Conduct a "Traffic Safety Study" along this corridor including all of its intersections and crosswalks and then fund and implement needed improvements.

Proposed improvements:

1. Make the Pedestrian crossings safer (all need upgrades):
 - a. Install flashing pedestrian crossing signs to all:
 - i. Particularly at the Washington Mill Elementary School
 - b. Repair all line of sight issues especially at Southwood Drive
 - c. Improve street signage and markings
2. Lower the speed limit
3. Add traffic calming measures on cut through streets
4. Add more enforcement.
5. Remark and retime the MVMH intersection with Richmond Highway

Suggested specific improvements to improve traffic backups and safety concerns on Mount Vernon Memorial Highway UPON approach to Richmond Highway

Currently:

The two left lanes are designated left turn only onto Richmond Highway South towards Fort Belvoir.

The single right lane is (both) straight through the intersection onto Jeff Todd Way and right turns onto North Richmond Highway towards Alexandria.

Problem:

The right lane often backs up to a point that stops all traffic trying to approach Richmond Highway and at other even worse times the backup is to the Grist Mill. This in turn pushes drivers to take all sorts of unsafe maneuvers including driving through all of the local businesses ... one of which is a school. It also causes drivers to divert earlier and cut through neighborhoods using Old Mill Road.

Suggested Solution:

Keep far left lane as a left turn only.

Change center lane to straight through only (or) straight and left.

Change far right lane to right turn only.

Re-time lights as needed.

Unanimously approved by the MVCCA General Council 6.27.2018