



LINCROFT VILLAGE GREEN ASSOCIATION Inc.

P.O. BOX 101 LINCROFT, NEW JERSEY 07738

"A COMMITMENT TO THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF OUR COMMUNITY"

September 17, 2003

Theodore A. Giannechini
County Engineer
P.O. Box 1255
Freehold, NJ 07728-1255

Dear Mr. Giannechini,

Thank you for providing our member representatives the opportunity to preview and ask questions regarding the newest Orth-Rogers proposals on CR 520. We truly appreciate the efforts the county has made to improve the Route 520 corridor while still considering the wishes of the local residents. Obviously, many of the proposals that were made by citizens last year have been incorporated in the latest proposals and we are very thankful for this.

We realize that the agenda for the meeting was limited to concerns involving the center of Lincroft Village only. However, many surrounding issues profoundly impact the traffic in the center of Lincroft. Specifically, access to the Garden State Parkway from a new exit 107 in Tinton Falls would be most beneficial in reducing traffic entering the parkway at both exits 109 and 105. We do not feel that any changes should be considered to Exit 109 until after exit 107 is built. Traffic on 520 could also be reduced by connecting southbound GSP to Rt. 18 north with a direct ramp. Similarly, Rt. 18 southbound traffic should be able to enter GSP north from a single ramp. Route 18 parallels Rt. 537 and 520 through Colts Neck and should be utilized as an east-west connection to the parkway. There are currently no easy connections between Rt. 18 and northbound Parkway. Extending Laird Rd. across Rt. 537 to a new Rt. 18 entrance could provide convenient access to Brookdale Community College via Phalanx Road. We hope that the county is considering these proposals and that these recommendations will be addressed in future updates.

The Executive Board of the Lincroft Village Green Association has reviewed the latest Orth-Rogers proposals and we have formulated the attached list of comments. Please take the time to read our comments carefully. After further discussion, the opinions that our members expressed at the meeting may have changed somewhat. Thank you again for including the community in your design process.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Hintz
Co-President

Winnie Scuteri
Co-President

Cc: Freeholder Harry Larrison, Jr.
Freeholder Thomas J. Powers
Freeholder Theodore J. Narozanick
Freeholder Edward Stominski
Freeholder Amy Handlin
Mayor Rosemarie Peters

A. Brookdale entrance on 520.

- 1) The proposed plan to build two jughandles is NOT acceptable. Instead the county should study the feasibility of replacing the current light with a modern, one-lane roundabout. The proposed jughandles would increase the red light wait time for westbound Rt. 520 traffic when the jughandle traffic (left into BCC) has a green, creating an additional traffic problem. (Westbound 520 traffic currently has a green light when the left turn lane into BCC has a green light.) A modern roundabout would keep all traffic moving.
- 2) We agree that left turn traffic from the post office should be prohibited if an easy turn around is available at the BCC entrance.
- 3) We agree that a small left turn lane into the post office should be added.
- 4) We do not feel that it is necessary to move the entrance or exit to the Lincroft Bible Church if a roundabout is built at the current entrance to BCC on 520.
- 5) The county should work with Middletown Township to build a new road from the BCC entrance on 520 to Middletown-Lincroft Road through the existing properties owned by the Bible Church and CBA.

B. Regarding 520 by Lincroft School and Phalanx Rd.

- 1) We oppose any plan to make Old Phalanx Rd. into a jughandle.
- 2) We oppose the plan to prohibit all left turns on 520 by building a 'green way' between Phalanx Rd. and the BCC entrance.
- 3) Instead, the county should change the intersection of 520 with Phalanx Rd. to a modern, one-lane roundabout. The Phalanx Rd. light is a major bottleneck for eastbound 520 traffic. A roundabout would keep traffic moving.
- 4) To help pedestrians and school children cross at the roundabout, a blinking light that can be activated to a red light by a pedestrian who wants to cross could be added.
- 5) With the installation of roundabouts at the BCC entrance and at Phalanx Rd., left turn conflicts could be eliminated. Left turns into the school and ball fields should be allowed while left turns out of the school, and into and out of the library and assisted living could be prohibited. Vehicles that are prohibited from making lefts would use the roundabouts to change directions. Left turns at the post office, Stag Place and residential driveways should be allowed.
- 6) Whether or not a roundabout is built, 520 should not be widened in front of the library. The two lane to one lane merge for westbound 520 traffic should remain between CR 50 and Phalanx Rd. where there are few driveways.. It should NOT be in front of the school or library where so many turns are occurring.

C. Regarding the 520 main intersection.

- 1) The proposed elimination of slip lanes and the addition of single right turn lanes on Middletown-Lincroft Rd. (one lane widening) and Swimming River Road (no widening) is acceptable ONLY IF a pedestrian phase is added to the light at the intersection of Routes 520 and 50. The best scenario for BOTH pedestrians and traffic would be to allow all right turns on red (right on red when leaving 520 is currently prohibited) but to install a pedestrian phase that would activate a 'NO RIGHT TURN' lighted sign when the pedestrian pushes the button. If all right turns on red are always prohibited and the slip yield lanes are removed, motorists will cut through side streets and shopping centers to avoid the red light. Allowing rights on red but adding a pedestrian phase with NO RIGHT TURN lights would solve this likely cut through problem.
- 2) Change the type of pedestrian light so that people know exactly when they should cross.

3) The current entrance to the Fleet Bank on Middletown-Lincroft Rd should be closed. It is too close to a major intersection and will only be worse if the road is widened by one lane at that point. Provide an entrance to Fleet Bank through a connection of their parking lot to the Lincroft Greens (former Tolas Plaza) shopping center. Also provide an entrance and exit to Fleet through the Acme access road.

D. Middletown-Lincroft Road, Acme access road and adjoining shopping centers.

1) The Acme access road should be widened to 2 lanes all the way from Middletown-Lincroft Rd. to the Acme, allowing both left and right turns into and out of the Acme access road from Middletown-Lincroft Rd.

2) A sidewalk with benches should be built to the north of the Acme access road from the Acme to Middletown-Lincroft Rd.

3) The installation of a raised brick crosswalk across the Acme access road at its intersection with the (Tolas) shopping center driveway is needed. This would both discourage speeding and cut throughs as well as provide a safe crossing point for seniors walking from Luftman Towers to the doctors' offices at the professional building next to the Fleet Bank. The raised crosswalk could be similar to the ones used at the new shopping center in Holmdel at Laurel Ave. and Rt. 35. A 'yield to pedestrian in crosswalk' sign would also be needed.

4) A crosswalk through the proposed landscaped center island in Middletown-Lincroft Rd. just north of the Lincroft Commons entrance is needed. Senior citizens from Luftman Towers would find the route both safer and shorter in walking to the Lincroft Commons, and the Lincroft Library if they could cross Middletown-Lincroft Rd. at the center island rather than walking to the main intersection of CR 50 and 520. Signage showing a senior citizen with cane on a 'yield to pedestrian in crosswalk' is also needed.

5) A small raised island rather than a painted island just south of the Acme access road to mark the beginning of the left turn lane from Middletown-Lincroft Rd. for left turns onto Rt. 520 is needed. This would prevent conflicts with vehicles in the left turn lane for the Acme access road. (Motorists currently ignore painted lane markers and turn into the center lane as early as the Lincroft Commons entrance to speed to a left turn at the intersection with 520.)

Newman Springs Rd. between Rt. 50 and Hurley Lane

1) Although we favor the proposal to build a center island on 520, we feel that the proposed configuration will cause problems. Specifically:

- a. Toop Plaza (location of Dunkin Donuts) is far too busy and too narrow to adequately accommodate 2-way traffic.
- b. Eliminating left turns into and out of the Exxon station will increase the amount of traffic that will have to use the left turn lane onto Swimming River Road. In addition, the increased number of left turns into the Exxon from Swimming River Rd. will also be dangerous since motorists will need to cross 3 lanes of traffic near an intersection to make the left.

2) We propose the following alternatives. (Please see attached sketch.)

- a. Build a smaller island in front of Toop Plaza that is approximately the length of Toop Plaza. Use part of the island to define the current left turn lane into Toop Plaza. Landscape the remainder of the island. Keep the current circulation pattern in Toop Plaza the same. The new island would prohibit left turns into the pharmacy lot.
- b. To prevent motorists from moving to the left turn lane for Swimming River Road too soon (at the Toop Plaza left turn lane), build a small raised island just beyond the Toop Plaza entrance, before the Exxon entrance.

- c. Do NOT extend the side of the island with a curb to the Rt. 50 intersection (on the left side of the left turn lane to Swimming River Rd). This curb, presumably to prohibit lefts into and out of Tolas Plaza, will not be necessary. With other access available (via Acme access road or Fleet Bank lots), motorists will voluntarily cease to make the dangerous left turns at Tolas Plaza that are now common. If the right turn driveways into and out of Tolas Plaza are angled sufficiently, left turns into and out of the shopping center will not be possible. Reinforce with no left turn signs. We agree with the proposal to eliminate all other driveways into Tolas Plaza from 520, including the driveways at the Nail and Subway shops.

3) A small landscaped island should be built on 520 just east of the Acme entrance. However the curb should NOT be extended to define the left turn lane for Hurley Lane. The curb may interfere with fire trucks and is unnecessary. Instead, paint the lines to define the left turn lane.

Swimming River Road

1) We favor traffic calming devices, such as center islands, but we feel that a center island on Swimming River Rd. between Oak St. and the Exxon station will block traffic that is a) backed up to make a left onto 520, b) turning left into the professional building and c) turning left into Triangle Square. We therefore cannot support this island.

2) The need to reduce the speed of traffic on Rt. 50 is apparent. Currently the speed on Rt. 50 is higher than the speed on Rt. 520 at the main intersection!! We feel that speed limit changes MUST be made. Please note that when traffic is heavy, it is already going slower. Reducing the speed limit will NOT impede traffic during peak hours. When traffic is light, speeding persists and this MUST be addressed.

Speed Limits on Rt. 520 and Rt. 50

1) The reduction in speed limit on CR 520 should be started sooner from both directions. From the west, begin the lower speed limit at the Brookdale entrance. From the east begin the lower speed limit at Jumping Brook Road or the Normandy Road underpass. At the center of the shopping area the speed limit should be 30 mph and not the present 35 mph.

2) The speed limit on Rt. 50 from Rose St. on Swimming River Rd. to the end of the center island beyond Lincroft Commons on Middletown-Lincroft Rd. should be changed to 30 mph.

3) The speed limit on Swimming River Rd. from the reservoir to Rose St should be changed to 35 mph.