

# Residents: Leave Route 520 alone

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FREEHOLD BUREAU

## They call widening dangerous; consultant advises uniform speed

MIDDLETOWN — About 350 residents packed a meeting here last night to urge county officials to turn down consultants' preliminary recommendations to widen Route 520.

Some proposals by the West Trenton engineering firm Orth-Rodgers Associ-

ates would increase traffic and speed along the roadway, threatening the safety of pedestrians, according to members of Lincroft Village Green Association.

A public hearing on the Orth-Rodgers study was held last night as part of

the process to decide final recommendations to improve the road. Monmouth County Engineer Theodore Giannechini said that his office will accept written comments through July 17.

After all comments, including those from last

night, have been reviewed, county engineers along with the consultants will come up with final recommendations, he said. Another public hearing will be held to discuss those proposals, he said.

The Monmouth County Board of Freeholders, who

would decide the final plans, have not reviewed any proposals yet.

Specifically, the association opposes Orth-Rodgers' recommendation to widen Route 520 to five lanes, including a left-turn lane, at Phalanx Road in front of Lincroft School

and near the library. Also, the association is against widening Middletown-Lincroft Road to add an additional through lane and realigning Swimming River Road.

A petition drive has gathered some 2,000 signatures against the plan, according to Hickory

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## Route 520

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Lane resident Abe Littenberg, who handed the signatures to meeting organizers.

The study, commissioned by the county two years ago, reviewed current and future traffic conditions along a 4.2-mile stretch of Route 520, also known as Newman Springs Road, from Crawfords Corner-Everett Road at the Holmdel border to Shrewsbury Avenue at Tinton Falls and Red Bank.

"These recommendations will not stop traffic from running through 520," said Linda Lintz, a board member with the association.

Mayor Patrick Parkinson told the panel that the township "totally opposes widening of the road in front of the library and the village center of Lincroft."

In his presentation before hearing public comment, Norm Deitch of Orth-Rodgers said, "In general, speeding is not a problem."

Stopping speeding is a matter of enforcement, he said. But Deitch said the speed limit should be consistent along the

roadway — the speed limits run from 40 to 50 miles an hour on different stretches of Route 520 — and the state should set a 40 mph limit on the entire roadway.

There are too many driveways along the stretch, causing many of the accidents, he said. Some of the driveways should be combined.

To increase pedestrian safety, crosswalks should be more visible to motorists with bright colors and ultimately a brick design.

Schoor DePalma, an engineering firm in Manalapan, analyzed traffic patterns at the entrance of Brookdale Community College and Route 520. Three alternatives were offered by representative Elizabeth Oltman:

- Add jughandles on both directions at the intersection, preventing left-hand turns into the college;

- Retain the left-hand turn into the college and create a jughandle on the other side for right turns into the college; or

- Allow two left-hand turns into the college.

To provide input, write to Giannechini at Hall of Records Annex, 1 East Main St., Third Floor, Freehold, NJ 07728.

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