



## Rivermont Avenue Safety Improvements Study Meeting Summary

A public meeting was held in a virtual format on Tuesday May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.

The following provides a summary of this meeting, along with responses to comments and questions that were asked by the public.

### Project Team

The following entities and people were present as the “panel” to present the project information and receive questions and comments.

- City of Lynchburg
  - Ryan Roberts, engineering Project Manager
  - Victoria Glasgow, AICP Candidate, Planner I
  - Eve Mergenthaler, Planning technician
- Hurt & Proffitt
  - Mike Johnson, Project Manager
- EPR
  - Bill Wuensch, Principal Engineer
  - Phil White, Planner

### Presentation Overview

The following sections generally describe the flow of the presentation.

### Project Location and Background

- Bedford Avenue is used as a neighborhood collector street and cut through between both ends of Rivermont Avenue. There has been continuing concern about safety at the Rivermont/Bedford Ave intersection. As such, in 2018 a safety study was conducted at the intersection because of the high number of crashes and a pedestrian injury. General findings were that:
  - Pattern of crashes were angle crashes caused by turning vehicles
  - Recommendations after this study included installing a median to prevent left turns from Bedford Ave through the intersection
  - The City prepared a grant application and the project from study scored well and was funded under the Smart Scale program.
- The intersection does not meet FWA signal warrants, and a signal could do more harm to intersection because it reduces amount of traffic that can move through intersection and would create delays
- As part of the presentation, a poll of the audience was conducted. The poll results were as follows: Familiarity of the intersection poll with meeting participants/city residents
  - 73% live within a couple blocks of the intersection

- 12% live elsewhere but pass through the intersection
- 15% live elsewhere but visit a destination on the intersection
- Project Scope and Purpose
  - Create design plans for the recommendation of the previous study
  - Conduct public outreach with affected stakeholders
  - Assist the city with procuring construction services
- **Design Elements**
  - Reduce conflict points
  - Crash data (from 2014-2020)
    - 9-Property damage only
    - 11-Severe injury
  - AASHTO wb-50, turning radius requirement: 17.0-45.7'
    - Inside turning radius needs to be almost 50 ft so tractor trailer can make that inside turn
  - Sight Distance and Parking
    - As one comes into one of the crosswalks and standing in curb ramp, ensures that there is adequate sight distance for the pedestrians to analyze their movement to make it across the street safely
    - Also need to account for vehicles who pull up to the stop bar, so they have adequate sight distance down Rivermont Ave to make safe movements/turns
  - Pedestrian safety: Daily pedestrian counts
    - 35 pedestrians cross mid-block (unprotected crossing) over Rivermont
    - Pneumatic tubes on the ground to calculate 85th percentile speed → speed to use for design of vertical curves, intersections, and entrances
      - 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is 38 MPH, noted the road is currently posted as 35 MPH which means there are no concerns about speeding.
  - Poll Results: How do participants in the meeting travel through the study intersection
    - 96% Driving
    - 41% Walking
    - 15% Bicycling
    - 4% Ride the bus
    - 0% Other
- **Conceptual Design Option A**
  - Includes:
    - Bike Lanes
    - Left Turn Restrictions (Mountable Curb)
    - Pedestrian Refuge Island and median to help traffic
    - Realign 2 Crosswalks
  - Does not address:
    - Sight distance on eastbound Bedford Ave (church obscures sight)
    - Intersection conflicts at McDonald St.
    - Irregular lane widths to accommodate median and island
- Option B
  - Includes: (to accommodate on street parking)

- Shared Lanes
  - Left turn restrictions (mountable curb)
  - Pedestrian refuge island
  - Realign 2 crosswalks
  - Creates green space
- Does not address
  - Sight stance on westbound Bedford Ave, making that right hand turn
  - Intersection conflicts at McDonald St.
- Option E
  - Includes:
    - Continues with shared lanes
    - Left turn Restrictions (mountable curb)
    - Pedestrian refuge island
    - Realign three cross walks
    - Create additional green space
    - Convert McDonald to one way
    - (Addresses all design components)
  - This option will have a slight negative effect on delivery vehicles for Exxon gas station. The design team will evaluate access options for fuel trucks and customers based on the proposed entrance changes.

[As a result of the public meeting, the design team will evaluate customer access to and from the Exxon station from Bedford Ave.](#)

**A full recording of the meeting is available on the City's project website.**

## **Meeting Comments**

Question/Comment 1: Rivermont has become a “freeway” Include more traffic slowing mechanisms and figure out the downstream traffic, right lane is going to be huge volume and it already is

Response: Within the limits of this project, we are attempting to include traffic calming measures to address speeds on Rivermont Ave. The speed study conducted by the design team shows that most through traffic approaching the intersection travels at or below 38 mph. thus, there is not a speeding concern.

Question/Comment 2: Think about how to get in and out of the Exxon and then go back onto Rivermont

Response: The Exxon entrance will be modified as part of this project to create some additional green space and facilitate fuel deliveries. The Exxon will retain entrances on Rivermont Avenue and McDonald St. therefore; fuel deliveries will adjust to the new traffic pattern.

Questions/comment 3: Resident believes that vehicular accidents may have happened at night/ were intoxicated as he has lived there for 6 years but has never seen accidents caused by traffic volume during the day, thinks changing traffic pattern to be unnecessary as it is based off a few incidents in a 6 year period

Response: This was the basis of the application for funds.

Question/Comment 4: Block away from Bedford, has seen 5 accidents in 8 months, buses go through fast, studies on her own and thinks street quieting would be helpful to slow down the traffic and could beautify the area, these people are distracted and are ripping down the road because there is nothing in their way

Response: The federal funds allocated to this project limit the areas where improvements can be made to the intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave., including the section of roadway where the pedestrian accident occurred. The current design includes traffic calming measures and aesthetic treatments.

Question/Comment 5: Please come and talk to those who live around Bedford

Response: The City doesn't plan on holding any additional public meetings, but the City is more than willing to have individual conversations with anyone in the project area.

Question/Comment 6: Lives opposite side towards downtown, additional accidents on Cabell and Victoria heading towards the bridge, issue with these accidents but also pedestrian safety. Rivermont between Oakwood has 7 lighted crosswalks for pedestrians, but the next crosswalk is on 5th street even though high speeds continue throughout the streets. When did you all do the pedestrian study (it is seasonal)? Any public meetings before this was sent to Smart Scale and about what the community wanted before the proposal was sent? Is there a larger comp plan to address pedestrian safety?

Response: The traffic study performed at this intersection was driven by numbers and analysis. The recommendations were to remove points of conflict between turning vehicles and through movements. The purpose of the pedestrian study was to show that pedestrian usage of Rivermont Ave. meets minimum thresholds to warrant the marked crosswalk. Because the volumes were adequate, the time of day or day of the week were not relevant. The study did show a large number of mid-block crossings of Rivermont Ave. which the design team will take into consideration during design.

Question/comment 7: Lives on Rivermont close to the intersection, walks up and down but now drives. Issues, along with the accidents and pedestrians, cares mostly about the children and the school buses. When church is in session, the streets are packed as church does not have enough parking, upset that this was the only meeting about this proposal as it's not what they want

Response: The design team will make every effort to improve the walkability of the intersection and improve pedestrian safety. We will look for opportunities to create green space, incorporate traffic calming measures, shorten crosswalks, and improve ADA access.

Question/Comment 8: Are you all just going to do this intersection or is this part of a bigger plan?

Response: The federal funds allocated to this project limit the areas where improvements can be made to the intersection safety improvement project of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave., including the section of roadway where the pedestrian accident occurred. There are currently no plans for a corridor study on Rivermont Ave.

Question/Comment 9: Larger problem is the Rivermont corridor, not just this intersection. Invitation to her house to discuss these issues with the people who are working on this and those who are a part of the community

Response: The federal funds allocated to this project limit the areas where improvements can be made to the intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave., including the section of roadway where the pedestrian accident occurred. Public meetings and additional studies on the corridor of Rivermont Ave. is outside of the scope of this project.

Question/Comment 10: Lives on Denver Ave, investment properties on early street, Cabell Street, lower part of Early Street. Lived in area for a decade and grew up there. If there is an option to do nothing, then that is what should be done. Can't say there are all of these accidents as people who cause them are driving recklessly, the fatal one was due to speeding, weaving, and crossing lanes to opposite side of traffic. All other minor accidents, data is two severe injuries, pedestrian injuries, 11 other accidents that have been REPORTED, I do not think warrants a half a million-dollar re-do. People who live in that area choose to live there. Do we want safety in our neighborhood? The issue is speeding, not those who are going 30. Stop light is not the answer, agrees with the gentleman. Whatever is going to impede traffic the least but will slow down traffic. Allowing traffic to flow onto Rivermont, not re-routing into heavier residential areas. If the speed were under control, neighborhood would be safer. If there is a stoplight there is going to be so much congestion.

Response: [The intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave. does not warrant a traffic signal. The proposed design improvements will follow the recommendations of the traffic study performed by ATCS in 2018 which evaluated the high number of angle collisions and one pedestrian fatality and was used as the basis for the funding application.](#)

Question/comment 11: Rivermont intersection was showing up on a state-wide crash data map, to credit the city, there was a new program in 2018, saw there was a chance to go after some Federal money for a conflict point.

Response: [This was a unique opportunity for the City to submit an application for Federal funds to improve safety at this specific intersection.](#)

Question/comment 12: Church facilities manager - This intersection was identified at state levels as a hazardous one, what was the cause of this? 40/50 parking spaces, another 20 at cemetery, more spaces behind church, I have not seen any accidents at this intersection but have been two or three off Ruffner Pl., worried about the diversion of traffic. Also worried because the stoplights influence the rate of speed in between the stoplights, opportunity to do a more comprehensive study on how to make the entire road safer and slower

Response: [VDOT crash data revealed a high crash rate at this specific intersection. The traffic study performed by ATCS did not show a substantial increase of traffic on any of the adjoining streets, but residents who typically make left hand turns at this intersection will enter and leave their properties by alternative means. Currently, there are no plans for a corridor study on Rivermont Ave.](#)

Question/Comment 13: Grew up in Lynchburg, seen numerous accidents outside of Denver Ave. Lived in Nelson County, a traffic light on 29, went from no accidents to several each year. Is a big fan of the round-a-bouts in Charlottesville, with pedestrian safety measures with light up cross-walks. Pedestrian safety does need improvements. Nervous that proposal is being rushed

Response: The intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave. does not warrant a traffic signal and a round-a-bout cannot be installed due to available space. The proposed design improvements will follow the recommendations of the traffic study performed by ATCS in 2018 which evaluated the high number of angle collisions and one pedestrian fatality and was used as the basis for the funding application. This project is following the typical timetable for roadway improvement projects.

Question/Comment 14: People on Cabell Street have begged for help with pedestrian crossings and turns onto Rivermont Ave. The whole street needs to be looked at for safety for children, pedestrians, turning movements, more than one problem. Worried is going to make heavier traffic flow going up Rivermont

Response: None of the proposed improvements at Bedford Ave. will have a noticeable effect on traffic volumes or speeds on Cabell St. The design team is evaluating if the funding source will permit pedestrian improvements at the intersection of Cabell St. and Rivermont Ave. which is currently outside of our project limits.

Question/Comment 15: Crosswalk on the right side coming from Exxon across the street. People cross here every day. Pedestrian studies should be conducted in the summer.

Response: The pedestrian counts conducted captured 201 pedestrian crossings within a 12hour period. The highest hour of pedestrian traffic was 11:30 – 12:30 with 43 pedestrian crossings.

Question/Comment 16: How soon do we have to do something before this money disappears, or is there time to pause and have more community meetings and do it right the first time? Is there a way to expand the focus on traffic safety issues plus/minus a mile from this intersection to also use this money to address part of the corridor?

Response: The federal funds allocated to this project have timeframes for spending and must show progression and also limit the areas where improvements can be made to the intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave., including the section of roadway where the pedestrian accident occurred. The improvements have to follow the recommendations of the traffic study used as the basis for the funding application.

Question/Comment 17: Of the options you presented, would agree with design option C but it is not totally sufficient

Response: The design team will continue to look for ways to address additional safety issues at this intersection throughout design.

Question/Comment 18: Is there an animated/Virtual reality simulation of what traffic would look like with these design options?

Response: The traffic study was based on crash data and did not warrant any traffic simulation.

Question/Comment 19: Will there be additional public meetings as there is still much to be discussed? Or do the community members need to put those together? Will you all re-do the pedestrian data since the data collected is not the full picture?

Response: The design team for this project has no plan for additional public meetings but is more than willing to have individual conversations with anyone in the area.

Question/Comment 20: Lives River house side, as part of the evaluation, did you look at the impact of increased traffic on Cabell and Rivermont from this proposal or are we moving this problem from one intersection to another?

Response: The proposed improvements will not increase traffic on Rivermont Ave. and one of the proposed improvements at Bedford Ave. will have a negligible effect on traffic volumes or speeds on Cabell St.

Question/Comment 21: Needs to be a broader neighborhood meeting before the proposal proceeds

Response: Currently, there are no plans for a corridor study of Rivermont Ave.



## Questions/Comments Received Via Email

Question/Comment: Phone message from Ruffner Pl. resident who was concerned about her street being closed during construction, or losing her on street parking ability.

Response: I called her back, and told her as to my knowledge, construction activities should not result in her street being closed or on street parking being removed.

Question/Comment: Received 20 May 2021

Hi, I am confused by the logic in the solution to this intersection, based on traffic movements through the intersection. The Planning Study/Safety Study reports that 1% of the cars entering the intersection from Bedford Ave during AM and PM rush hours (24 out of 2,139) are making either through movements or left hand turn movements. The solution implies that this 1% of traffic is responsible for the majority of the accidents in the intersection. Were past accidents caused exclusively or primarily by vehicles making through movements or left hand turns from Bedford?

Additionally, since the traffic study was done during AM/PM rush hours, it implies that the majority of accidents occurred during those times. However, no data is presented to indicate this is true. At what times did the accidents occur?

Also, the report states that the proposed solution will eliminate 10 of 24 conflict points. Based on Figure 5, that makes sense. At which conflict points did the accidents occur? If these conflict points had been eliminated prior to 2011, would we have experienced no accidents at this intersection?

What did your analysis of a stop light at the intersection tell you? I would love a traffic circle at the intersection, but the past city traffic engineer told me that you guys would have to buy and raze the gas station, and that's too expensive.

Thanks!

Response: The traffic study was conducted by another consultant; so I cannot answer all of the questions raised here. I can state that all traffic analysis is conducted during AM and PM peak hours between Tuesday and Thursday because those are typically the highest volumes at any given intersection. The volumes were not used as the basis for the recommendations. The recommendations were made based on the types of accidents that occurred at the intersection. The volumes were included to show that the impacts of restricting the left turns onto Rivermont Ave. were minimal and would only affect local residents and not cut through traffic. Traffic volumes at this intersection will not warrant a traffic signal and there isn't adequate room to evaluate a round-a-bout.

Question/Comment: Received 20 May 2021

Dear City of Lynchburg,

Thank you for tackling this issue. I fully support an additional in-person neighborhood meeting as requested by many of the participants of the meeting.

The facilities manager at Gospel Community Church offered their building for this meeting. Multiple participants and long-time residents clearly stated that the solutions were short sighted and didn't have a holistic approach.

Our family has lived off of Rivermont for 7 years and speed is the biggest issue. It's excessive from Oakwood Country Club all the way to the Rivermont Bridge.

Our firm members have been on planning and zoning board and have had to deal with traffic issues on many projects. Given other solutions we have observed over the years, we are not convinced that the suggestions presented Tuesday evening will solve the problem. The traffic slowing needs to happen well in advance of this intersection on both ends. Tom Martin has worked to implement bike lanes and "road diets" that would be more useful.

The reason speed is not an issue from Oakwood to Kroger is that the road is only two lanes. The four lanes and very wide lanes that exist on many parts of Rivermont promote excessive speed.

Less costly solutions that should be considered are:

- a. Striping to make continuous bike lanes...similar to Charlottesville and other towns
- b. Traffic calming planting areas near the gas stations that help slow traffic. Traffic calming areas near Denver Ave. Currently, cars parked there make it difficult to see oncoming traffic and it's dangerous for the kids waiting for the bus.
- c. Potential striped bike lane on Rivermont Bridge to reduce car traffic to two lanes. This would slow traffic and also help the D street entrance to Rivermont which is just waiting for an accident now that there are more residents in Daniels Hill and a wonderful retail bagel shop there.

A more costly approach may be a traffic circle, although there may be resistance to this, it slows traffic, makes the Bedford area a bit of a landmark with nice plantings, and would be safer for pedestrians.

Response:

Public meetings and additional studies on the corridor of Rivermont Ave. are outside of the scope of this project. The design team is looking for ways to incorporate traffic calming measures into this project, but the federal funds allocated to this project limit the areas where improvements can be made to the intersection of Rivermont Ave. and Bedford Ave., including the section of roadway where the pedestrian accident occurred. We conducted a speed study at two locations within our project limits and the resulting 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile speed was 38 mph.

Comment/ Question: Received 18 May 2021

Good evening,

Tonight, myself, my professor, and my partner in research all joined in and watched the meeting that took place. We are doing public history research this summer here at Randolph College.

Obviously, there are a broad range of concerns that have been addressed this evening. Though late in the meeting, you disclosed to the crowd that the money must be used here at this part of Rivermont.

No I am not an engineer, but I am a college student who frequently spends her time driving through this place. I have come too close to pedestrians with my car due to poor lighting and poor places for the pedestrians to walk.

I am from Danville, VA, and I spend my time frequently in the downtown area there. There are many of the same issues here that are there. To get back to school from the other side of Lynchburg, obviously since Main Street is still being torn apart, I use Commerce Street almost every day. That street has HEAVY traffic, but what is helpful, as is on Church Street that has heavy traffic, are "all stop" signs. In Danville's Downtown Area, Lynchburg's Church Street, and Commerce Street, the "all stop signs" have helped and made these areas safer for drivers and pedestrians. I think that if there were these types of stop signs at this intersection, with more lights and a pedestrian island, traffic would be slowed and the area would be safer.

Also, the speed limit could be reduced. It seems that these options I have listed would be cost effective, no stop lights, no roundabout, no traffic cutoffs, and not create any one way streets.

This is just my opinion. I thank you for spending the time to have this meeting, despite how late in the game you may have had it.

Thank you,

Response: [There is not a speeding issue to reduce the speed for and all way stops do not meet the warrants. Additional lighting can be considered with this design by increasing the number of lights or the wattage of existing lights.](#)

Question/Comment: Received 18 May 2021

Another thing is that there is drug traffic on Rivermont in this area. There needs to be a police presence in this area. The last speaker is right. There isn't enough contact with the residents to determine what is needed.

Response: [The scope of this project is limited to roadway improvements as outlined in the traffic study completed by ATCS in 2018.](#)

Question/Comment: Received 14 May 2021

I live near the corner of Early Street.

This agenda needs to be expanded to include stopping and slowing traffic on Rivermont at Early. This is a five way intersection. I moved to this house in late October 2020. Since then there have been four serious accidents, one of them fatal. At least 2 of them requiring hospitalizations.

I watch this traffic every day. This is a killer intersection because Rivermont traffic is way too fast, and no one is safe crossing the street, or making a turn off or on to Rivermont.

Early Street needs a stop sign on both sides of Rivermont or at a minimum rubber traffic slowers. This is deadly.

I can't believe you guys are doing nothing about our intersection and we have called the Mayor, City Council people, police chief and the Traffic Department.

PLEASE FIX THIS DEADLY PROBLEM. SPEED, THE TURN IN RIVERMONT AND FIVE STREETS INTERSECTING AT THE SAME PLACE ARE THE PROBLEM.

THEY NEED A STRUCTURAL SOLUTION AND YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF STRUCTURE. PLEASE FIX IT NOW/ THANK YOU,

Response: Sent 17 May 2021

Thank you for taking the time to review our conceptual plans for the Rivermont Avenue and Bedford Avenue intersection. The design team is familiar with the area and we realize that the proposed improvements at this intersection are a targeted solution which will not address all of the issues through this corridor. I hope you will have a chance to attend, and wanted to be sure we answered you directly. A recording of the public meeting will be available on the project website after the public meeting.

This design project is focused on the safety improvements outlined in a traffic study conducted in 2018 which focused just on the intersection we are evaluating currently. Because of the funding source, we are limited to the proposed improvements, but this project has provided some additional background data for the Rivermont Ave. Corridor.

We have completed a speed study and conducted pedestrian counts at the Bedford Ave. intersection. In the meeting, we will quickly cover the results of those studies. We found that most of the traffic on Rivermont is traveling at or below 38 mph and that pedestrian traffic at this intersection can be as high as 40 crossings per hour. The City is included in all of the design discussions so they are aware of the comment regarding reduction of the speed limit on Rivermont and I know of several other corridor wide recommendations that have already been made.

If you have any further thoughts, please feel free to email them to our design team.

Sincerely,

Mike Johnson

Question/Comment: Received 11 May 2021

Greetings,

In reference to the proposed project for the intersection of Rivermont and Bedford here are my thoughts. We deal with this intersection, and also the intersection of Rivermont and Cabell on a regular basis.

Coming from our side of Rivermont we typically make left hand turns by going around the block and using Cabell, though it can be very difficult based on traffic. Based on your current plans it appears you are proposing blocking left hand turns onto Rivermont from either side of Bedford. With our experience, depending on the time of day, that won't help. With the current speed folks travel, and limited visibility with cars parked on Rivermont, it is difficult, and sometimes risky, trying to even make a right hand turn onto Rivermont. With your current proposal you will also have more folks making a left off of Cabell, which as noted can be difficult, and is just moving the problem from Bedford.

I have two recommendations to improve the situation.

First, install a streetlight at the intersection of Rivermont and Bedford. This will take the bulk of the risk off folks making a turn in either direction onto Rivermont.

Second, reduce the speed limit to 30 mph. Even with a stoplight you will still have folks making right turn on red, so there will still be a hazard. I actually recommend doing this the entire length of Rivermont, which for most of the route is technically a residential area. With street parking on both sides, and the current speed limit, drivers will have little time to react if a child or pet runs out from between cars.

Thank you for addressing this situation and the opportunity to comment.

Response: Sent 17 May 2021

Thank you for taking the time to review our conceptual plans for the Rivermont Avenue and Bedford Avenue intersection. The design team is familiar with the area and we realize that the proposed improvements at this intersection are a targeted solution which will not address all of the issues through this corridor. We plan to address some of your comments at the public meeting and I hope you will have a chance to attend, but wanted to be sure we answered you directly. A recording of the public meeting will be available on the project website after the public meeting.

Our team has done a quick review of the intersection and the traffic volumes do not warrant a traffic signal. In order for a traffic signal to have a net benefit, there are specific thresholds for turning movements which are not met at this intersection. That is a very simple answer to a more complex analysis, but a traffic signal was evaluated. A traffic study was conducted at this intersection and the solution which provided the greatest benefit was a reduction of conflict points. With a majority of traffic using Bedford Ave. as a cut through to the western intersection with Rivermont Ave. our team has looked for ways to reduce turning movements at the intersection while permitting the predominate movements and looking for opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and sight distance.

We have completed a speed study, and I may have even met you the morning I was placing the road tubes in front of you home. We have also conducted pedestrian counts at the intersection. In the meeting, we will quickly cover the results of those studies and outline the ways that the three conceptual plans address the key design components. We did find that most of the traffic on Rivermont is traveling at or below 38 mph and that pedestrian traffic at this intersection can be as high as 40 crossings per hour. The City is included in all of the design discussions so they are aware of the comment regarding reduction of the speed limit on Rivermont and I know of several other corridor wide recommendations that have already been made. Because of the funding source, we are limited to the proposed improvements for this project.

If you have any further thoughts, please feel free to email them to our design team.

Sincerely,

Mike Johnson

Question/Comment: Received 07 May 2021

Hi - I live on Rivermont

In the draft designs, what does the yellow indicate? Lane markings, or raised islands?

Was any thought given to just a stoplight at the intersection? This would be the most reasonable solution in my mind. Prohibiting a left hand turn from Bedford onto Rivermont will cause some distinct issues for me (and I'm sure others) as the only access to my building is from the rear. I have a 28' car hauler which I use to transport my collector cars, and not being able to turn left onto Rivermont would cause difficulties as I would have to go the opposite direction, try to maneuver down some side streets, then come back up Bedford on the opposite side to turn onto Rivermont towards downtown so I could get to Route 29. Not easy to do with a truck and trailer combination.

Prohibiting left hand turns onto Rivermont still will not solve the visibility issues of cars being difficult to see from Bedford as the travel on

Rivermont. A stoplight would address this, as would separate left turn and straight/right turn lanes on Bedford.

I look forward to your comments and the virtual meeting.

Response:

Sent 17 May 2021

Thank you for taking the time to review our conceptual plans for the Rivermont Avenue and Bedford Avenue intersection. The design team is familiar with the area and we realize that the proposed improvements at this intersection are a targeted solution which will not address all of the issues through this corridor. We plan to address some of your comments at the public meeting and I hope you will have a chance to attend, but wanted to be sure we answered you directly. A recording of the public meeting will be available on the project website after the public meeting.

The yellow in the conceptual drawings is a concrete median. Due to the nature of traffic at this intersection, we are proposing a mountable curb to prohibit movements and vertical curbs to protect pedestrians within the crosswalk island.

Our team has done a quick review of the intersection and the traffic volumes do not warrant a traffic signal. In order for a traffic signal to have a net benefit, there are specific thresholds for turning movements which are not met at this intersection. That is a very simple answer to a more complex analysis, but a traffic signal was evaluated. A traffic study was conducted at this intersection and the solution which provided the greatest benefit was a reduction of conflict points. With a majority of traffic using Bedford Ave. as a cut through to the western intersection with Rivermont Ave. our team has looked for ways to reduce turning movements at the intersection while permitting the predominate movements and looking for opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and sight distance.

We have completed a speed study and conducted pedestrian counts at the intersection. In the meeting, we will quickly cover the results of those studies and outline the ways that the three conceptual plans address the key design components. We did find that most of the traffic on Rivermont is traveling at or below 38 mph and that pedestrian traffic at this intersection can be as high as 40 crossings per hour. The proposed improvements will also restrict some of the parking near the intersection which will improve sight distances.

As part of the conceptual design, we are also including turning clearance analysis for some of the vehicles we know utilize the intersection. These vehicles include a 53' tractor trailer which makes deliveries on Bedford Ave., the fuel delivery vehicles utilized by the gas station, and a car pulling a trailer turning onto your street from Rivermont Ave.

Is your car carrier a hitch or goose neck?

Do you pull it with a standard or super duty truck?

I would like to accommodate your vehicle wherever possible. As for the turning movements southbound onto Rivermont Ave. we are proposing a left turn from Cabell St. but I have never pulled a trailer through your neighborhood; so any insight you may have on those intersections would be beneficial.

Sincerely,

Mike Johnson

Question/Comment: Received 17 May 2021

Mike, thank you for the reply. While I am disappointed and surprised that a traffic light hasn't been deemed the simplest, most cost effective, and reasonable solution, including addressing pedestrian crossings, seems like the matter has already been decided without input. A traffic signal triggered only by cars on Bedford just seems like such a logical and inexpensive solution. If there is no traffic on Bedford, then Rivermont flows as it does now. 'Push to cross' buttons would allow pedestrian crossings to be addresses. I don't see how the planned changes address pedestrian crossings at all, maybe this will be explained at the meeting.

I pull my 28' trailer with my Ram 3500 Heavy Duty. Because of the way the access to my property is situated, and the parking issues on Bedford, my only option is to turn left out of my drive onto Bedford (towards Rivermont). And that only works when cars are not parked illegally, which they often are. There is absolutely no way to maneuver my truck and trailer around the back side streets to try to get to Cabell. So I will now have to turn right on Rivermont, loop around somewhere, come back up to get on Rivermont before I can head towards 29.



Question/Comment: Received 18 May 2021

Mike, since it sounds like this is a done deal based on the meeting we just had, keep in mind with my truck and trailer I'm at least 50' long. If you force me into a right hand turn onto Rivermont from Bedford, there is going to have to be a lot of room between the sidewalk and any island, as I obviously won't be able to make a sharp right turn - will have to go out a ways to get the trailer around the corner. This hasn't been an issue so far no matter which direction I go, but will definitely be a factor if I have to go right. There is no option to go down any of the other residential streets to get to Rivermont. Would be glad to do a walk-thru with you if that helps.

Response: Sent 18 May 2021

Thank you for letting me know. I am looking at the clearance for that right turn.

I did drive the back streets and can see the limited access. Let me do a little more analysis and get back with you. My original intent was to install a vertical curb on that island, but we may need to adjust that plan.

I'm still thinking about other options but have not found one yet; so please feel free to email me if you think of anything or have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Mike

Question/Comment: Received 18 May 2021

Thanks Mike. I know you understand that I still think a traffic light, triggered only when traffic approaches from either side of Bedford would solve all these issues and make pedestrian crossing even safer, but for some reason it doesn't qualify for a light.

If I can provide any other information or be of help, just let me know also.