

Tom Meyer, Chief, Traffic Studies Group

Mr. Meyer,

This is intended to confirm our discussion this morning regarding the need for a traffic light at the intersection of Route 1 and Bridge Road. This intersection is within the private community of Middlesex Beach, which is South of Sea Colony and North of South Bethany on Route 1.

Middlesex Beach is bounded on the North by Short Road and on the South by Evergreen Road. Currently, there is a traffic light to the North of the community at the Route 1 entrance to Sea Colony, and another light on our South border at Route 1 and Evergreen Road. Evergreen Road primarily serves the community of South Bethany to the West of route 1.

I have been authorized by David Weiching, the President of the Middlesex Beach Association, to pursue this issue with the proper authorities.

As you are, no doubt, well aware, traffic along Route 1 is increasing at an alarming rate each year. Our community straddles Route 1, with about two-thirds of the homes on the West side of Route 1. Consequently, we have a large flow of pedestrians crossing Route 1 in order to get to the beach and then back to their homes.

As someone who resides on the West side of Route 1 (at Bayberry Road,) I can tell you from first-hand experience that the only way to cross Route 1 in the summer is to be very patient until there is a momentary break in the traffic, then make a mad dash across two lanes of traffic to the center median strip, then repeat the same exercise to get across the other two lanes of traffic. I can also tell you that such a sprint is not recommended for either older people or youngsters, who may lack both the speed and judgment.

Admittedly, while the major part of this problem is caused by the ever increasing volume of traffic, it is further aggravated by the speed with which vehicles routinely travel along this stretch of highway. The posted limit is 35 MPH, but few travel at this speed because motorists have learned that there is virtually no enforcement in our area. (Further aggravating this traffic problem are the 'u-turns' which North bound traffic make to access commercial establishments located on the West side of the South bound lanes. This clearly adds to pedestrian confusion and danger crossing Route 1 safely.)

Regardless, this is a very serious safety issue, and an accident just waiting to happen.

It is my understanding that there have been periodic discussions about a light at this intersection. And, last year, some discussions took place between DELDOT and the Association through Sharon Adams, a member of the Middlesex Board of Directors. It is not clear to me whether or not traffic studies, at the peak summer period, were actually undertaken, but I was left with the impression that discussions broke-down when we were informed that the State had taken the position that Bridge Rd. is a private road and therefore the State would not pay for a light at this intersection.

Frankly, I think the issue is one of pedestrian safety, and the funding is a secondary issue, which can be addressed at an appropriate point in time.

On behalf of the Middlesex Beach Association, I am requesting that you review your records on this matter, and work with us to see how best we can address these safety concerns, as quickly as possible. I would also appreciate it if you could provide me with a contact name within the Delaware State Police, to see if they could patrol this area more vigorously, and set-up speed traps on route 1, within our community.

I can be reached by e-mail at bschoonover@attglobal.net, by telephone at 302/539-2043 or by mail at 16 Bayberry Rd Bethany Beach, DE 19930.

My thanks for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.