

From: K. Ann Campbell, LLM JD JSM BS AAS [<mailto:kacampbelljd@gmail.com>]

Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 3:02 PM

To: Jim Wheeler <jwheeler@berlinnh.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Line of vehicles blocking road and crosswalk

Hello Mr. Wheeler:

Attached are two images showing long line in front of Dunkin's drive-thru blocking ramp/road in front of Eagles Club.

Pedestrian safety issue

A crosswalk extends from bank park to almost exactly where that drive-thru line spills into the road. Not really sure why a cross walk was painted there - but pedestrians often have to wave vehicles to back up because road and crosswalk are usually blocked. Many drivers are unwilling to move forcing pedestrians to wait until that drive-thru line is completely gone. As pedestrians cross from sidewalk in front of Eagles Club toward the bank park, they must stand directly in front of vehicles with running engines waiting in line. Some drivers shift their vehicles into "park" while waiting in road but others simply put their foot on the brake which creates very dangerous conditions for pedestrians who must walk around their vehicle to access the crosswalk. Meanwhile, other vehicles are approaching that same crosswalk from Main St. to get to intersection on Pleasant Street adjacent to Dunkins on the other side of the median. Few drivers stop for pedestrians, but speed on through - many do not even look to see whether anyone is on that crosswalk. Stunning to witness the recklessness. That means pedestrians must wait at median in center of road/crosswalk until the speeding ramp vehicles pass by. Most vehicles try to beat the yellow light and speed through intersection, nearly running down whoever is standing on that crosswalk. Potentially deadly situation. I know. Cars have come very close to hitting me many times in that spot. There is no other path for pedestrians because barriers in front of the old movie theater remain in place - unless one walks completely around an entire block up Main Street or crosses more dangerous intersections on Pleasant St.. COVID-19 drive-thru policy may be making Dunkin's drive-thru line even longer, therefore city should address this problem and find a safer solution for drivers and pedestrians.

Solutions

I believe you should assemble an exploratory committee to study traffic pattern in that location or any other in Berlin to make them safer - which falls within the duty of a city manager. My request is proactive. I simply do not want anyone to be hit by a vehicle in that area - but the potential for that is high. Summer is short in this area. I have raised this issue to you on several occasions, without improvements. Pedestrians should be able to safely enjoy the nice weather on downtown sidewalks to access local retail stores, also, without fear of being hit by vehicles. Additionally - many of the sidewalks in downtown Berlin are uneven creating trip hazards. Since many communities around the state and country have easily addressed problems like this by investing time and allocated funding to make major improvements to sidewalk conditions for pedestrians of all ages in a timely manner, I am asking for city-wide sidewalk repair that can be completed in a professional and efficient manner before summer season begins in earnest. Why not also install heating vents which have been mentioned on numerous occasions, as well, to reduce ice and snow in winter. [Further, some concrete and asphalt mixtures incorporate cork to help absorb noise. Last year, I introduced NH DOT to cork mix paving solutions which substantially reduce heavy traffic and sidewalk noise, and are widely used out West]. Plant more trees downtown as we did in Rochester in 1976 when revitalizing

downtown for the bicentennial. Trees provide more oxygen and shade for walkers. Add soothing low lighting along the sidewalk path for late afternoon and early morning strolls, and additional benches. [Why not also plan a city-wide bike lane - it's overdue]. Population is aging. Pedestrians matter. Imagine how much more pleasant Pleasant and Main Streets would be if local patrons and residents had high quality, even, and wider sidewalk surfaces to enjoy throughout the year. Remove the eyesores. Invest in Berlin's people. It can be done. Just requires willingness and dedication.

Thank you.

Regards.

K. Ann Campbell, LLM, JD, JSM, BS, AAS

kacampbelljd@gmail.com



