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Stevens Ave. memo

Feb. 5, 1992

TO: Bill Bray
FROM: Paula Craighead
MEMO RE: Stevens Avenue

mc 773-2866
mc

INFORMATION: Since the January 7 accident at the Stevens Avenue crosswalk in front of Longfellow grade school, the following information has been gathered:

- individual screening (12 hours) of 293 accident reports on Stevens Avenue (and 19 reports for Leland Street) covering the four years 1988-1991. Screened for residence of the drivers involved in the accident and the "at fault" drivers.

- state DOT reports of accidents for the same period with information about weather and road conditions, most common place of accidents, time of day

- summary of the number and place of residence (neighborhood, Portland resident, non-resident) of drivers arrested for speeding and OUI for same period

- number of children attending Stevens Ave. schools between Brighton Avenue and Morrill's corner between ages 3-18 (total is 2,423; of these, 1,300 are 14 and under).

- list of children attending Longfellow, Lincoln and Deering who are likely to cross Stevens Avenue to reach those schools

RESULTS: The residency of drivers involved in accidents has been tabulated with an initial finding that 60% of all accidents on Stevens involves a non-resident (greater Portland) driver and, of those where fault can be determined and a non-resident is involved, the non-resident is at fault approximately 60% of the time.

Sites of accident frequency appear to be at the intersection of Ludlow and Stevens (turning onto Stevens and trying to cross over to Higgins); Walton Street (where Route 9 turns off of Stevens to connect to Ocean); New Street (where the through driver has used Leland to avoid Stevens); Brentwood (where increased business development has led to more pedestrian and auto use of this area) and Morrill's Corner.

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The common thread with accidents seems to be the turning, therefore, slowing driver OR the stopping driver (usually to turn; in a few cases, stopping for pedestrians). The "at fault" driver either rear ends the stopped driver or attempts to pass illegally. The accident reports also frequently note the "inattentive" driver. Much more work needs to be done with the data at hand (including time / day of accidents).

SOME EARLY CONCLUSIONS

Both the number of cars and the number of children using Stevens Avenue is increasing

The historic purpose of Stevens as a major thoroughfare has outlasted its current setting (intensely pedestrian/residential/educational)

The non-resident driver does not understand the present nature of Stevens Avenue (slower speeds and frequent stopping required)

IDEAS TO PURSUE:

- Long range (5 - 70 years) educational program in greater Portland area to alert drivers to nature of Stevens Avenue (long running ad campaign in area local newspapers or "shoppers"; car bumper stickers; 'reward' program for courteous drivers)
- Painted and well-maintained cross walks done to specifications similar to Freeport
 - Re-routing Route 9 off Stevens Avenue
 - Route traffic one-way
- Positive reinforcement to neighborhood drivers on their good driving in this area
 - Additional traffic lights (Walton Street, Ludlow, near St. Joseph's, Leland (stop signs))
 - Pedestrian island at Deering Center (near Pat's Meat Mkt.)

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- Additional pedestrian-oriented design considerations including: aggressive street tree plantings along avenue (at least two trees have deterred wayward cars from running onto sidewalks; also, mature tree canopies, even without leaves will, filter glare of sun), re-designed, not additional, school/speed signs to emphasize unique nature of the street; temporary textural strips in roadway during school opening and closing (to wake up the inattentive driver); smaller curb radii for pedestrian convenience in crossing

- Program for monitoring both traffic and pedestrian use of Stevens Ave; especially for assessing impact of any new measures to improve auto safety and pedestrian comfort.

- Regular police radar patrol from side streets, especially near elementary schools

This memo reviewed by:

Joanne Fiore, principal, Longfellow Grade school
Cathy Rossi, principal, Lincoln Middle school
Paul Pendleton, principal, Deering High School
Sr. Dale Jarvis, Catherine McAuley Sr.
Theresa Rand, St. Joseph's Elementary
Sue Reed, Westbrook Children's Center
Susan Wilbur, Steven's Ave Children's Coop
Peter Morelli, president, DCNA
David Little, chair, DCNA safety committee
Dave Warren, chair, Mayor's Transportation Task Force
Sue Minervino, Longfellow safety committee
Kathy Freund, nat'l subcommittee on elderly drivers
Helen Quirk, Longfellow crossing guard