

Cape Henry Shore Civic Association
P.O. Box 5351
Virginia Beach, VA 23471

February 17, 2009

Mayor William D. Sessoms and City Council Members
2401 Courthouse Drive
Municipal Center, Building 1
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Re: Shore Drive and Kendall Street Safety Initiatives

Dear Mayor Sessoms and City Council Members:

In October 2007, after multiple near misses and yet another serious automobile accident at Shore Drive and Kendall Street, the residents of the Cape Henry Shores subdivision again petitioned the City Council for the installation of a traffic light and a crosswalk at this intersection. Our petition for this traffic light and cross-walk was rejected in October 2008, citing insufficient number counts to meet the warrants for the traffic signal. No mention was made by the city of the unique safety hazards presented by the limited visibility west along Shore Drive from Kendall Street. The city has again failed to fully comprehend our safety concerns that we residents experience every time that we use our only available exit from our area. While we fully recognize and appreciate the city's recent efforts on our behalf to improve the safety along this corridor, we residents still maintain significant concerns for the safety of our family members attempting to safely exit onto Shore Drive from Kendall Street.

Exiting Issue

The frequency of residents exiting at Kendall St. may not be numerically significant, but represents a constant and significant danger due to the degree of difficulty of integrating into westbound traffic. Traffic attempting to enter westbound onto Shore Drive must recognize and then accurately estimate the speed of oncoming eastbound traffic on Shore Drive. An exiting driver is unable to see oncoming eastbound traffic beyond 580 feet due to a blind spot created by the road's curvature and structural obstructions along Shore Drive. An exiting driver has approximately 4 seconds (7 seconds to avoid a collision minus 3 seconds of safety buffer between the cars) to view, judge, react and clear the eastbound lanes of this oncoming traffic. Failure to acquire or recognize oncoming eastbound traffic or to correctly judge the speed of that traffic if that traffic is speeding presents a significant hazard of a broadside collision. If the eastbound traffic exceeds the 45 MPH speed limit, the available time for our residents to recognize, judge, react and safely clear the eastbound lanes is further reduced. It is the degree of difficulty more than the frequency numbers for our exiting residents that poses our

safety threat. The margin of safety for exiting onto Shore Drive is further reduced at night because of the minimal street lighting and the associated difficulty of accurately judging the speed of directly oncoming eastbound traffic. Any miscalculation in either judging speed, closure rate, or how quickly the entering driver can clear both eastbound lanes presents a serious safety threat to our residents.

Recommendations:

1. To improve the safety margin, reduce the speed limit to 35 MPH for this 0.7 mile section of Shore Drive from Great Neck Road to Kendall Street.
2. Install a tread activated traffic signal light on Kendall Street at Shore Drive. This light should also be pedestrian activated to allow pedestrians an improved safety margin to cross Shore Drive.
3. Install a crosswalk along Shore Drive at Kendall Street.

Reducing the speed limit from 45 mph to 35 mph along the 3700 feet section of Shore Drive from Great Neck Road to Kendall Street improves our safety at the minimal addition of 16 seconds to the travel time, a negligible cost. The cost of painting a pedestrian crosswalk across Shore Drive is minimal. The added safety margin provided to our residents provided by a traffic light at Shore Drive and Kendall Street for the justifiable reasons given offsets the minor cost to the city. It should be noted that the City of Virginia Beach has already acknowledged and accommodated First Landing State Park officials' safety concerns for their seasonal vehicle and pedestrian traffic by installing a traffic light and crosswalk at Shore Drive, similar to that which we request. Additionally, the city has recognized future traffic safety concerns by installing a light system at Marlin Bay Drive for the still undeveloped Indigo Dunes property. I believe that these two cases further validate our traffic and pedestrian safety needs and concerns. It is hoped that city officials will revisit our request and recognize our unique safety situation. Your favorable consideration of your constituents' requests would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Martin S. Schuman

President

Cape Henry Shores Civic Association