

Report on Manhasset Traffic Congestion and Safety

OVERVIEW

It has been established by previous reports that Plandome Road, the main thoroughfare through downtown Manhasset averages between 10 and 15 thousand vehicles every weekday.

Plandome Road's accident rate is 5 times the statewide average, congestion being the major contributing factor to this accident rate.

While the previous studies offer solutions that are very expensive, complicated and require multiple inter-municipal agreements and grants which take several years to process and complete, the below recommended solutions can be instituted in day, in some cases a few hours, or even minutes.

This report is comprised of both real time traffic studies and interviews completed by Commissioner Paterson, interviewing well over fifty individuals; Manhasset citizens, store owners, members of the Nassau County police, Manhasset Lakeville Fire and Water District Employees, local tradesmen (carpenter, plumbers, electricians), who use the below mentioned roads several times a day.

Although all of these recommendations fall outside the jurisdiction of the Manhasset Park District, the MPD Commissioners have agreed to partake in the recent traffic task force lead by Councilwoman Anna Kaplan of Manhasset to pursue changes that will alleviate congestion and further enhance pedestrian safety along Plandome Road. Thus we have undertaken to evaluate traffic flow on Plandome Road, parking hazards, pedestrian dangers and present this report of suggested remedies.

The recommended changes are listed from a north to south direction, starting from Webster Avenue to Northern Boulevard.

WEBSTER AVENUE/ COLONIAL Parkway TRIANGLE

On the western side of Plandome's southbound lane a bottleneck is created by three separate conditions:

ISSUE #1: Twenty feet after the Webster Avenue stoplight are two parking spaces that block southbound traffic attempting to turn onto Locust Avenue. **(Exhibit A)** Most of this traffic is non-local traffic heading towards Bayview Avenue and onwards to Great Neck. As Plandome is a single lane road, the combination of stopped traffic at the Colonial Parkway Stoplight and the two parking spaces taken by parked vehicles create a backup on the southbound lane in both morning and evening rush hour traffic.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: Replacing parking signage for the last two parking spaces to allow daily parking **EXCEPT** for the hours of 6:30-8:30am and 4:30-6:30pm.

Requires: TONH approval and installation.

ISSUE #2: The northern sidewalk of the Colonial Parkway Triangle is in constant use as double parking and jaywalking. **(Exhibit B)** This creates a hazardous condition and again creates a backup onto Plandome Road from cars attempting to turn onto Locust Avenue.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: A pedestrian guardrail along the sidewalk forcing pedestrians to use the Colonial Parkway crosswalk and Plandome Road crosswalk and preventing double parking for delivery and local drop off at the UPS Store and Le French Drycleaners.

This has been highly effective in many communities, including New York City where implementation has resulted in dramatically fewer pedestrian/vehicle collisions.

REQUIRES: TONH approval and installation.

ISSUE #3: Colonial Parkway Triangle; the triangle is too small for pedestrians, **(Exhibit C)** it's size also confuses Northbound Plandome Road traffic, with many drivers turning illegally on the northern side of the triangle, rather than the proper southern side.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: Increasing size of triangle will create a safe pedestrian island and prevent northbound traffic incorrectly turning onto Locust Avenue.

REQUIRES: TONH approval and construction.

BAYVIEW AVENUE

ISSUE: Northeastern end of Bayview Avenue is too narrow to allow emergency vehicle to get through when traffic is on both sides. **(Exhibit D)**

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: Northern sidewalk across from Starbucks is wider than standard sidewalks by nearly 18 inches. Cutting sidewalk back 12-14 inches creates sufficient space for emergency vehicles to continue onto Plandome Road.

REQUIRES: TONH approval and DPW construction

RUGGERIO WAY

(Between Memorial Place and Manhasset Avenue)

ISSUE: Although this is a parking lot created by TONH for vendor parking, the lot is used as a thoroughfare for traffic as a shortcut into the LIRR parking lots. Multiple accidents have been reported by the NCPD and causes heavy congestion at morning and afternoon rush hour.

A recent MPD study during an afternoon rush hour recorded 18 vehicles using Ruggerio Way as a cut through to Lot #3 in 50 minute period. Only one car during this period was an actual vendor lot vehicle that properly exited the lot.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: No exiting onto Manhasset Avenue 7-9 am and 5-7pm. No exit sign on Memorial Avenue removed. Should additional turning space be required, 10-12 inches can be removed from eastern portion of oversized sidewalk.

REQUIRES: TONH Approval and implementation; DPW if necessary.

PLANDOME ROAD AND NORTHERN BOULEVARD

ISSUE: Eastern and Western turning traffic creating traffic back ups as far as Manhasset Avenue.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION #1: Although TONH has recognized the repainting of the exit lane was incorrectly painted and needs to be extended northward, it has yet to happen, causing southbound traffic to cross the double lines to reach the boulevard before the light changes. Commissioner Paterson's vehicle was recently struck by a vehicle crossing the double line to make the left turn at Northern Blvd. Extending this turn lane can prevent such accidents and hopefully will be rectified soon.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION #2: Western turning traffic backup can be relieved by changing the last two parking spaces on the western side of Plandome Road (South of Manhasset Animal Hospital) to **NO PARKING**, between the hours of 7-9am and 4:30-6:30pm.

REQUIRES: TONH approval and implementation.

SIGNAL LIGHT SUGGESTIONS

It is acknowledged that altering traffic light signals is simple in concept, but extremely difficult in convincing traffic officials to alter, despite what may seem a very simple strategy. That being said, the following recommendations are as follows:

Due to the exceedingly brief green light at Colonial Parkway, traffic builds up on Locust Street, resulting in traffic diverting to Bayview Avenue, which also has a short green light. Traffic coming up Bayview Avenue sees the congestion backed up past Locust and Bayview, they then divert up Linden Avenue to Manhasset Avenue, which also has a shortened light. Once traffic has backed up past Ruggiero Way on Mahasset Avenue, commuters choose to drive through the MPD lots, cutting through to exit the MPD lot at Plandome and Park Avenue .

As the majority of this traffic is merely attempting to find a quicker way to travel North on Plandome Road, simply adding 3 to 4 seconds at the Colonial Parkway stoplight will relieve traffic congestion on Locust Street, Bayview and Manhasset Avenues. Though 3-4 seconds may seem brief, this allows 4-6 additional cars enough time to make the light.

CONCLUSION

Although these solutions do not reduce the number of cars that use our streets everyday, and many, if not the majority of the peak traffic is from non-residents of surrounding villages, these recommendations will improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and eliminate double parking, they could be easily implemented with little or no cost and a minimum of construction affecting daily traffic for completion.