



Churchill Area Neighbors

General Meeting

Visit www.churchillareaneighbors.org for details.

When? October 24th @7:00-8:30

Where? The CHS Library following the Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee meeting.

Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee Meeting

When?

October 24th @5:30-7:00

Where?

The Churchill High School
Library

Visit the Churchill Area Neighbors web site for more information at:
www.churchillareaneighbors.org

Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee

The Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee (BHRSC) was formed in response to the terrible accident that took place on Bailey Hill Road near Churchill High School, on August 27, 2007. Initiated by Julia Pommert and with help from Dennis Biggerstaff, Churchill High School principal, the first meeting was held on September 12, 2007 with the belief that if children appear to be at risk in our neighborhood, then, adults must try to make the area safer.

Julia is just one of the many Churchill residents to show concern for the traffic hazards that exist on parts of the Bailey Hill Road. When she began gathering information about the area, she found that many individuals, including the school principals of the area, the Churchill HS head secretary, the Churchill Community Safety officer, and local firefighters had all been lobbying for several years to have this area made safer.

In collaboration with principal Biggerstaff, Julia identified what groups specifically needed to be invited to participate in the committee. It was agreed that in order to reach the best solution, all groups that have a stake in the Bailey Hill Road must be represented in the committee. In addition, all interested parties are invited to participate in this problem-solving process. The BHRSC Committee hopes to find solutions to the traffic accidents in the BHR area.

The Churchill Area Neighbors (C.A.N.) is participating in the process by lending support and resources. The Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee is not a committee of the Churchill Area Neighbors; however, when addressing neighborhood issues, neighborhood associations are the preferred means of communication by the City of Eugene. The C.A.N. looks forward to working with this committee and the multitude of neighbors who have stepped forward to engage in the dialog and ensure safety for all community members.

Visit www.churchillareaneighbors.org/baileyhillroad for access to the BHRSC resource page. There you can find documentation, maps, and related links. This information is available to the public at large. However, if you create an account you can post comments and participate in forums. Registration is free, and the only catch is that you might become known for wanting to make a difference in your neighborhood.

The Churchill Area Neighbors web site is more than just a great place to get information about your community. It is an interactive virtual community that is growing. Once mature, the web site will serve as a powerful communication tool to bring neighbors together to build a stronger community.

Issues

This issues list was provided by the BHRSC and was generated out of the first meeting on September 12th.

General

- There are many different stakeholders in this area
- The Winston Green park path ends across from the Churchill Market
- Well-meaning drivers who stop mid-block set up a dangerous situation
- Children are not taught the expectations of pedestrians when young
- High schools have a disproportionate rate of inexperienced drivers around
- *Elementary and middle schools have a disproportionate rate of inexperienced pedestrians around*

From Pedestrian View

- The current crosswalks are not perceived as a safer place to cross
- Small stature of younger kids makes it harder to see what is coming
- Drivers don't respect the signs and crosswalks
- *Walkers want to take the shortest route*

From Driver's View

- Pedestrians and bikes flow like a wave not a stream
- Pedestrians don't respect the signs and crosswalks
- Speeders
- BHR is an arterial that acts as a thoroughfare for out of the neighborhood drivers
- Drivers coming in from Lorane area have been going fast and resist slowing
- Because of four-lane design and 35 mph speed drivers see BHR as cars only
- Kids have a sense of invincibility and over confidence – so take high risks
- Small stature of younger kids makes them harder to be seen
- Drivers are not sure if kids want to cross the street or are just congregating
- There are no clear signals to a driver whether to stop or go
- It is not clear where the school zone and reduced speed area is
- The overhead caution light at Westleigh does not work all the time
- Drivers are inattentive to the road
- A new resident says the signs and caution lights on BHR are confusing

The Bailey Hill Road Safety Committee has hosted two emotionally charged meetings where concerned citizens came together to collaborate on a common issue. A third conversation on the subject was hosted by the Churchill Area Neighbors on September 26th. These meetings have spawned documentation that will be used to present the community's collective concern and desire for action to the City of Eugene and the City Council. The solutions list below was provided by the BHRSC and was generated out of the second meeting on September 19th. For more information, please visit www.churchillareaneighbors.org/baileyhillroad

Engineering solutions

Lower Speed:

Community members spoke up in favor of lowering the speed limit on this section of Bailey Hill Road at both meetings.

Eugene Traffic Engineer Tom Larsen said that directly lowering the speed limit was not something that he or others in the city were empowered to do, according to state statute. The posted speed limit is a function of the actual speed that 85% of drivers practice going through an area as well as crash statistics. To lower the posted speed limit we first need to induce drivers to drive slower.

Mr. Larsen said he was empowered to change the configuration of the street. This could include things such as; reducing the number of lanes in each direction to one, changing the location and design of the crosswalks, and adding traffic-calming devices (also known as "friction") to the street. These things would be expected to slow traffic. Once traffic is slowed, then Mr. Larsen could lower the limit.

One person at the meeting worried that only having one lane in each direction could bring traffic to a halt during busy periods. Mr. Larsen said his traffic volume measurements did not show enough traffic to require 2 lanes in each direction as it is now.

Sign Maintenance:

Trimming bushes and trees around street signs would make them easier for drivers to spot and thereby know what to expect. Some signs may be missing and need to be replaced. An inventory should be done.

Control Park Users Access to BHR:

By adding six foot fencing just west of the sidewalk and part way up the driveway of the Pathfinders' School pedestrians and cyclists using the park could be funneled to the one desired crosswalk location.

Engineering Cont.

Shift Through Traffic to Bertlesen Road:

Drivers coming north from the country out on Lorane highway tend to turn right on Bailey Hill Road because Bertlesen Road between the BHR and West 18th intersections is narrow and rough. It does have a posted speed limit of 45 mph, but vehicles can't drive this fast. If this street were widened, given curbs and a sidewalk on the east side, through traffic would be encouraged to drive on Bertlesen.

Pedestrian-activated crosswalk signal:

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk signal and intersection control signal would reduce the ambiguity that drivers and pedestrians currently face about whether to stop or go.

During the previous discussion about the 'problems' in this area, frustration about the ambiguity surfaced from both perspectives.

Participants said solutions such as this signal needed to work 365 days a year.

The group discussed how a push-button crosswalk at the junction of Westleigh would need a full, intersection light system in order to allow emergency vehicles to leave the fire station rapidly.

Enforcement solutions

Reduce Teen Drivers :

A suggestion was made that we could reduce the number of teen drivers in this area by making Churchill a "Closed Campus". There was little discussion about this idea.

Support Graduated Drivers' License

Laws: These laws were established because new drivers are at higher risk of crashes and need to have the least distractions. Parents and the community need to voice support for these rules and apply negative consequences for their violation.

Police Presence :

The Churchill H.S. administration and parents felt that having the traffic team patrolling BHR the first week of school sent a good message to all of the drivers.

Education solutions

Parent Education:

The Lancer Parent Association (Churchill parents) plans to have a driver's education session for parents this school year. Several speakers are being contacted about their availability. Parents have an important job as good role models, educators and enforcers.

McCornack video:

A McCornack parent and a fifth grade teacher talked about producing a pedestrian safety video with their students. They may work with other media to spread the message about pedestrian safety.

MADD presentation at CHS:

The current Churchill H.S. student body president, Erica Dose, reported that her leadership group is talking with the MADD organization about providing a school assembly. Drunk drivers endanger everyone.

Concessions:

We all may need to make concession in order to have a child-safe street. Principal Biggerstaff pointed out that there are 2,000 children going to and from school each day within a mile of this accident. Kids must be the priority.

Survey Kids:

The suggestion was made to survey kids at all four schools about what they thought would make this area safer.

CHS videos:

After this meeting the Churchill technology teacher said he would encourage his students to produce short "public-service type pedestrian and auto safety videos that might be aired on local stations.

