



Martin O'Malley, *Governor*
Anthony G. Brown, *Lt. Governor*

Beverly K. Swaim-Staley, *Secretary*
Melinda B. Peters, *Administrator*

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

June 25, 2012

Mr. Richard Krajeck
Chairman Village Council
Village of Martin's Additions
7013B Brookeville Road
Chevy Chase MD 20815

Dear Mr. Krajeck:

Thank you for your letter regarding pedestrian safety at the MD 185 (Connecticut Avenue) and Lenox Street intersection in Montgomery County. I appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance to you.

Safety is the number one priority of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). As such, SHA shares your concerns about pedestrian safety and access, working to enhance safety through the three "E's" of education, enforcement and engineering.

SHA follows federal and state rules under the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) as a guideline for when and where traffic control devices should be installed. These guidelines are nationwide in scope and promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration for reasons of consistency and safety.

SHA recently concluded an evaluation for a pedestrian-activated traffic signal to cross MD 185, which included a thirteen-hour turning movement count along MD 185 at its intersections with Melrose Street, Lenox Street, Kirke Street, Irving Street, and Chevy Chase Circle. The traffic volume count also included all pedestrians crossing MD 185 at these intersections or at any given point mid-block between these intersections. Ridership volumes for the bus stops located at East/West Lenox Street, Irving Street, Oxford Street, and Quincy Street collected from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation were taken into consideration for the analysis.

When performing a signal warrant analysis, SHA employs traffic volume counts that best depict a typical daily volume scenario, understanding Chevy Chase Village holds special events that may create additional pedestrian activity along MD 185. Field observations revealed that some elderly pedestrians crossed MD 185 and most motorists travelled at the posted speed limit. Scenarios outside of the typical methodologies noted in the MUTCD were considered to determine if a pedestrian-activated signal was warranted. In order to account for the elderly population utilizing MD 185, the criterion for pedestrian volumes crossing the major street was reduced by as much as 50 percent for the signal warrant analysis. In addition, a summation of the pedestrian volumes from each of the aforementioned intersections were utilized in the warrant analysis as a single combined factor to determine if a pedestrian-activated signal is warranted. Although more generous scenarios were used in the analysis, the volumes remained too low to meet warrants.

My telephone number/toll-free number is 410-545-0400 or 1-800-206-0770

Maryland Relay Service for Impaired Hearing or Speech 1.800.735.2258 Statewide Toll Free

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Sight distance along MD 185 was also reviewed to determine whether adequate sight distance is available for pedestrians to cross MD 185 safely. Considering the prevailing speeds of vehicles traveling along MD 185, SHA found that the sight distance is adequate for pedestrians to judge gaps in traffic and safely cross MD 185. A review of the most recent three-year police-reported crash history within the study limits did not reveal a pattern of pedestrian crashes correctible by installing a pedestrian-activated traffic signal. As a result of the aforementioned findings, a pedestrian-activated signal is not recommended at this time. In fact, installation of an unwarranted traffic signal may lead to excessive delay in the already-congested MD 185 corridor, increased cut through traffic as motorists attempt to avoid the signal, increases in rear end collisions, and increases in crash severity.

In lieu of the pedestrian-activated signal, SHA explored other measures to address the concerns expressed by Chevy Chase Village. To raise driver awareness, a new flashing warning beacon reading "Pedestrians Ahead Stay Alert 30MPH" will be installed on southbound MD 185 just south of MD 191 and the existing flashing warning beacon along northbound MD 185 will be relocated closer to the DC line with a modified message that reads "Pedestrians Ahead Stay Alert 30MPH." These modifications, coupled with the existing overhead hazard identification beacon (HIB) along southbound MD 185 approaching Aspen Street, the automated speed enforcement device, pedestrian warning signs, and the existing marked crossings within the study limit will likely contribute to enhanced pedestrian safety.

As you may know, representatives from SHA's District 3 office met with members of the Chevy Chase Village community on May 16, 2012 to discuss the findings of the study. The requested listing of state-maintained signals within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties along with a copy of the study findings are forthcoming.

Thank you, again, for your letter. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Brian W. Young, District Engineer who can be reached at 301-513-7311, toll-free 1-800-749-0737 or via email at byoung@sha.state.md.us. Mr. Young will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,



Melinda B. Peters
Administrator, SHA

cc: Mr. Brian W. Young, District Engineer, SHA
Mr. Michael W. Younes, Director of Municipal Operations, Chevy Chase Village

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