



**Oakland Mills Community Association**  
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**Columbia, MD 21045**  
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December 2, 2021

Mr. Kris Jagarapu, Chief  
Howard County Public Works Department  
7125 Riverwood Drive, Suite B  
Columbia, MD 21045

Dear Mr. Jagarapu,

The Oakland Mills Community Association is concerned about the safety of Stevens Forest Road (**SFR**), particularly the safety of our children. This concern stems from actual recent events. During one week, automobiles struck two people on bicycles on two separate occasions at Kilimanjaro Rd and SFR. Fortunately, neither victim, one of whom was a child on the way to school, suffered permanent injuries. However, the crash immobilized the adult victim for ten days, and his bicycle was totaled. These incidents highlight the need for action.

We need short and long-term solutions. **First**, the intersections on SFR need to be evaluated for safety and improvements made immediately. We suggest implementing a lead pedestrian interval of 7 seconds at Kilimanjaro Rd and SFR. Also, the “no turn on red” sign at that intersection needs better visibility. The traffic sign is difficult to see, particularly during darker times of the day. Placing a speed camera near Stevens Forest Elementary could help slow traffic, as well. Also, the intersection at White Acre Rd and SFR may warrant a three-way stop. We suggest conducting a study to evaluate pedestrian, bicycles, and automobile traffic at that interaction. **Second**, the automobile speed limit along SFR should be posted to 25 MPH. A recent SFR traffic study conducted by the Howard County Police found that 15% of drivers exceeded 35 MPH. SFR, categorized as a major collector, feeds 4 schools, with one directly on the road. Twenty-five MPH is the speed limit when school is in session over small stretches of the road. Automobiles should always be restricted to this speed at all times for the entire length of the road through Oakland Mills.

**Third**, a complete street solution is an appropriate long-term answer to the unsafe speeds and intersections on SFR. Several years ago, a SFR complete street solution was designed and planned. Unfortunately, Howard County only implemented the one-block Whiteacre Road solution. With the new 7-11/gas station anticipated to open soon, the continued success of the Oakland Mills Village Center, and the reopening of our economy, more auto traffic is expected. The area that would receive this streetscape includes a fully subsidized apartment complex and a Howard County Housing Commission property. This economically challenged area deserves a complete street solution to help protect our children. We feel that these excerpts from the Howard County Complete Streets Policy are particularly relevant:

- “When there are conflicting needs among users and/or modes, safety shall be the highest priority; particularly safety for the most vulnerable street users (pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, and people with additional accessibility needs).”
- “Motor vehicle speed, flow, and driver convenience shall not be prioritized over safety for vulnerable street users.”

In closing, this letter covers several important safety concerns and possible solutions for Stevens Forest Road. We have discussed many of the issues in prior letters and to date, the safety concerns increase while no safety measures have been addressed.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention; we look forward to hearing from you and working with you.

Sincerely,

*Jonathan L. Edelson*

Jonathan L. Edelson, OMCA Board Chair

*Warren Wortman*

Warren Wortman, OMCA Board Member  
OMCA Public Space Committee Chair

Cc: County Executive Calvin Ball  
Councilman Opel Jones  
Chris Eatough, HC Office of Transportation  
Jennifer Biddle, Chief, HC Traffic and Engineering