



Oakland Mills Community Association
The Other Barn • 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045

410-730-4610 • oaklandmills.org



December 5, 2022

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

CPL Will Smith, Supervisor
HCPD Traffic Unit
3410 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dr. Kendra Johnson, Community Superintendent
Howard County Public School System
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Dear Mr. Jagarapu, CPL Smith, and Dr. Johnson,

Oakland Mills Community Association (OMCA) and the Stevens Forest Elementary School PTA (SFES PTA) are writing to you jointly to express concerns with safety on Stevens Forest Road in the vicinity of Stevens Forest Elementary School, especially during drop-off (8:30 - 9:15) and pick-up (3:00 - 3:45) times at the school. Representatives from OMCA and SFES PTA recently met on site at the school during pick-up to observe traffic and pedestrian behavior following a collision in front of the school where children were nearly hit by a car. We witnessed three incidents of jaywalkers stopping traffic, one child running through traffic, as well as road and signage design issues that we believe could be addressed to improve safety in this corridor.

Following are bulleted descriptions of what we saw, and we look forward to having conversations with you about how these issues can be addressed to ensure the safety of everyone on Stevens Forest Road, and especially the safety of some of the youngest children in the community.

Traffic and Pedestrian Behavior

- Parents and guardians picking up students from SFES are parking on the southbound shoulder of Stevens Forest Road instead of using the carpool loop. They are then jaywalking to get their children, or waving their children across the road, instead of using the crosswalks or tunnel.
- Parents and guardians picking up students from SFES are parking on the northbound side of Stevens Forest Road, opposite Camelback Lane, in the through traffic lane despite the no stopping or standing signs.

- Traffic approaching the crosswalk closest to the school, at the Stevens Forest Neighborhood Center, is not consistently stopping for pedestrians in the crosswalk. One parent approached us as we were observing traffic to express her daily concerns for her children’s safety in that crosswalk. This crosswalk does not have crossing guards.
- Representatives from OMCA talked to the Crossing Guards posted at Stevens Forest and Kilimanjaro about what we saw, and they confirmed that this is regular behavior during drop-off and pick-up.

Road and Signage Design

- As traffic on westbound Kilimanjaro Rd approaches Stevens Forest Rd, they see an “End School Zone” sign that is presumably for the Oakland Mills Middle School zone. As they turn onto southbound Stevens Forest Rd, there is no sign or flashing light to indicate they are entering another school zone. There is a 30 MPH sign on a post just after they make the turn. All other entries to school zones in the neighborhood have flashing signs indicating a school zone 25 mph speed limit, including the northbound approach to Stevens Forest Elementary School.
- The crosswalk at the Neighborhood Center just south of the school is difficult to see from the southbound lane of Stevens Forest Road.
- Southbound Stevens Forest Road is an uninterrupted straightaway from the traffic signal at Kilimanjaro Road until the crosswalk at the Neighborhood Center. Cars appear to pick up speed as they approach the school.

We discussed potential solutions to the issues listed above; however, we also defer to your expertise in enforcement and road design. We request a conversation to talk more about these issues so we can improve safety near Stevens Forest Elementary School.

Thank you,

Jonathan L. Edelson

Jonathan L. Edelson, Chair
Oakland Mills Board of Directors

Warren Wortman

Warren Wortman, Public Space Committee Chair
Oakland Mills Board of Directors

Michael Elser

Michael Elser
Stevens Forest Elementary School PTA

cc:
Dr. Martirano, Superintendent, HCPSS
HCPSS Board of Education