

THE REASONS WHY LAUREL CREST SHOULD NOT HAVE A TURN LANE AND WHY WE FAVOR THE ALTERNATIVE TO PLACING IT MIDWAY BETWEEN LAUREL CREST AND HICKORY

A SHORT CUT We have lived on Laurel Crest since 1977 and can definitely say that when University Avenue gets backed up, for instance, during winter snows, people try to swing into this neighborhood to avoid back-ups. Also, every morning on my way to Harbor Athletic Club on Hwy. Q I see cars scooting down Baker. So we are well aware that Baker and Capital Avenue are both shortcuts/alternatives to get to Lake Mendota Drive and to get away from the heavy traffic on University Ave. Laurel Crest is a poor substitute to Baker and Capital.

If a turn lane were positioned at Laurel Crest, one block before the light at Capital, it would also be a short cut, via Laurel Court to Capital to avoid the traffic light. This already occur to some extent... we certainly would not want to encourage more of this traffic. Also, Laurel Crest is such a short distance from Capital, which is considered the collector street for the neighborhood.

TOO NARROW It is too narrow to be an alternate to Capital. Between Taychopera and Lake Mendota Drive it is only 10 ft 6" to 11 feet wide. When a car comes down on this part of Laurel Crest, a pedestrian has to stand on someone's driveway or landscaping to avoid being run over. Between Laurel Court and Taychopera, the road is approximately 17 feet wide and between Laurel Crest and the center "tree island" the road is 14 feet wide, again not wide enough to accomodate a car in each direction. But once again the tree island is a unique and lovely feature of the neighborhood and is maintained by several in the area.

POOR SNOW REMOVAL. Being a very secondary or minor street in Madison, the snow removal on Laurel Crest is late and minimal. The hill down to Lake Mendota Drive, which is a fairly steep decline, becomes very icy and cars and trucks have been known to get stuck trying to get up the hill. Also, because there is snow piled on the side of the road, it gets even narrower for traffic.

NO CURBS OR SIDEWALKS. Remember, not that many years ago, this was the outskirts of Madison. People walk in the middle of the street with their dogs and children, people stop to chat, kids play, ride bikes and the school bus stops at the end of Laurel Crest and also at the end of Taychopera. This has always been a much safer street to walk on than Lake Mendota Drive or Capital.

PARKING AND TRAFFIC. If you have guests visiting, there is barely room to park cars and have the road open for traffic. If a UPS or FEDEX truck stops to deliver, a car has to wait for the truck to leave. If you put up no parking signs, there would be no where for visitors to park, because Hickory is narrower and Taychopera has the same problems. And the part of Laurel Crest nearer to Univ. Avenue is wider, but has houses with very short driveways.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC. Currently neighborhood people have several alternatives to get to Baker, Camelot, Lake Mendota Drive, Taychopera, Hickory and Laurel Crest/Court. If you eliminate access to Baker and Hickory, that puts all the traffic on Laurel Crest and Capital. At least Capital is wider and has a traffic light to accommodate traffic flow. But Capital, as the collector street, as you know, strongly needs repair and again in an unimproved street. So in many ways, HAVING A TURN LANE BOTH AT BAKER, AND BETWEEN LAUREL CREST AND HICKORY AND THEN THE LIGHT AT CAPITAL IS THE VERY BEST ALTERNATIVE BECAUSE IT SHARES THE BURDEN. Clearly, the construction that is done here will probably have to last another 40 to 50 years and should be done correctly.

Apparently the accidents that have occurred at Baker have all been rear-end accidents that could be eliminated by having a turn lane. We have not been presented with statistics showing head-on collisions.. And having the ability to do the u-turn at Baker as well as near Laurel Crest would probably be most appreciated by the Heim and Hickory Hollow residents. Better yet, if a traffic light on a turn lane at Baker were installed that was only activated by several cars needing to turn that would be better yet. It would also allow those needing to u-turn the ability to do so without worrying that a car speeding on University Avenue would run into them.

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