



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



**Ross Valley Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Task Force
Meeting Notes
Friday, September 20**

Attendees 18: **Yellow add contact info to FM task force list**

Wendi Kallins- Safe Route to Schools Director, Peggy Clark Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator, SR2S Team Leaders: Kathleen Cutter-St Anselms, John Ferguson-Manor, Joe Loll- Wade Thomas, Kristy Marksbury- San Dominico, Debra Merten-Brookside Lower, Karl Vavrek-Cascade Canyon. Hadley Dettmer- School Board, Ross Valley School District, Kristi Fish- Principal Hidden Valley School, **Suzanne Loosen- Transportation Planner TAM**, Carey Lando- Senior Transportation Marin County Public Works, John Reed- Councilmember City of Fairfax, Jason Richardson Principal Manor School, Nancy Vernon Aide to Supervisor Katie Rice, **David Levitt Parent Hidden Valley, Rhonda Richardson-Fairfax Police Officer**, Renee Goddard Councilmember Fairfax, Brent Joiner Maintenance for Ross Valley School District

Infrastructure and Police

Fairfax improvement requests from Manor Safety Meeting. Jason reported he met with home owners and other stakeholders to address the many issues/concerns for students getting to schools and how improvements affect curb appeal.

Issues discussed at meeting:

- Manor School no sidewalk in front of the school, there is one on the perimeter of the campus but not in front of the school, they are looking for remedies- possible SR2S grant. Wendi said probably not. It's more a homeowner need than a student need.
- Consider a crossing guard at Piper vs. current location
- East side of Oak Manor- cross walk has over grown vegetation that needs to be cut back. Announced that a work order has been placed.

- White Hill: Glen Drive – there will be more discussions in the future. Drivers are taking a left turn onto Sir Frances Drake Blvd and many times they do not have a clear view of oncoming traffic unless they pull out into the intersection.
- Crossing Guard at Glen Drive is responsible for covering both sides of the intersections (challenging position to cover both sides of the street). Consider scheduling a more aggressive person in that crossing guard position.
- No control lights at Glen Drive and Sir Frances Drake Blvd, sunlight in vehicle driver's eyes is a cause of concern, yes there is a crossing guard however drivers are blinded.

Hidden Valley intersection- (see attached supporting document by David Levitt)

David Levitt presented a brief history of working with the town: on San Francisco Blvd 6 months to add a crossing guard. Lobbied the town of San Anselms in 2011 to get funds to redesign the intersections along with the crossing guard position, he provided Ray the crossing guard with replaced warning cones after someone stole his. He is currently addressing the safety concerns for students traveling on Green Valley and Butterfield the entrance into Hidden Valley School. David commented on the huge number of traffic issues in the vicinity of the school. Kristy presented a poster diagram/map of the neighborhood of Hidden Valley. Two Primary safety issues:

1. No traffic control – Vehicles making a left onto Butterfields must creep out into Butterfield to look for oncoming traffic. Often drivers wait for the crossing guard to guide pedestrians into the road to creep out for a clear view. Traffic exiting the school backs up into the campus circle. With this back up emergency vehicles are blocked from accessing the school campus.

This area is a “cross county district” for Cal Trans, local DPW including law enforcement. CHP has expressed jurisdiction issues too, resulting in no law enforcement to take action. The agencies have budget constraints with limited time for officers to patrol this area. (Wendi inquired if the CHP/ SEAL team was at the meeting?)

Nancy Veron reported that Katy Rice's office was contacted too. Students on Green Valley Ct do not have a defined bike lane; just a white line shoulder which is not well defined or passable by wheel chairs. Residents have commented that no road work improvements have been made in 10 years and complaints continue.

Kristy reported a result of the back-up on Green Valley Ct parents in vehicles are using Fawn Drive as a drop off creating another safety concern for other road users.

Wendi reported SR2S has conducted many Walk Audits over the years resulting in the County not identifying any problems. The county must first recognize there is an issue to be addressed.

David's recommendations:

Next step to conduct a pilot study traffic control officer to see if this would work- 1-2 week pilot study- ask officers to provide traffic control. They take data before- during and after drop-off working with MC DPW- this came out of the meeting with CHP

Recommendations after pilot study is completed: 1. Convert the current crossing guard with traffic control officer with enforcement power. 2. Install stops signs on Butterfield or a flashing signal that would flash during specific school hours.

Renee inquired if this area of Butterfield a dedicated school zone? There are schools signs, is there one says school zone? There is law allowing a 15mp speed zone within 500 feet to 1000 feet of a school but it has to go through studies to be encated. Hidden Valley is very close to Butterfield, would this qualify?

David is recommending the 1-2 week pilot study observing traffic patterns before, during and after schools. Kristy requested Fawn Drive also be studied. The study could be conducted in a month. Important next big step, define parameters, determine base line, weather and temperature, all the variables including student field trips and on campus school events.

Wendi suggested CHP make observation the week of October 7th International Walk to School Day is Oct 9 and/or on Walk and Roll Wednesday. Central Marin police may have resources to support this observation period. It is important for the officers to be at the school for the entire drop off time frame. Parents see a problem and authorities do not; must get all parties on the same page.

Carrie commented this is an unincorporated area, there are many other schools in the county and it takes a long time to get someone to observe the challenges. The more people are involved the more the county can stay on top of the needs.

John Reed recommended the traffic circle design similar to the one at Old Mill School, Mill Valley be considered as a possible solution vs. a traffic light/stop sign on Butterfield.

Bike Spines Mayor John Reed- new concept developed with David P as a result of a student being hit at an “all stop” intersection. Initiated a conversation “what is the town doing to get kids to school safely. The wanted to developed resources that would give parents and students the safest possible route to school and increase awareness to drivers. The Bike Spine was the result. It is the back bone to the various routes. It is pretty close to completion, there have been a few growing pain. The next step is to educate residents, all road users including cyclists on what the road markings mean.

Renee commented people are complaining “what are the marking and why are they here”. There is also confusion with the route, it is not the most direct route to school; it is the recommend route and cyclists need to be educated on why. Some of the road markings have been defaced by neighbors and new road paving is leaving vehicle tire stains on the road marking. Now it is time to provide outreach on the streets to educate people. Positive results from law enforcement is that traffic has slowed down on Park drive.

Jon Ferguson suggested tying in International Walk to School Day with the education of the Bike Spine.

Recommendations for education resources: Request officer help, bring the officers into the schools, distribute information to the school parents, and provide information to the Ross Valley Reporter and the Patch. Officer Richardson commented that Nels Johnson from the IJ lives in that area, suggested getting him to write an article about the Bike Spine.

Wendi requested someone write a “ How To Resource (with video?) for cyclists and drivers”, send to all the parents, the Patch and Marin IJ. Make use of Town of Fairfax eblast list, add information on the town’s web site, local events- educational hand outs available.

Recommendations to educate at the school level:

- SR2S include information in the curriculum presented to Ross Valley Schools.
- IWalk Day, plan for the Bike Train to take the new route. Start at the fire station – police officers offered to support on Oct 9- possibly use the town’s historic fire truck.
- Get parents out on the streets to speak with people along the route- educate them on the Bike Spin.
- Develop a video with riders on the route- eblast to the school district
- Fairfax volunteer contact list- get the information out to people in the community.
- Develop press release- must come from the town of Fairfax
- SR2S will encourage Team Champions to get the word out in the schools.
- Make use of social media: Facebook and Twitter, SR2S will include information on web site.

Other issues

- Kathleen commented she contacted Sean (DPW) to move the bus stop down to the Red Hill Church.

- White Hill School, there is a new bicycle parking area near the new campus building. Good news is the bike racks at Wade Thomas racks are 3/4 full (approximately 200 bikes). Suggestion for schools to host a fund raiser to generate funds for additional racks, currently no grants available. Fire up Your Feet program- great way to raise money for bike racks and encourage walking. Racks range in price \$290.00 rack for 4 bikes. Also local DPW's may have a resources of racks, Drake High school has used police barricades as bike racks. Another possible resources is Walk/Bike Marin and ask for funds from Air District.

School Activities

- IWalk preparations- Quality of Life Commission requesting information for fair in late September on all actives for IWalk Day- suggestion to make one large flyer including all the details in Ross Valley. Team Champions will meet to discuss how to includ St Anselms families that come from areas outside of town-there is an issue with the various start locations and how the bike train can get strung out creating disconnect. They will meet to discuss the route and meeting locations. Last year many students were grabbing the fire truck. Parents need to create a barrier between student's cyclists and the emergency vehicles.

Brookside, Hidden Valley and San Dominico Team Champions will meet to plan I Walk needs. They will discuss the route, meeting locations and school start times. Last year many cars not aware of the day's events, they blamed San Dominico School. Important to get the word out to residents, requested Central Marin police support as well. The Marin IJ is not all that supportive for getting the word out that IWalk Day is coming, best to have posting In Your Town, The Patch and RVR are great resources

Family Bicycling Playshop (aka Riding with Youth) will be scheduled this school year- new format including education and a fun family ride. Manor School would like to host a workshop after soccer season.

Set next meeting and agenda: January- Friday- 17 in the blue room at the district offices