

## SR 2 and Upper Pike Creek Road Virtual Workshop Summary

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### Comments were submitted by:

- 8 – Richards Lane residents
- 6 – Business Owners
- 3 – Upper Pike Creek Road residents
- 2 – Meadowood residents
- 8 – Other
- A petition with 56 signatures against the closure was also submitted by Jallin Patel on March 16, 2010.

### Comments supporting the closure included:

- Although the proposed change will be inconvenient, it will be a very positive improvement.
- Turning left from Kirkwood Hwy is usually a nightmare and the number of illegal u-turns makes this intersection extremely dangerous.
- I never make a left-turn onto Upper Pike Creek Rd going east because you cannot see far enough.
- This may inconvenience people with homes in this area, but the bottom line is that it is dangerous as it exists now.
- Island curbing should be put in place to prevent illegal left turns from Upper Pike Creek Rd onto EB Kirkwood Hwy.
- I fully support this project. It will reduce accidents. This is a difficult intersection.

### Comments against the closure included:

- It's safer and faster making a u-turn at Kirkwood Hwy and Upper Pike Creek Rd because there's a better view of oncoming traffic than at Kirkwood Hwy and Green Valley Circle.
- I've never had an accident at Upper Pike Creek Road.
- Your data indicates that there are more crashes at Harmony Road and Green Valley Circle than at Upper Pike Creek Road.
- Closing the intersection will increase traffic load, increase delays due to u-turn traffic, increase air pollution and cause stress on the other two intersections.
- Your plan will cause additional auto accidents at Harmony Road and Green Valley Circle due to additional u-turn traffic.
- The closure will cause undue inconvenience to the residents of Richards Lane as well as businesses. It will reduce our property values.
- Many of the motorists who would have normally taken Upper Pike Creek Road will most likely continue east on Kirkwood Hwy to Pike Creek Rd or Milltown Rd where they will cut up to their destination. This will place more traffic on Kirkwood Hwy, at already congested intersections as well as on Pike Creek and Milltown Roads.
- A lot of traffic will cut through Meadowood if the median is closed.

### Ideas for solving the existing safety issues:

- Add a traffic light to Kirkwood Hwy to keep the left-turn to Upper Pike Creek Rd open. The light would slow down the speed of drivers on Kirkwood Hwy.
- Extend the median a few feet to the east to give drivers making that turn a clear view all the way down and up the hill past the Green Valley stoplight.
- Left-turning traffic from Upper Pike Creek Road needs to be addressed – maybe by adding a median there that forces those cars to make right turns only.
- The existing no u-turn sign should be removed – I make u-turns there because, in my opinion, it is safer than the alternates.
- If possible, could DelDOT install a turning and decel lane for our development (Richards Lane) so that our community members won't have to make u-turns?
- I would like to see further efforts put into slowing down and restricting traffic on Upper Pike Creek Road.
- Create a one-way spur road by connecting Harmony Road and Old Harmony Road and install a signal at Kirkwood Highway and Upper Pike Creek Road/Old Harmony Road.
- Build a connector road by extending Harmony Road to Upper Pike Creek Road north of Richards Lane.
- Fix the line of sight problem for vehicles making a right from Upper Pike Creek Road onto Kirkwood Highway by cutting back the existing berm on the northeast corner.

- In addition to the left-turn vehicles stacking in the through lanes while waiting to turn onto Harmony Road, the through vehicles are also backing up to the Upper Pike Creek Road intersection and are being rear ended by vehicles that can't see them as they're going over the hill on Kirkwood Highway. This issue needs to be addressed.
- Why can't the hill along Kirkwood Highway be cut down to get rid of the line of sight issues?

**In response to the comments DeIDOT received on the SR 2 and Upper Pike Creek Road Virtual Workshop, we are providing the following information to address some of the suggested solutions we received and to clarify the proposed improvements.**

- We evaluated the possibility of signaling the SR 2 and Upper Pike Creek Road intersection, but found that it is not recommended for several reasons:
  - This signal would be approximately 1000 feet from the signal at Harmony Road, which is too close. As a result, we would not be able to provide an adequate left-turn lane at Upper Pike Creek Road without a major widening of Kirkwood Highway.
  - We would not be able to lengthen the left-turn lane for Harmony Road.
  - Signals at the top of hills are discouraged on roads like Kirkwood Highway due to the high number of trucks. It takes trucks more time to accelerate from a stopped condition on hills, which increases delay and the potential for rear end crashes.
- Several respondents stated that they have a better view of oncoming traffic at Upper Pike Creek Road than at Green Valley Circle. We've measured the available sight distance at both intersections and found that there is more sight distance available at Green Valley Circle.
- The traffic signals at Kirkwood Highway and Harmony Road and Kirkwood Highway and Green Valley Circle will be changed to protected-only phasing. This means vehicles will only be permitted to make left-turns and/or u-turns when a green arrow is present.
- Although the total number of crashes at the SR 2 and Upper Pike Creek Road intersection is the lowest of the three intersections, this is expected since it has significantly less turning vehicles as compared to the other two intersections. This intersection is experiencing a higher percentage of left-turn and angle crashes as well. The left-turn and angle crashes at SR 2 and Harmony Road and SR 2 and Green Valley Circle are expected to decrease significantly when we change to protected-only phasing.
- The one-way spur road would require a signal at Kirkwood Highway and Upper Pike Creek Road/Old Harmony Road, which is not recommended per the same reasons stated above.
- A connector road from Harmony Road to Upper Pike Creek Road would go through state park lands, which would not be permitted per Federal regulations.
- We will remove the portion of the embankment that is restricting sight distance on the northeast corner of the intersection.
- We are looking into options to address the issue of through vehicles stacking in an area where approaching vehicles can't see them.
- Changing the vertical curvature of Kirkwood Highway would include either raising Kirkwood Highway east of Upper Pike Creek Road or lowering Kirkwood Highway west of Upper Pike Creek Road. The challenges would be:

Raising Kirkwood Highway

- The Pike Creek bridge would have to be raised.
- Aerial utilities may have clearance issues.
- The Creekside frontage and entrance would be impacted.
- There is the potential for wetland impacts and significant tree removal.

Lowering Kirkwood Highway

- Many underground utilities would need to be relocated.
- Utility poles could be undermined/need to be replaced.
- The culvert at Richardson's may have to be replaced.
- Business entrances and frontage would be impacted.

The challenges associated with changing the vertical curvature of Kirkwood Highway mentioned above are not inexpensive and would be extremely disruptive to adjoining businesses/homes, wetlands, trees, and utilities.

**In summary, DeIDOT is still recommending the closure of the median, which will allow us to lengthen the left-turn lane for Harmony Road, modification to the signal phasing to protected only left-turns at Harmony Road and Green Valley Circle, and removal of a portion of the embankment on the northeast corner to improve sight distance for right-turning vehicles.**