

Dear Residents:

August 20, 2012

After McEwen Phase III opened in April, the city administration knew that the intersection would be an issue since the road and roundabout were not connected. Unfortunately, the city could not complete this final step of the Phase III construction because funds from both the state and the city were maxed out at that time.

Before phase III was completed, I began to ask for funding while securing the commitment from the other members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) so we could quickly move forward with all phases including design, securing the right-of-way, and the actual construction. This project will extend the western part of McEwen Drive through the roundabout and connect back into the current McEwen Drive just east of the Garden Club Estates entrance.

We have secured the funding and the board's commitment and we are now in the design stage, obtaining the necessary right-of-way, as well as working with the utility companies in the area. The city plans to go out to bid on this new section sometime in the next few months and we are hopeful that construction will begin by the end of 2012 / beginning of 2013, with completion date sometime in the fall of 2013. We are moving as quickly as possible so the congestion at this intersection can be relieved and a functioning roundabout will be working sometime by late 2013.

In the meantime, we have been experiencing traffic back-up on Cool Springs Blvd., which is a major collector road and traffic impeding the outbound access of our fire trucks out of the Fire Station on Cool Spring Blvd. This situation had to be corrected immediately, which necessitated the new traffic pattern at the intersection. I understand that some of you believe we traded one problem for another and that may be true, but it was imperative that we not impede access in and out of the Fire Station.

Our traffic engineers studied the intersection at McEwen, Cool Springs, and Oxford Glen and they provided the best solution, given the difficult circumstances. We believe that this solution addresses both problems. The situation on Cool Spring at the Fire Station has been rectified, and traffic flow at the McEwen, Cool Springs, and Oxford Glen intersection between 4:30 pm and 6 pm has improved.

We also recognize that we must do something to free up the traffic congestion on McEwen in the mornings. The current traffic pattern is not ideal for those coming

from east McEwen. We are certainly fully aware of the tie-ups and have the daily traffic counts, in addition to documented wait times as well. In an effort to minimize the current traffic problem, I have suggested, along with the City Engineering Dept., that we place a police officer in the intersection from at least 7 am until 8:45 am, Monday through Friday. The officer will allow traffic to function and move on its own as much as possible when it is not backed up much further than Garden Club Estates entrance. However, once traffic backs-up to that point, the officer will conduct traffic control as needed. We have already completed one week with the Officer on duty at the intersection and we believe this will be the best solution for moving traffic for the next year in a safe and cost-effective manner.

Some have suggested the installation of a traffic light, but the cost of the light would be approximately \$75,000 to \$100,000. In addition, this would not be an immediate solution since it would take at least two to three months to work with utilities, order the equipment, and actually get the light installed. Using the police officer provides an immediate and less expensive solution. This solution also provides flexibility. If we find that we need to increase the Officer's time at the intersection we will do so as the need presents itself, especially now that school has started. We find that the intersection is functioning fairly well during the other times of the day, but the City will continue to monitor it closely this fall and for the next year.

I know this is not the ideal situation, but we know that within one year we will have a fully functioning roundabout that will release the tie up for our morning and evening commutes. I have received numerous inquiries about this intersection and I am sorry I could not get back with you all with this full explanation before this time. I have been meeting with the City Administrator, our City Engineering Dept., and our Police Dept. over the last two weeks in an effort to analyze and resolve this situation. Our City Administration and staff are totally involved in this issue and continue to work hard and smart in making sure we are doing the best we can do for our citizens given the current situation for the next 12 months.

I ask for your help and patience during this tedious time. I appreciate all the suggestions and input the City and I have received from you all and I am ALWAYS willing to take your calls and hear your concerns and work with you all to bring about effective solutions to these issues.

I promise you I will stay on this and will send out regular updates on the road project as we have them from our departments. Again, please be aware that they will be evaluating this intersection on a regular basis.

As far as construction of the new intersection at Wilson Pike and McEwen; we had hoped that the project would be underway by now, but we've been tied up with the railroad and utilities and acquiring the right-of-way of a property section that is in foreclosure. These issues must be resolved before we can move forward with the construction phase. As soon as we get full releases from the railroad, utilities, and the property issues, we will immediately begin work. It is our desire to move ahead and get this intersection completed as soon as possible. The school board had committed \$1M towards this intersection under the condition that it would get started by August 2012. Do to no fault of our own (as mentioned above) we will not be able to start this intersection in August so we are asking the School Board to extend our contract with them. I would assume, in all good faith, that they would do so since the City is not the party holding up the construction. We shall see. I will also send out updates on the intersection at Wilson and McEwen as I receive them from the city.

Thank you and I count it an honor to serve the residents in Ward 1 and the City of Franklin,
Bev

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