

**Village of Mamaroneck Walking Safety Assessment:  
Old Post Road, Orienta and Rushmore Avenues  
November 5, 2019  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**Background**

In September 2014, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) released a national action plan, ["Safer People, Safer Streets: Summary of U.S. Department of Transportation Action Plan to Increase Walking and Biking and Reduce Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities."](#) This plan outlines activities the Federal government seeks to undertake in concert with State and local partners to make safe walking and biking a reality for all Americans, regardless of age, income, or ability.

The *Walk/Bike Safety Assessment* is just one tool described in the Plan for States or communities with safety concerns stemming from pedestrian and/or bicyclist crashes, or the potential for such crashes. These *Assessments* involve coordinating a group of local practitioners and stakeholders to explore connected pedestrian and bicycle networks and the safety of non-motorized users; in short, a multi-disciplinary group gathers on a corridor that poses crash risk for pedestrians, takes a walk together, and records observations and recommendations.

The Village of Mamaroneck Traffic Commission began utilizing these *Assessments* as part of a larger effort to become more systemic and data-driven in analyzing and recommending roadway improvements. In addition, the *Assessments* support the evaluation component of the Village's recently announced Vision Zero initiative.

**Overview of corridors**

The Traffic Commission held an *Assessment* on November 5, 2019, based on an accumulation of resident concerns about safe student passage to schools such as Mamaroneck High School, Hommocks Middle School, Central Avenue Elementary School, and Westchester Day School. Heavily used by students who live in the Orienta neighborhood of the Village, Old Post Road, a portion of Orienta Avenue, and Rushmore Avenue were identified as the most heavily used corridors that students on foot and on bike use between home and school.

Old Post Road is a one-way, single lane roadway stretching from Orienta Avenue to its terminus, a lighted intersection with Boston Post Road and Richbell Avenue. This relatively short local roadway parallels U.S. Route 1/Boston Post Road, and is frequently used by local residents as an alternative to traveling on the more heavily congested Boston Post Road. Old Post is a one-way exit for all vehicles leaving the McDonalds restaurant, Orienta Gardens apartments, Fairway Green Townhomes and single-family homes. The corridor has a steady flow of non-motorized traffic, with school children, families with strollers, seniors, cyclists and other residents using the quieter roadway. There is a dedicated painted pedestrian lane along a portion of the southern edge of the roadway.

Rushmore Avenue is a two-way local roadway that closely parallels the west basin of Mamaroneck Harbor, and stretches from Orienta Avenue to a dead-end on the waterfront of Long Island Sound. A portion of Harbor Island Park, several dozen single-family homes, and several boatyards and social clubs lie along Rushmore Avenue. Unfortunately, because of its proximity to the water and relatively low elevation, Rushmore Avenue is prone to flooding after even a moderate rainfall. The roadway has sidewalks along a portion of its length, but some are ornamental flagstone-style pathways in disrepair, and so not ADA-compliant.

The small stretch of Orienta Avenue that was assessed stretches from the Old Post Road terminus to Boston Post Road – essentially a key connector to carry travelers from the interior of the Orienta neighborhood to Boston Post Road directly. This is a wide, two-laned local roadway with sidewalk along one side of the roadway.

### **Event overview**

A summary of the operational plan, schedule for the day, and participant instructions were also shared:

- (1) The ten participants were divided into two walking teams, each comprised of a mix of disciplines to broaden observational perspectives; for instance, a patrol officer, public health professional, resident and Traffic Commission member.
- (2) Each team was asked to assign one reporter to record consensus observations made during the walk, and one photographer to capture pictures of the environment and people traveling along the corridor.
- (3) One of the teams was assigned to walk the Old Post Road, beginning at the corner of Old Post Road and the Boston Post Road. The other team was assigned to walk the short portion of Orienta to Rushmore from the Town Center.
- (4) Each team was asked to walk on the side of the road facing traffic, regardless of whether pedestrian facilities were provided.
- (5) During their walk, participants were asked to record both observations and experiences using a Walkability Assessment Checklist (see attached).
- (6) At the walk's conclusion, participants reconvened at the Village Town Center to discuss the most pressing issues and problems they observed, as well as identify potential countermeasures.
- (7) Shannon Purdy from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Region 2 then discussed pedestrian and bicyclist crash data from the national level, as well as key factors to consider in enacting a successful pedestrian/bicycle safety initiative.

### **Issues and recommendations: Old Post Road**

The stretch of the Old Post Road was assessed on a dry weekday afternoon just as school was getting out. Vehicle traffic was steady with an increase in volume during school dismissal. There were many children on foot as well as a number of cyclists – many of which headed down



the Old Post Road on their way home from school. A crossing guard at the corner of Old Post and Boston Post Road described violations he regularly observes that present dangerous conditions for pedestrians, including red light-running and excessive speeds from vehicles exiting Old Post Road.

The Assessment team also noted the painted pedestrian lane on Old Post Road ends abruptly at the one-way vehicle exit from McDonald's parking lot, leaving pedestrians to choose between walking in the roadway quite close to vehicles queuing at the traffic light, or walking through a steeply graded mulch patch alongside the parking lot.

### Infrastructure Issues



- Broken sidewalks at intersection of Old Post Road and Boston Post Road – sidewalk curb ramps were broken or deeply cracked, making access impassible for wheelchairs.
- Lack of continuity in pedestrian lane and/or sidewalk (Old Post and Boston Post Road) – Old Post Road approach at Boston Post Road has no identified pedestrian space on either side. Pedestrians were seen cutting through hedges to utilize the dry cleaners parking lot en route to Old Post Road.
- Lack of continuity in pedestrian lane (Old Post Road and Orienta Avenue) – the painted pedestrian lane that aligns most of Old Post Road abruptly ends at a slip road entrance to Orienta Avenue on the southwest border of Gilley's Park. Pedestrians continuing onward toward Harbor Island Park have no identified space, and crossing Orienta at the terminus of Old Post Road is extremely hazardous due to a significant blind spot caused by residential tree overgrowth and vehicles rapidly picking up speed as they travel southbound on Orienta.
- Pedestrian lane not well maintained – Within the painted pedestrian lane that lines most of Old Post Road, the Assessment team observed large leaf piles, debris and landscaping trucks parked alongside residences, blocking access for pedestrians and cyclists.



### Behavioral issues

- Excessive speed (Old Post Road) – the Old Post Road is a curved road and makes visibility difficult for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Despite this, multiple vehicles were observed traveling at what appeared to be unsafe speeds for the conditions, often entering the pedestrian lane on blind curves.
- Excessive speed (Vehicles entering Old Post Road from Orienta Avenue) -- cars coming from Boston Road veer right onto Old Post with limited pedestrian or car visibility and when cars coming from Orienta make a sharp left almost u-turn down Old Post Road



### Recommendations: immediate, low-cost

The following recommendations from the assessment team are not intended to be an exhaustive list of needed improvements, but may address the most pressing needs and have a significant impact on pedestrian and bicycle safety:

- Traffic Study – At the entrance to the Old Post Road from the Boston Post Road, a simple traffic study could evaluate the usefulness of such a short two-lane section; observations show only two cars can queue side-by-side. If the additional cars queued back in a single-lane scenario could be tolerated, the additional width could be given to a sidewalk where one of the traffic lanes is now.
- Law Enforcement – Law enforcement should ticket cars parked along the pedestrian walkway. Tickets should also be given for violations like overgrown bushes and weeds that encroach upon the pedestrian lane.
- Continue painted pedestrian lane - The pedestrian lane should continue along its trajectory toward Orienta Avenue from where it currently ends at Gillie's Park, and the limited street parking that's currently permitted along that stretch (e.g., 6PM – 8AM on weekdays) should be prohibited. Adding "No Parking in Pedestrian Lane Anytime" signs at various points along Old Post Road will further emphasize this dedicated space.
- Add painted crosswalk across Orienta Avenue from Old Post Road – Again, following the natural trajectory of pedestrian traffic entering and exiting Old Post Road from the painted pedestrian lane, a well-marked crosswalk with an in-road "must yield to pedestrians" sign will help slow vehicle traffic for pedestrians to more safely cross Orienta.
- Add painted bicycle icon to painted pedestrian lane – Cyclists of all ages traverse Old Post Road in both directions, and should be able to share the pedestrian lane using caution.
- Paint Fog Line – Paint a fog line/white stripe on the opposite side of Old Post Road 10' off the yellow stripe to delineate the travel lane and parking lane. Typical



minimum widths are 10' for travel lane, 8' for parking lane, and 5' for two-way pedestrian path. Several Google Earth spot measurements show Old Post Road to be 30' to 33' which is adequate for a 10' travel lane and an 8' parking lane, with the leftover being given to a wider striped path that could better accommodate two-way cyclists and pedestrians.

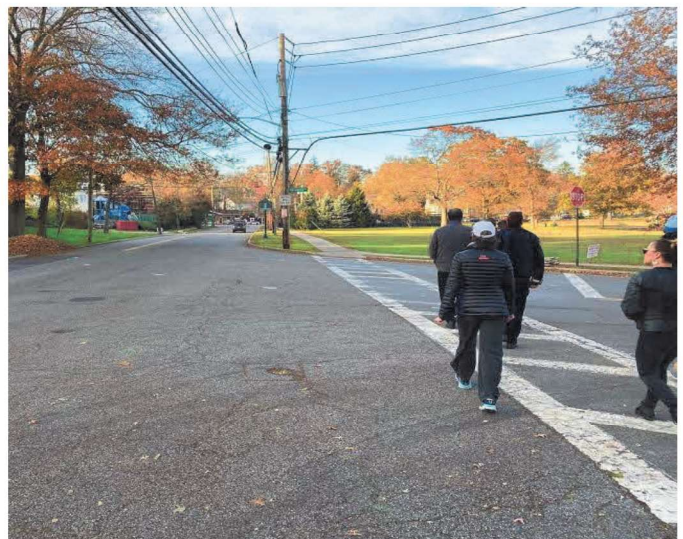
#### Recommendations: longer-term, higher-cost

- Install sidewalk connecting the Boston Post Road to the Old Post Rd -- At the McDonald's corner there is an opportunity to build a concrete sidewalk in the landscaped area (on the McDonald's side where there is currently a berm). This would enable pedestrians and cyclists coming from the Post Rd. to travel safely to the Old Post Rd. Perhaps McDonalds has that berm because of set-back requirements – look into converting this berm to a sidewalk (this would require a short retaining wall because of the grade difference between the street and parking lot level).
- Repair sidewalks/curb cuts at the intersection of Old Post and Boston Post Road -- Ask the businesses along Boston Post Road to repair the walkways in front of their businesses. Most of the walkways have been patched many times, are uneven and are made up of many different materials
- "No Parking this Side of Street" – Prohibit parking along the entire stretch of Old Post Road pedestrian/bicycle lane, and install needed signage to indicate
- Solar Speed Monitoring signs along the "Old Post Rd" – people use this street as a speed short-cut, they fly down this street to avoid more congested roads. Given the curved street, numerous visibility issues and limited pedestrian protections it is imperative that motorists go the speed limit

#### **Issues and recommendations: Orienta Avenue/Rushmore Avenue**

Two roadway segments key to connecting pedestrians to the Orienta neighborhood were also assessed: (1) the stretch of Orienta Avenue between Boston Post Road and Old Post Road, and (2) the stretch of Rushmore Avenue between Orienta Avenue and the southern border of Harbor Island Park.

The intersection of Boston Post Road and Orienta Avenue is a T-junction, with two significant driveway entrances onto Boston Post Road immediately across from the Orienta Avenue terminus: a newly built apartment building, and a fuel station. The intersection



itself is very large, and vehicle entry onto Orienta Avenue from either direction of BPR takes cars from a four-lane secondary highway to a single lane traveling southbound. For vehicles exiting Orienta Avenue onto BPR, there are two separate lanes: one for right-hand turns and one for left-hand turns.

This creates a very wide pedestrian crossing at Orienta Avenue and Boston Post Road. The crossing is signalized and has a crosswalk, but pedestrians must traverse a long distance in a short amount of time.



Cyclists traveling to this intersection along Boston Post Road are forced to cross the commercial driveway at the fuel station during permissive northbound Boston Post Road signal phase. Ideas include making it a protected-only signal phase, prohibiting left turns into that driveway, and closing the driveway (there are two other driveways to enter/exit this commercial business if the third was to be closed).

Ideas to calm traffic at the north leg include making it all-way stop to end confusion

over right-of-way, a pedestrian refuge island on the Orienta Avenue approach to break up the long crossing and low turning vehicles, or installing a neighborhood traffic circle/mini-circle at Orienta and Rushmore Avenues, which could cost as little as \$15,000-\$20,000.

#### **Recommendations: immediate, lower-cost**

- Disseminate Vision Zero Mamaroneck outreach materials to residents along Old Post Road, Orienta Avenue and Rushmore Avenue to educate local drivers on the Village's 25 mph speed limit, and key elements of the safe systems approach.
- Install high-visibility pedestrian crossing signage at the Orienta Avenue/Hall Street intersection, so drivers entering Orienta Avenue from Boston Post Road have visible warning of frequent pedestrian crossings.

#### **Recommendations: longer-term, higher-cost**

- Intersection of Boston Post Road and Orienta -- Very wide pedestrian crossing at Orienta Avenue and Boston Post Road. Ideas include making the left turns from southbound Boston Post Road onto Orienta Avenue only go on a green arrow/protected-only signal phase to eliminate conflicts with pedestrians, a pedestrian refuge island where the center line is which will break up the crossing and slow turning vehicles and/or add a curb extension in the foreground of the picture, subject to truck turning template/AutoTurn assessment.
- Install mini traffic circle at Orienta and Rushmore Avenues – Reducing the size of this intersection will aid in reducing vehicle speeds. Participants in the WSA indicated



that members of the Orienta Point Association may be interested in donating a portion of the funds for installation.