

LOCUST HILL CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION

9719 Bellevue Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

July 26, 2012

Via Electronic Mail

Ms. Barbara Solberg
Mail Stop C-102
Office of Highway Development
Maryland State Highway Administration
707 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Ms. Solberg:

The purpose of this letter is to request, on behalf of the Locust Hill Citizens' Association ("LHCA"), that you confirm the scope of the cost-benefit and design analysis that the State Highway Administration ("SHA") will undertake prior to submission of its request for funding of Phase 4 of the Cedar Lane-Rockville Pike intersection improvement project, as noted by County Executive Leggett in his July 12, 2012 letter to the Office of Economic Adjustment ("OEA").

We also request that that you inform us of the time frame for your analyses and for their submission to OEA and that you keep open channels of communication with us as your analysis progresses, including access by our traffic engineer, Mr. Joseph Cutro, to any updated traffic count data and to your modeling assumptions and outcomes.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for the effort you and your colleagues (particularly Yuqiong Bai) have expended with respect to addressing our concerns regarding the design of the Phase 4 auxiliary through lane—if it is built—including your proposed resolution of the sidewalk issue.

However, LHCA continues to believe that the construction of the auxiliary through lane would be unsafe and an inefficient use of federal traffic mitigation funds. In this regard, LHCA believes that SHA's additional cost-benefit analysis and design efforts would be incomplete unless SHA evaluates the auxiliary through lane's costs and benefits under scenarios that include possibility that the "temporary" North Wood Road exit signal would need to remain in service beyond the completion of the BRAC Cedar Lane projects.

For example, the preliminary examination of the spring 2012 traffic data SHA made available to Mr. Cutro, found that, in the afternoon peak hours, the percentage of

northbound traffic turning right onto Cedar Lane was higher than previously estimated. As explained by Mr. Cutro, the resulting "weave conflict" above North Wood Road between this right-turning traffic and traffic departing Walter Reed using the North Wood Road gate—both of which traffic streams would use the same new lane under current plans—could well preclude the new lane's operation from being effectively or safely sustainable. Avoidance of such a result could necessitate having more than one lane for exiting traffic, which would require keeping the exit traffic signal at North Wood Road operational, making such an outcome a more probable result of the scheduled 2015 assessment of the exit signal's future.

In turn, as you confirmed in your June 20 email to us, continued operation of the exit signal would result in the auxiliary through lane having "minimal" traffic mitigation benefits, with the result that the auxiliary through lane would likely not be constructed. Consequently, SHA's analysis of Phase 4 and its design would appear inadequate if it does not consider the implications of the continued use of the exit signal on mitigation funds currently allocated to construction of the auxiliary through lane. For example, as noted by Mr. Cutro, constructing additional capacity between Wilson Drive and North Wood Road could permit northbound Rockville Pike traffic to flow more efficiently through and beyond North Wood Road if the signal light remains on.

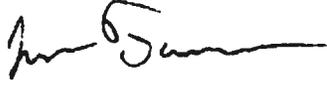
Evaluating the relative costs and benefits of adding lane capacity through the North Wood Road intersection (or other traffic mitigation options) if the exit signal remains on would, of course, require further analysis—but that is just the point. We thus believe that SHA has an obligation to all stakeholders concerned with the mitigation of Walter Reed traffic to ensure that the analysis provided to OEA assesses the most appropriate use of Cedar Lane project funds within the project's boundaries if the exit signal should remain on—permitting Phase 4's locational details to be adjusted based on this engineering contingency. As an illustration, attached Exhibit 1 is a mark-up of the map used in SHA's October 2011 OEA submission showing the location of Phase 4's added lane capacity (if otherwise justified) in alternate locations based on the engineering contingency regarding the continued use of the North Wood Road exit signal.

In sum, we ask that you advise us of the scope of SHA's forthcoming Phase 4 cost-benefit and design analyses (including date of the traffic count data on which it will be based) and confirm that they will: (1) consider the possibility that the North Wood Road exit signal remains in use after the pending 2015 assessment; and (2) address a more appropriate location for Phase 4's lane capacity (if any), if additional analysis and/or a decision in favor of continued use of the exit signal demonstrate that the auxiliary through lane can no longer be viewed as a cost-effective and/or efficient means of achieving the Cedar Lane project's traffic mitigation objectives.

We also ask that you inform us of the timing of your analyses and request that you keep open channels of communication with us as your analysis progresses, including timely access by Mr. Cutro to any updated traffic count data and modeling assumptions and outcomes.

We look forward to continuing our dialog.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Turner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jim Turner
President, Locust Hill Citizens' Association

EXHIBIT 1

**SHA CEDAR LANE PROJECT MAP
SHOWING ILLUSTRATIVE ALTERNATE PHASE 4 LANE
LOCATIONS**

MD 355 (Rockville Pike) and West Cedar Lane / Cedar Lane

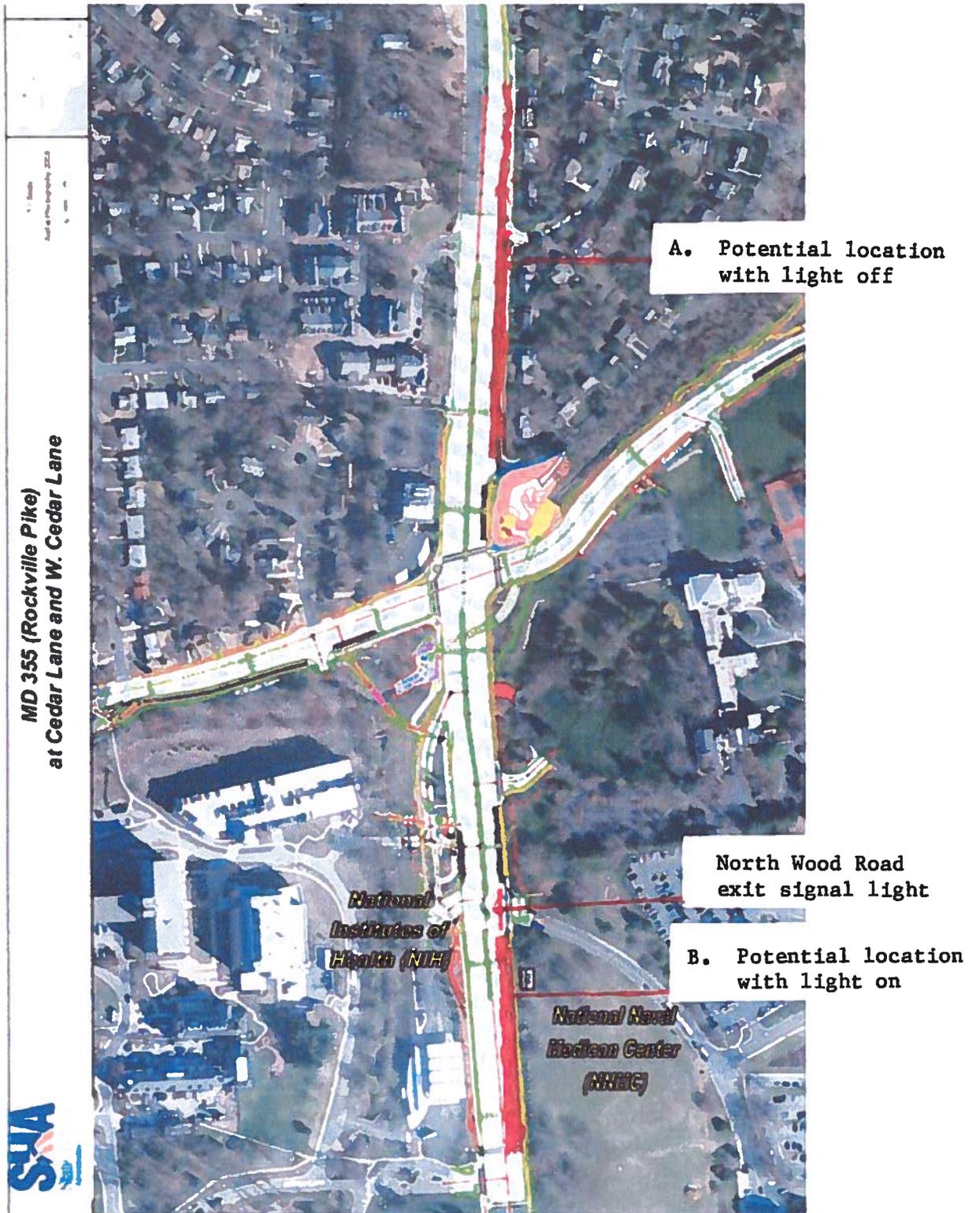


Figure 2: MD 355 (Rockville Pike) and West Cedar Lane / Cedar Lane, Phase 1 - 4