

Clancy, Glenn

From: Nikolay Koumpikov [kumpikov@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 05, 2012 8:41 PM
To: Clancy, Glenn
Cc: chief@belmontpd.org
Subject: Baker St

Dear Glenn,

My name is Nikolay Koumpikov and I live on 46 Baker St.

Some years ago we had a correspondence regarding the street. I did ask if it is possible to straighten the street and provide sidewalk on both sides of the street at Concord Ave.

Your response at the time was that you were concerned about eroding the house at 67 Concord Ave. I still believe that the area where the Baker St. connects to Concord Ave is unsafe and it looks rather ugly. Moreover, there is a parking space just across the bulge. The parking space is an apparent accommodation for the Chinese restaurant and when there are cars parked, the entrance into Baker St from Concord Ave. is very narrow and very unsafe. Apparently, the street at this point is not wide enough to allow to have parked cars and two-way traffic.

Today am writing to you with another concern, which is shared between the neighbors I have spoken with.

Ever since the street was paved, the traffic through it skyrocketed. Effectively, it became the only street in the neighborhood serving as a shortcut for Blanchard St. During the evening commute hours, Baker St accommodates an impressive parade of cars in both directions. As you know, the street does not have sidewalks and during the traffic times many cars are crossing into the pedestrian areas (shoulder) in order to pass each other. Compounded with this is the fact that some neighbors park on the shoulder in order to alleviate the drivers, yet causing unsafe conditions for the pedestrians. This makes the street exceptionally unsafe for pedestrians. Simply put, the width and the design of the street were never meant to accommodate such excessive traffic. I am encouraging you to come visit Baker Street between 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. during the week days. In a more scientific approach, the town can arrange so that the traffic is quantified and compared to the traffic the street was taking before it has been paved. Last week I witnessed a situation in which a car nearly struck a toddler. Luckily, the car was not speeding and the driver was able to react and stop about 3-4 feet from the kid.

I am also very concerned that when the construction on Concord Ave (across Baker St) completes and the shopping center operates, the traffic will become even worse. I sincerely wish a great success to the shopping center, but its success should come at expense of its neighbors. The traffic to and from the shopping center should not go through Baker Street as it appears to be the default layout now.

In the light of the facts that:

1. The street cannot provide a safe two-way passage along its entire length, and
 2. There is no adequate protection for the pedestrians, while walking on the shoulders,
- I would like to ask you to help come up with a plan, which will significantly curb the traffic and make the neighborhood safer. I think that there are various ways to achieve this. In my opinion, options include:
1. Restricting the traffic in the evening peak hours (similar to the way it is restricted in the morning),
 2. Making left turn from Concord Ave prohibited during evening peak hours,
 3. Providing a separation island on Concord Ave, which will prevent left turns from Concord Ave and straight exits from the newly developed shopping center into Baker St.
 4. Converting the street into one-way-street (similarly to Underwood St.),

5. Working with Cambridge Police Department to adjust the set of lights at the intersection Concord Ave / Blanchard St. The lack of left light for cars coming from Belmont through Concord Ave makes Baker Street a rather appealing shortcut.

6. Installing speed bumps to force the cars into more considerate speeds. I have to admit that most drivers are driving with normal town speed - 35 mph. Yet, the visibility on the street is certainly not great and this speed can be dangerous. Moreover, in the evening hours, there are often gross abusers who are going through the street at really high speeds.

I am certain that even more and better set of options can be developed and implemented by professional people.

The neighbors with whom I have spoken are equally concerned about the traffic and the overall perceived lack of traffic safety on the street. Given the number of cars passing through the street, and the lack of protection for pedestrians, I think that an accident is just waiting to happen. I hope our concerns can be taken into account and I am ready to work the town to make the street safer and more neighborhood-friendly.

Please let me know if I should submit my above thoughts in a different format or address a different set of people.

Thank you very much for your consideration!

Nikolay Koumpikov
46 Baker St
Belmont MA
Cell: 617-372-7319



Traffic Advisory Committee

TOWN OF BELMONT

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Dana Miller, Clerk

Committee Members
Michael Bair
Peter Curro
Donald Mercier
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Matt Sullivan

Date: April 10, 2012
To: Members – Traffic Advisory Committee
From: Linda Nickens, Chair
Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, April 12, 2012 at 7:00 PM** in the **Town Hall Board Conference Room 1**. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Linda via e-mail.

7:00 Call to Order
7:00 – 7:05 Minutes (3/08/12)
7:05 – 7:30 Discussion – Broadening Commission Scope to Include Parking Matters
7:30 – 7:35 New Business

- Baker Street Resident Complaint (Town Engineer to Report)

7:35 – 7:40 Old Business

- No Known Items

7:40 Adjourn

Cc: Board of Selectmen – Mark Paolillo
Kellie Hebert, Interim Town Administrator
Glenn R. Clancy, Town Engineer
Sgt Ben Mailhot, Belmont Police Department
Richard McLaughlin, Belmont Police Chief
Peter Castanino, Director, Department of Public Works
Karl Haglund, Planning Board