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Pleasant Hill Road traffic trials

By Pippa Fisher



Reliez Valley Road faces either congestion during peak hours or empty roads and speeding drivers at other times. Photo Pippa Fisher

right hand turn toward Deerhill Road. Coe said that extending the right hand turn would allow roughly three extra cars through on each traffic signal cycle or less than 50 extra vehicles an hour, which he said was not worth the expenditure.

Perhaps the harder question is that of traffic on Reliez Valley Road. Coe recommended the continued monitoring of traffic along the road and shared the consultant's suggestions of flashing speed feedback signs together with targeted speed enforcement.

Coe also suggested talking to the community-based navigation app, Waze, which still directs traffic along Reliez Valley Road as a bypass for Pleasant Hill Road.

Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen weighed in on the effectiveness of the speed feedback signs, saying that they have limited success and that drivers tend to pay attention to them only the first few times they see them.

Several residents testified to the problems with one gentleman calling the situation a "mini crisis." He said that his commute from north of Withers Avenue to Springhill Elementary School, which used to take seven to 10 minutes two years ago, now regularly takes him 30 minutes.

The same resident pointed out that Waze works from data feedback, so as traffic times on Reliez Valley Road are improved the app is actually more likely to divert traffic along that route. The resident also said that Waze would only change if the law changed by making the turn on Withers Avenue illegal.

The residents who spoke agreed with the findings that have shown improvement in congestion since the city changed the traffic signal timing to favor Reliez Valley Road, allowing traffic to get onto Pleasant Hill Road more easily.

Council Member Mark Mitchell said that he would like to keep the question of an extended right hand turn lane to Deerhill Road on the table and would like to find out more about the cost. He expressed interest in turn restriction signs and said he would like that brought up in a public forum meeting.

All members agreed money would be better spent on speeding enforcement rather than speed feedback signs.

Mayor Mike Anderson added that he hoped a future public meeting with neighbors would have a broad scope to discuss all angles and ideas.

A motion was passed unanimously by all five members directing staff to coordinate a meeting to get public feedback, to begin police speed enforcement, to get a cost estimate on extending the southbound right hand turn lane and to look further into turn restriction signs.

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