

David De Angelis

From: David De Angelis
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2022 11:17 AM
To: Craig Harley; David De Angelis; Village Trustee Jim Koleski; John McNamara; Village Trustee John Schindler; Katy Cornell; Richard Paul Jr; Rob Casperson; Robert Coons; David De Angelis; kristinasayas@gmail.com; Neil Palmer; Village Trustee Thomas Michalski; Village Trustee Jennifer Stuckert; Village Trustee Kristina Sayas; Elizabeth Williamson; Emily Baseheart; Jamie Niederbaumer; John Schindler; Kim Irwin; Martha Kandler; Natalie Schneider; Patrick Kressin; Sarah Wynia Smith; Stacy Barry Coffee; Theresa Lauer; Barbara Decker; James Gage; John Oliveri; Margaret Thew; Village Trustee Thomas Michalski
Subject: FW: PATHWAYS ON GREMOOR!

From: Darcie Schrubbe [mailto:darcie7183@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 12:53 PM
To: David De Angelis <ddeangelis@elmgroveswi.org>
Subject: PATHWAYS ON GREMOOR!

Hi Dave,

Would you please forward this message to members of the trustees, public works committee, public safety committee, and pathways committee who are not already copied?

I am extremely frustrated and sad to see that a driver lost control of their car at the intersection of Gremoor Drive, Legion Drive and Hollyhock this morning. It was peak time to drop children off at school and if anyone would have been walking this could have been a very tragic accident for no reason at all.

I have two girls, five and seven. I should not be this scared to walk two blocks to get my kids to school. I will continue to fight for a pathway. Otherwise start with speed bumps on Gremoor. Something needs to happen!!! We are all done waiting!!!

I recognize that this progress will only happen at the rate that the village is comfortable budgeting for it and prioritizing it, and I urge this process to take on a higher priority. I urge you all to prioritize pathway construction on the list of pathways already prioritized by the pathways ad hoc committee on at least equal footing with road reconstruction. Safety should be our number one concern, especially when it comes to small children walking to school.

In the meantime, I request additional road salting priority to be given to this dangerous bend in Gremoor Drive which starts roughly between Arrowhead Court and Hollyhock headed to this intersection with Legion Dr on icy/slippery days, as this is part of what makes this intersection particularly dangerous for the pedestrians who walk there daily.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Darcie Schrubbe
12900 Gremoor Drive

David De Angelis

From: Mackenzie Johnson <mackenzieanne1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 12:46 PM
To: David De Angelis
Subject: Urgent Child and Pedestrian Safety Concerns
Attachments: IMG_0035.jpeg; IMG_0036.jpeg

Good afternoon, Dave,

Can please forward this message to the members of the Village Board of Trustees and members of public works committee, public safety committee, and pathways committee? Thank you in advance!!

Dear Village Leadership and Members of the Public Works, Public Safety and Ad Hoc Pathways Committees:

I live on Gremoor Drive and have three young children, the oldest of which is a Kindergartener at Tonawanda. We walk our daughter to school each day - in fact, proximity to the local public elementary school was a key reason we purchased our home in 2017. The pictures attached were taken by my neighbor yesterday morning (11/15) around 8:30 am at the intersection of Gremoor Dr, Legion Dr, and Hollyhock. The footprints you see very well could have been mine and my daughter's as we passed moments before my neighbor snapped these pictures on our daily walk to Tonawanda. These are pictures of a car going too fast and thankfully hitting "only" the Stop sign. We can all imagine what a terrible tragedy this could have easily been if it happened moments before or after it did.

I implore each Trustee and the members of all the committees involved to be proactive in prioritizing the safety of our children. Saying the funds don't exist is no longer an acceptable answer given what is at stake. It's time for a definitive action plan and steps forward. Pathways will only happen if each of you commit to bold leadership: to make the tough (but needed) decisions to budget for these projects. I hope you can agree that waiting for a more serious accident to happen, before fasttracking pathways, is not an option.

Sadly, the scary incident yesterday is not the first time something like this has happened at this intersection. Near misses continue to happen, and won't stop, until pathways are constructed on these routes with both heavy pedestrian and car traffic. We can only hope they stay "misses" and something more serious doesn't happen.

I URGE you all to prioritize construction for the list of pathways already established by the pathways ad hoc committee. For a Village that prides itself as family friendly, safety of our smallest residents must be our number one concern. If speaking at a meeting would be more impactful, please let me know and I (and many more concerned residents) will be there.

Sincerely,
Mackenzie Johnson
13140 Gremoor Drive

David De Angelis

From: Sarah Wynia Smith <wynia.smith@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 10:57 AM
To: David De Angelis
Cc: Natalie Schneider; Stacy Barry; John Schindler; Brian Smith; Kristin Olson
Subject: Safety Concern at Gremoor/Hollyhock/Legion right across from Tonawanda
Attachments: IMG_0035.jpeg; IMG_0036.jpeg

Hi Dave,

Would you please forward this message to members of the trustees, public works committee, public safety committee, and pathways committee who are not already copied?

I am writing today to reiterate the need for safe walking pathways in Elm Grove for our schoolchildren. The pictures attached were taken Tuesday morning 11/15 around 8:30 am at the intersection of Gremoor Dr, Legion Dr, and Hollyhock. Of note, this is peak "dropoff" time for school children walking to Tonawanda Elementary, which is located directly across the street from the pictures. At the bend in Gremoor heading towards the stop sign, a car lost control and ran into the stop sign. As evidenced by the footprints seen here, this is a very commonly used pedestrian route for parents taking their children to school. Even on days with supbar weather, numerous families use this route as pedestrians.

This may be a good time to note the fact that I am a resident of the house on the corner here and casually witness the large parade of walkers when I pick up and drop off my own children from school. We are thankfully protected from the danger I'm pointing out to you; after the crosswalk, my own children cut across our yard directly into our house. However, many families in our wider neighborhood use the shoulder of Gremoor daily as a pedestrian route to Tonawanda. I am incredibly concerned for their safety.

In my work as a member of the Ad Hoc Pathways Committee in Elm Grove, we have had many discussions regarding Gremoor being on the list of pathways to be developed... at some point in the nebulous future. I recognize that this progress will only happen at the rate that the village is comfortable budgeting for it and prioritizing it, and I urge this process to take on a higher priority.

I ask members of all the committees involved to consider whether we should be waiting for a more serious accident to happen before prioritizing pathways further. I am glad that Gremoor Drive's equivalent on the west side (Gebhardt, also near a school - Pilgrim Park) was recently overwhelmingly approved by voters to construct a pathway along with its roadway reconstruction. The photos I've attached illustrate that had this car come through minutes earlier, it may have traversed directly in the pathway of those schoolchildren's footsteps. I shudder to think about what a tragedy this would have been for Elm Grove.

Of note, this is not the first time something like this has happened at this intersection. A few years ago a car lost control and missed the stop sign, but ended up cutting the corner and driving across the yard. Again, that incident happened during schoolchild dropoff time and could have been a much bigger tragedy than the damage to the yard that resulted. I do not care one bit about any damage to the grass in our yard, but I care greatly about the potential harm that could befall schoolchildren.

I urge you all to prioritize pathway construction on the list of pathways already prioritized by the pathways ad hoc committee on at least equal footing with road reconstruction. Safety should be our number one concern, especially when it comes to small children walking to school.

In the meantime, I request additional road salting priority to be given to this dangerous bend in Gremoor Drive which starts roughly between Arrowhead Court and Hollyhock headed to this intersection with Legion Dr on icy/slippery days, as this is part of what makes this intersection particularly dangerous for the pedestrians who walk there daily.

All the best,
Sarah Wynia Smith
13380 Gremoor Drive

David De Angelis

From: Natalie Schneider <schneider.nat@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 11:02 AM
To: Richard Paul Jr
Cc: David De Angelis; Tonawanda DI Rising Stars
Subject: Fwd: Safety Concern at Gremoor/Hollyhock/Legion right across from Tonawanda
Attachments: IMG_0035.jpeg; IMG_0036.jpeg

Richard,
FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sarah Wynia Smith <wynia.smith@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Nov 16, 2022 at 10:57 AM
Subject: Safety Concern at Gremoor/Hollyhock/Legion right across from Tonawanda
To: David De Angelis <ddeangelis@elmgroviewi.org>
Cc: Natalie Schneider <schneider.nat@gmail.com>, Stacy Barry <sbarry5@wi.rr.com>, John Schindler <johnschindler4@gmail.com>, Brian Smith <bcsmith313@gmail.com>, Kristin Olson <olsonk@elmbrookschools.org>

Hi Dave,

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through minutes earlier, it may have traversed directly in the pathway of those schoolchildren's footsteps. I shudder to think about what a tragedy this would have been for Elm Grove.

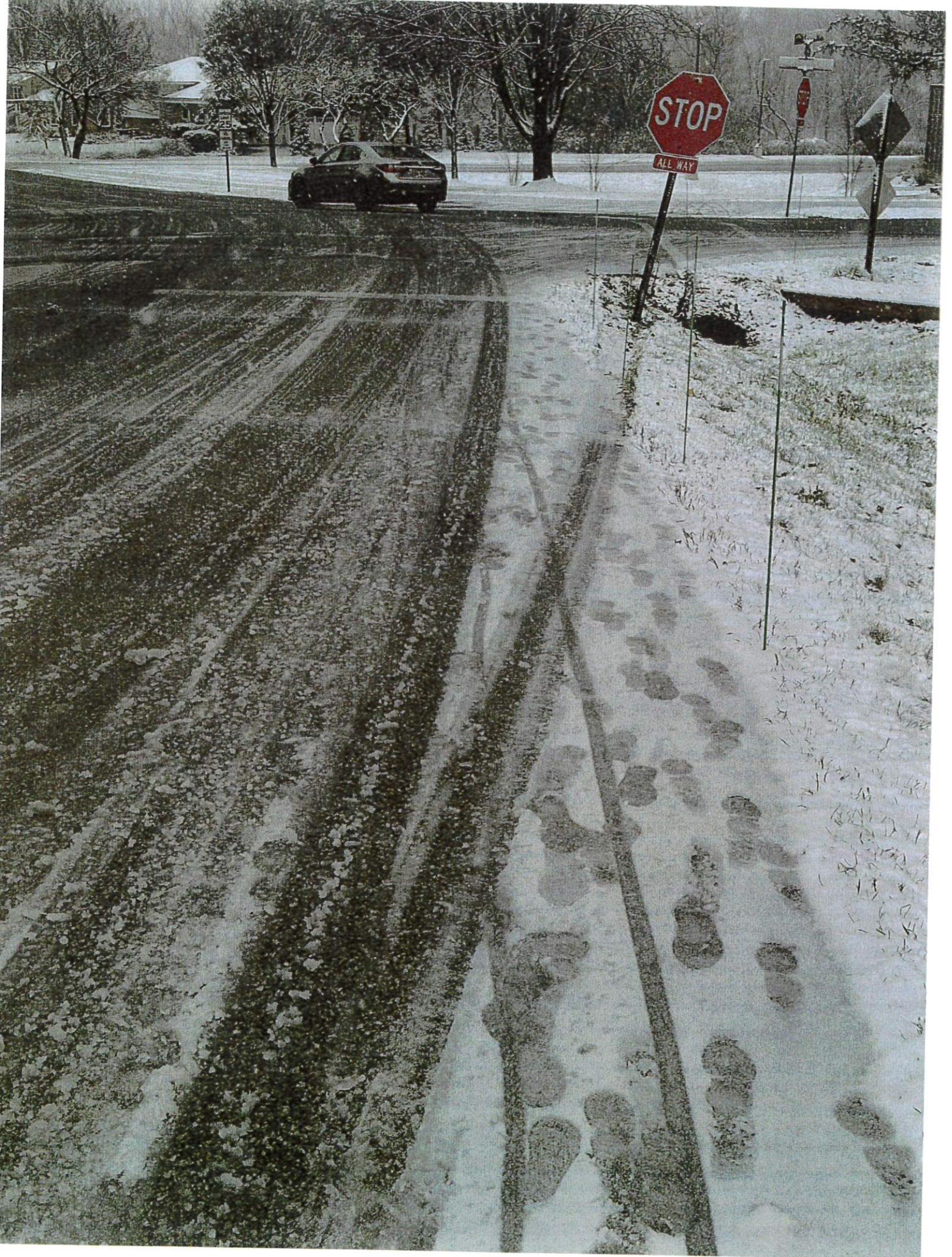
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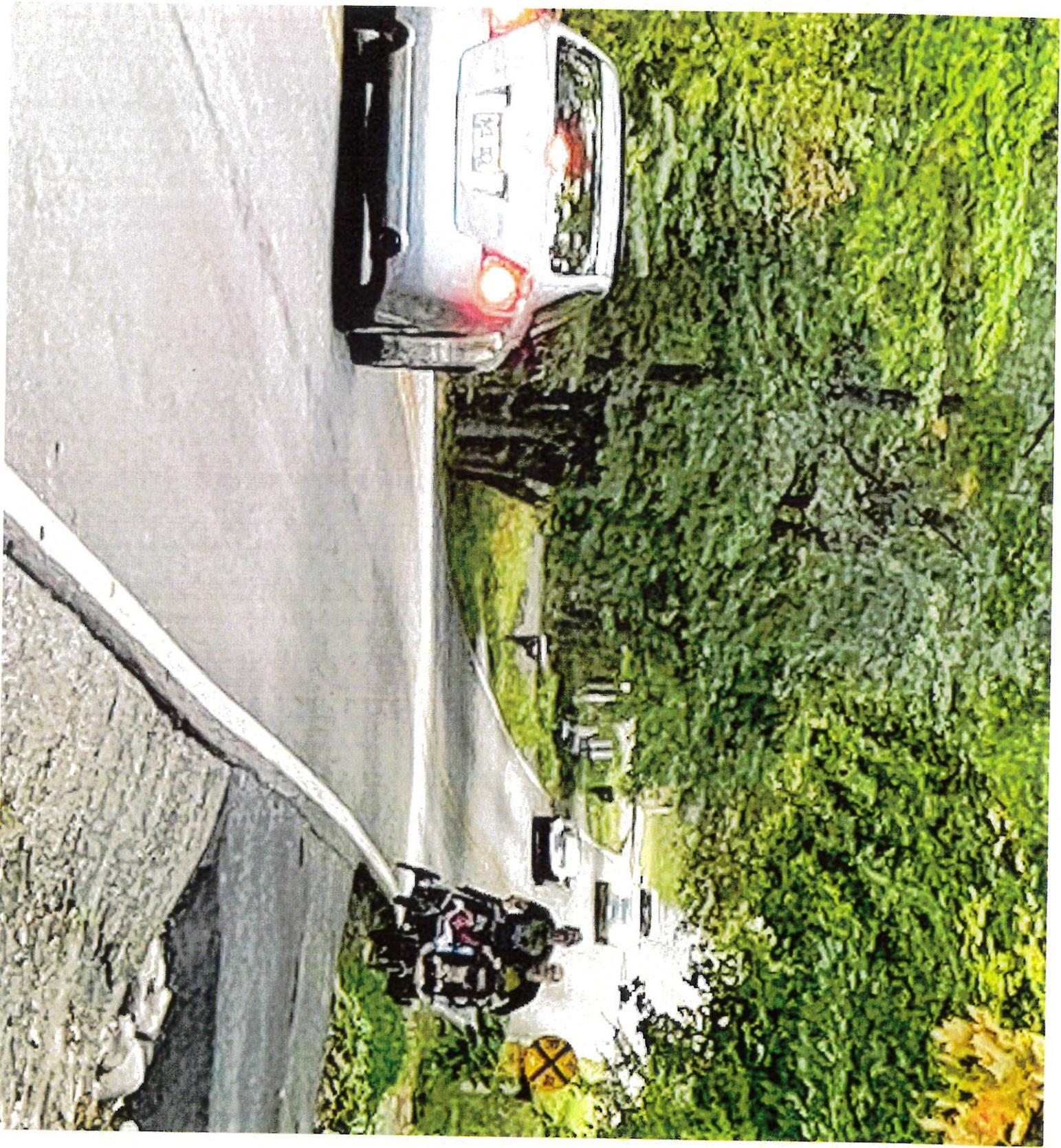
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All the best,
Sarah Wynia Smith
13380 Gremoor Drive

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Natalie Schneider
schneider.nat@gmail.com







**SBAR: Proposed Pedestrian Pathway on Juneau Blvd
Ad Hoc Pathway Committee Meeting – 3/14/23**

Situation (S): The Juneau Pathway currently exists as a pedestrian pathway that connects the Elm Grove Village Park to Highland Drive. From a safety and recreation standpoint, this has been a tremendous addition to the Village of Elm Grove and its residents. Residents have requested that the Village expand the Juneau Pathway east to Watertown Plank Road to include a dedicated pathway to increase accessibility and improve safety for pedestrians, as this currently poses safety concerns and is a main throughfare. A dedicated pathway would greatly benefit the community at-large. Currently, a shoulder exists on the north side of the road between Legion Drive and Church Street, but this is not sufficient to protect the safety and wellbeing of pedestrians. Of note, there are areas of Juneau Blvd that do not have a shoulder to walk on (e.g., near SMV Thrift Shop), forcing people to walk on the road and navigating traffic from both directions. In the summer, one can choose to walk on the grass, but in the winter and spring months, one typically has to walk on the road, which can be icy and wet, exacerbating safety concerns.

Background (B): In September 2020, various residents near or on Juneau Blvd wrote a petition and presented to the Village of Elm Grove Safety Committee with the request to expand the Juneau Blvd pathway east to Watertown Plank Road, including Theresa and JT Kapke, Amy and Keagan Mager, Maureen and Mark Polczynski, Mildred Schoos, The Dymit Family, the Kahle Family, Megan and Balraj Muthupandiyan, the Ratajczyk Family, Lisa Becker, David and Barbara Bresnahan, and Laura and Dave Linn. *Please see Attachment A for a copy of the petition that was presented.* **These residents specially requested that a dedicated pathway be developed, as Juneau Blvd is a main thoroughfare in Elm Grove and has significant car/pedestrian traffic, and continues to pose great safety concerns for pedestrians, including children and families making use the park, walking to school and church, and accessing different parts of the Village.**

In response to this request and requests from other community members in Elm Grove, an Ad Hoc Pathway Committee was developed through the Village to support the planning and creation of the proposed pathways. In August 2021, Ruekert & Mielke, Inc. prepared a report of the conceptual designs and projected cost estimates for these pathways.

The total cost for the Juneau Blvd pathway was estimated to be \$395,630, including the area between Village Hall Entrance to Watertown Plan Road. Second to Gebhardt (which will be built this year), this was the least expensive pathway. Specific assumptions used for the concept design and preliminary cost estimate for the pathway along Juneau Blvd. (Village Hall Entrance to Watertown Plank Road) included the following:

- Mapping from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Water Surface Data Viewer website shows wetland indicators exist at the following location along the corridor: The entire segment between the Village Hall entrance to Legion Drive.

- A flood storage area exists on both sides of Underwood Creek. Grading of the pathway in these areas will need to be carefully designed to avoid filling the storage areas.
- The pathway is located on the north side of the road to avoid conflicts with the existing overhead power lines.
- The pathway will match into the existing path that leads to Village Hall.
- The pathway will be adjacent to the pavement across the Underwood Creek bridge.
- The exact location of the pathway between the Village Hall entrance and Legion Drive is flexible because the Village owns the land.
- Scope of ditch grading and culvert replacements is limited between Legion and Church Street because the existing ditch is already enclosed.
- Utility poles in front of SMV may need to be moved to accommodate path/grading.
- The existing parking lane in front of SMV will need to be removed to accommodate the pathway and a narrow roadway shoulder.
- The new pathway will connect to the existing pathway at the intersection of Juneau Blvd and Watertown Plank Road.

Based on the information that was provided, as well as other road construction projects, the pathways were re-ranked in November 2021 by members of the Ad Hoc Pathway Committee. The Juneau Pathway was ranked last of 6. Please see Attachment B for a map to visual the pathways that have been proposed. The red lines represent existing pathways, and the yellow are the pathways that have been proposed.

In Fall 2022, the Village Board learned that the Village would not be receiving any state or federal grant money to build pathways on Gebhardt or Highland (ranked 1-3 of 6). Due to State imposed tax levy limits, the overall Village budget continues to be limited. The Village continues to explore ways to build pedestrian pathways on main thoroughfares.

Regarding the Juneau Blvd pathway, there were some initial concerns about the Village not having enough right of way and needing to be granted an easement by SMV. However, the Ad Hoc Pathway Committee has since clarified that although SMV owns all the way to the middle of the road, the Village has a "right of use" with a standard size right of way and would not need an easement to put in a pathway. However, there would have to be discussion about placing the pathway inside the utility poles, which may be an added expense, as well as the issue of the berm.

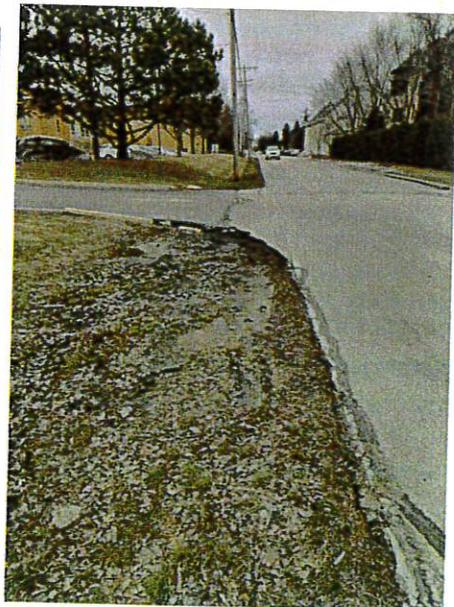
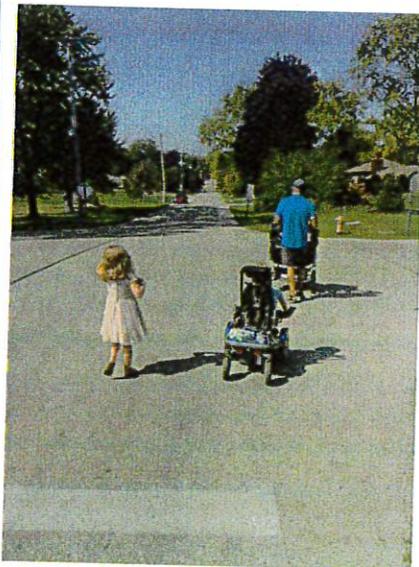
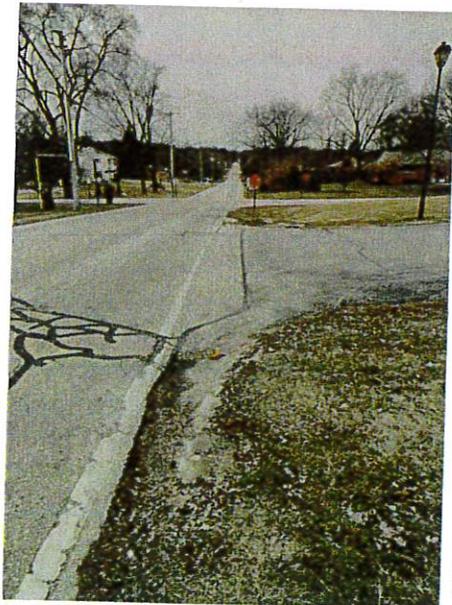
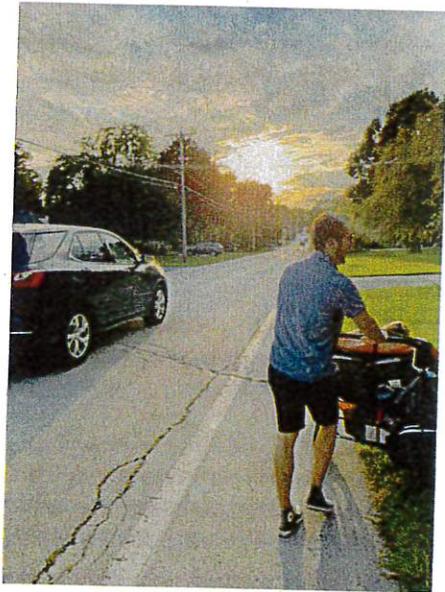
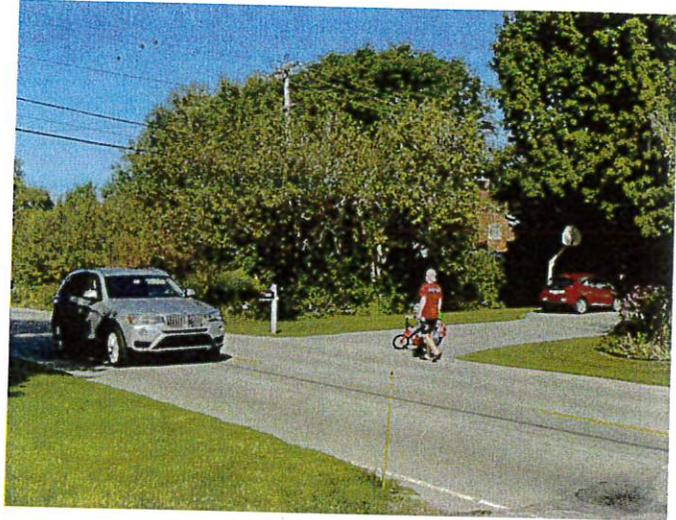
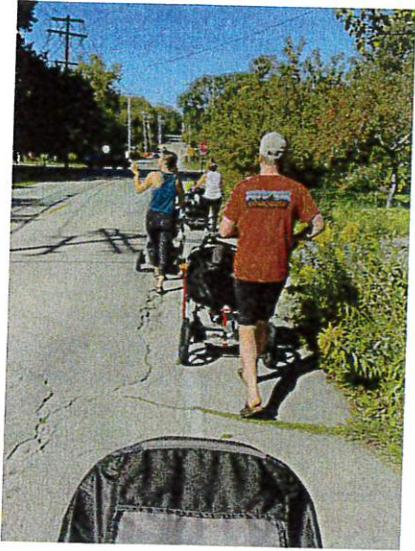
Currently, SMV is raising funds to support construction of a new adoration chapel on the east side of Juneau Blvd, and they are considering plans to construct some kind of pedestrian pathway as part of their design. We have been in touch with SMV about potentially collaborating on this effort, as such a pathway could benefit both SMV parishioners and school families and the community at-large. Although the discussions with SMV about whether they would be willing to commit to construction/funding for a partial pathway on Juneau Blvd are ongoing, the SMV Design and Planning Committee has demonstrated openness and support on this. Most recent meeting was March 9, 2023. Next steps include taking the information that was provided to Mike Sobczak, the lead designer / architect on the project to discuss next

steps. This includes the plans and recommendations from the Ruckert & Mielke, Inc. report. Currently, a pathway does exist on the north side of the Juneau Blvd. between Crescent Dr. and the SMV Thrift Shop parking lot. Thus, the area that would be most pertinent to SMV includes the stretch between the SMV Thrift Shop parking lot and Church St.

Assessment (A): A dedicated pathway on Juneau Blvd would greatly improve accessibility and safety of pedestrians, including youth and families. Given the current plans to build a new adoration chapel on the north side of Juneau Blvd, this is an opportune time to revisit the east expansion of the Juneau pathway. If the Village received partial funding for the Juneau Blvd pathway with SMV's support, it would significantly aid efforts to expand the Juneau Pathway from Legion to Watertown Plank Rd. in the long-term.

Recommendation (R): As SMV continues to move forward with the design/planning and construction of the new adoration chapel on the east side of Juneau Blvd., this is an opportune time to revisit reprioritization of the Juneau Blvd. pathway east expansion to Watertown Plank Road. In light of this planned construction project, the fact that Juneau Blvd. continues to be a main thoroughfare in Elm Grove, and ongoing safety concerns, especially for pedestrians, youth and families, Juneau Blvd. should be ranked highly in the list of prioritized pathways that have been proposed.

Pictures to Demonstrate the Need for an East Expansion of Juneau Pathway



Please let us know how we can get involved with the Juneau Pathway Project and whether the Village of Elm Grove will consider working to expand it east. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Theresa and JT Kapke
Amy and Keagan Mager
Maureen and Mark Polczynski
Mildred Schoos
The Dymitt Family
The Kahle Family
Megan and Balraj Muthupandiyam
The Ratajczyk Family
Lisa Becker
David and Barbara Bresnahan
Laura and Dave Linn

US Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA; March 2019). *Traffic Safety Facts*. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812681>

September 9, 2020

Dear Village of Elm Grove Board of Trustees and Safety Committee,

We hope this finds you and your families well. On behalf of the Kapke and Mager families and the other Elm Grove neighbors living on or near Juneau Blvd. between Legion Dr. and Church St. who are listed below, we are contacting you with regards to the Juneau Pathway Project and our request to expand the pathway east.

As you are aware, the Juneau Pathway currently exists as a pedestrian pathway that connects the Elm Grove Village Park to Highland Drive. From a safety and recreation standpoint, we believe that this has been a tremendous addition to the Village of Elm Grove and its residents. **We are requesting that the Village of Elm Grove consider expanding the Juneau Pathway east to Watertown Plank Rd.**

As residents of Elm Grove living east of the Elm Grove Village Park, our families and neighbors regularly walk, bike, and/or scooter on Juneau Blvd. to the park and other areas of Elm Grove. We have found this section of Juneau Blvd. to be well-loved and heavily traveled by many of its residents and neighbors, including adults and children. However, there also is significant car traffic on this section of Juneau Blvd., and with the planned developments to Elm Grove, we expect that this will only increase. Unfortunately, we have experienced and observed many "close calls" as pedestrians on this section of Juneau Blvd. On many occasions, we have experienced safety issues with vehicles moving at relatively high speeds not respecting the space of pedestrians, including our children. Although there is an existing shoulder on the north side of the street, we do not believe that it is sufficient space for pedestrians to travel safely and comfortably, especially when there is traffic on both sides of the street. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), pedestrian fatalities remain high and have only increased in recent years, with a pedestrian being killed every 88 minutes. Sadly, children are at greatest risk (NHTSA, 2019). As healthcare providers, we have seen the devastating impacts of such accidents and tragedies within our community. We believe that a dedicated pathway would greatly reduce these safety concerns for all.

We have had the opportunity to speak with many of our neighbors and other residents of Elm Grove, and there has been great community support for asking to expand the designated pedestrian pathway to this section of Juneau Blvd. Many others have had similar experiences and concerns, and there is much interest in making this area of Elm Grove safer and more accessible for pedestrians with different abilities. We understand that nothing has been approved and that many details would need to be worked out, as this is a great undertaking and expense, but we would love to get this conversation started and for this block of Juneau Blvd. to be added to the list of potential/proposed pathways.

On a personal note, we recently welcomed a family of a young boy with disabilities to our neighborhood. He uses a power wheelchair, and he and his family regularly travel on Juneau Blvd. to St. Mary's Visitation. His parents have noted that not only would such a pathway provide him with more freedom and independence, but it would also minimize safety concerns and give them peace of mind.



Pathways help to make Elm Grove the positive and community-oriented environment that it is. Pathways promote safety and accessibility for people with all different levels of ability, and they connect us in many ways. Pathways help to protect children, the future of our community. We have seen the devastating impacts of pedestrian accidents and tragedies within our community. We believe that more dedicated pathways would greatly reduce these safety concerns for all.

- Theresa Kapke, Homeowner and Resident of EG

We need pathways so we can be safe! We like to ride our bikes and scooter to school, the park, and library, but if there are a lot of cars, we don't want to get hurt.

- Norah Kapke, Age 5, Resident of EG

One of the things that makes Elm Grove special is the focus on community. It is embedded within the structure of the city—being extremely walkable is key to fostering chance interactions with neighbors. Whether you're walking to the park, running into Sendiks, or grabbing a bite to eat at Zisters or O'Donoghues, we all benefit from the joy of interacting with our neighbors.

While Elm Grove has made many improvements over the years in creating sidewalks and designated pedestrian paths, there is still work to be done in order to ensure a safe environment.

Of particular concern to me and my family is the stretch of Juneau Boulevard that connects Legion Drive and Watertown Plank Road. There is only an expanded shoulder to walk on until you get to Church Street, and then there is nothing west of that. Walking to St. Mary's, where we are parishioners, is particularly difficult to do with kids as we try to keep them on the shoulder and out of traffic. Connecting the two portions of Elm Grove (east and west of the Village Center) with an additional walkway would be beneficial to many.

- Ben Dymit, Homeowner and Resident of EG

Legion and Juneau intersection remains unmonitored. "Full stop" is optional. Pedestrians remain at risk with uncensored traffic. A path is needed to protect them.

- Maureen Polczynski, Homeowner and Resident of EG

Pictures to Demonstrate the Benefits of Pathways

