



Watson & Evergreen Mills Rd Intersection Update

As someone who frequently drives through the Watson & Evergreen Mills Road intersection, either alone or with my kids, I know the importance of making it safe both now and in the future. In September of 2016, I witnessed the aftermath of a terrible accident that occurred just moments before I entered the intersection. Since that day, just over a year ago, I have continuously worked with VDOT, County Staff, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO), and my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors to implement near and long term safety improvements at the intersection.



Near Term Safety Improvements

To date, in addition to existing signage, we have been successful in approval and installation of the following near term safety improvements:

- Addition of painted optical speed bar markings on northbound Evergreen Mills Road (EMR) designed to slow traffic prior to the intersection.
- Addition of "Stop Ahead" sign on Watson prior to EMR.
- Addition of painted stop bar adjacent to existing stop sign on Watson as additional reminder that drivers must stop before proceeding.
- Addition of increasingly larger sharp turn road safety signs designed to slow traffic prior to the intersection.
- Increased tree trimming and brush removal throughout corridor to ensure maximum visibility and increased line of sight under existing conditions.
- Increased guardrail monitoring and repair to ensure maximum safety under existing conditions.
- Increased LCSO monitoring and enforcement.

As part of the above effort to implement near term safety improvements, the following additional improvements are currently under design and will soon be added:

- Pre-intersection "Warning Flasher" device to notify northbound EMR traffic of stopped vehicles ahead who are waiting to turn onto Watson.
- Replacement of existing signage with brighter more luminescent signs.

In addition to the above, and as a result of the tragedy that occurred on September 8th, I have made the following immediate requests of VDOT and LCSO:

- Addition of rumble strips on Watson prior to EMR.

- Review of posted speed limits on the Watson and EMR approaches to the intersection.
- Further trimming of existing trees and brush for increased driver visibility.
- Immediate guardrail repair.
- Consideration of mandatory headlight use throughout EMR and Watson.
- Further increase of LCSO monitoring and enforcement.

It should also be noted that I have asked VDOT to consider Watson Road for the "No Thru Truck" designation. That said, I have not previously seen success with such requests in circumstances where safer nearby alternatives do not exist.

Long Term Safety Improvements

As part of last year's Six Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), I was able to gain Board support and partial funding for the addition of a new intersection improvement and road straightening project for EMR from Watson Road to Reservoir Road. The project is identified in the County's FY17-FY22 CIP as the "Evergreen Mills Road Realignments (Reservoir Road and Watson Road)" project.

As is the case for any new project within the CIP, funding for the new project is initially programmed for outer years of the CIP and construction does not begin until the project has been fully funded and we have reached the final year in which funding has been programmed. In the current approved CIP, the Evergreen Mills Road Realignments project is programmed for partial funding in FY22, with remaining funding in future fiscal years (FY23 and beyond). That said, I will seek acceleration of that funding to earlier fiscal years as part of the Board's upcoming FY19 Budget process which will include adoption of the County's FY18-FY23 CIP.

In the meantime, I will continue working with VDOT, County Staff and stakeholders to identify an improved roadway design for this future safety improvement.

Make Evergreen Mills Road Safe (Facebook Group)

I applaud formation of this group by residents interested in safety improvements along all sections of EMR which traverses both the Catocin (Supervisor Geary Higgins) and Blue Ridge Districts (my district). As such, myself and Supervisor Higgins have already made contact with group leaders Stephanie Manning, Kelly McGinn, and Kimberly Barnes, and we look forward to including them in our continued effort to improve safety throughout the corridor.

Go Fund Me for the Kaplan Family

Please consider a donation of any size to the Kaplan family as they suffered a tragic loss in the September 8th accident and could use our support. Anyone interested in donating can do so [here](#).



Many thanks to all who have provided thoughts, comments, and suggestions via phone, email, and Facebook. It is great to see the community come together in support of the Kaplan family and to advocate for much needed safety improvements to our transportation network. As always, I remain committed to doing everything in my power to improve safety and reduce traffic congestion as quickly as possible.

I encourage anyone wishing to remain aware of ongoing progress regarding this project to reply to this email with any of the below listed information so that you can be added to my update list:

- Your Mailing Address;
- Your Election Precinct (click [here](#) for list); or,
- Your Polling Place (example, "I vote at Emerick Elementary")

All my best,



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