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865 Salem Heights Ave S
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Olivia Glantz
Planning Division
555 Liberty Street SE
Salem, OR 97301

To Whom It May Concern,
I am writing today regarding case number SUB-ADJ19-02.

Let me begin by saying I do not have a problem with a housing development going in off of Salem Heights Ave S. Our city is growing and development is part of life, as long as we continue to support the growth through infrastructure improvements. I believe the folks at the Planning Department are working hard to maintain a healthy and effective infrastructure and I do not envy your position. My hope for this letter is to provide a perspective from a person/family that resides on Salem Heights Avenue. A family that witnesses dangerous and irresponsible behavior from drivers on a regular basis. A family that has lived on this road for over 5 years and have seen no improvements to safety besides a police motorcycle once or twice a year, "your speed" radar display one time, and painting white lines on the edge of the street.

Our children are never allowed to play in our front yard due to the fact that there is an extremely high volume of vehicles exceeding the posted 25 mph speed limit, many having reduced reaction times due to distracted driving or simply because of the sun in their eyes as they travel up/down the hill into the setting/rising sun. I back my truck into my driveway every time I return home because I am more than uncomfortable backing out into the street as cars come from seemingly out of nowhere over the blind hills and as a "sitting duck" I can do nothing to respond.

As residents of Salem Heights Ave. some neighbors have been forced to take safety measures into their own hands. A fellow neighbor has offered for school children to cut through her property to avoid the blind intersection of Holiday Dr. S. and Salem Heights Ave on their way to Candalaria Elementary. I have placed large rocks along the edge of my yard because I grew frustrated with people driving off the road into my grass for whatever reason.

Which leads me to my next point. This road has no buffer zone between pedestrian and vehicle. There is nothing in place to prevent a vehicle from drifting over the

white line into the two foot section of grass or dirt that pedestrians have to walk on. Hence the reason I have used rocks to create a visual “walking zone” that simulates a three foot wide “sidewalk” along the edge of my property that abuts Salem Heights. Other roads in the area have designated “pedestrian paths” (Ewald Ave. SE for example) that provide a visual reminder to drivers that there may very well be pedestrians walking along side the road.



We ask that especially in an area that is within the 1.0/1.5 mile respective walk zone for a school and also where children walk to a bus stop, pedestrian safety be a higher priority. All of Ewald Ave SE between Liberty and Commercial is within the walk zone for Wright Elementary and has seen safety improvements, yet isn't even classified as a collector street. Salem Heights Ave, not only as a collector street, but as a shortcut to Minto Brown Island Park, is going to see an increase in vehicular traffic as the city grows and especially as this and other housing developments go in.

Salem and Oregon lawmakers/residents are voting more than ever to promote health and safety of animal species and the environment yet programs like Safe

Routes to Schools and Complete Streets lack serious funding and attention. I'm glad to see "20 is Plenty" spreading throughout Portland and hopefully residents of the City of Salem will see the importance of slower speeds in residential areas. It is not uncommon to see vehicles traveling between 30 and 35 mph on Salem Heights. Studies show that pedestrians have less than a 5% chance of being killed if struck by a vehicle moving at 20 mph. The likelihood of death skyrockets to nearly 45% if the vehicle is traveling at 30 mph, which is the vast majority of vehicles traveling on Salem Heights Ave.

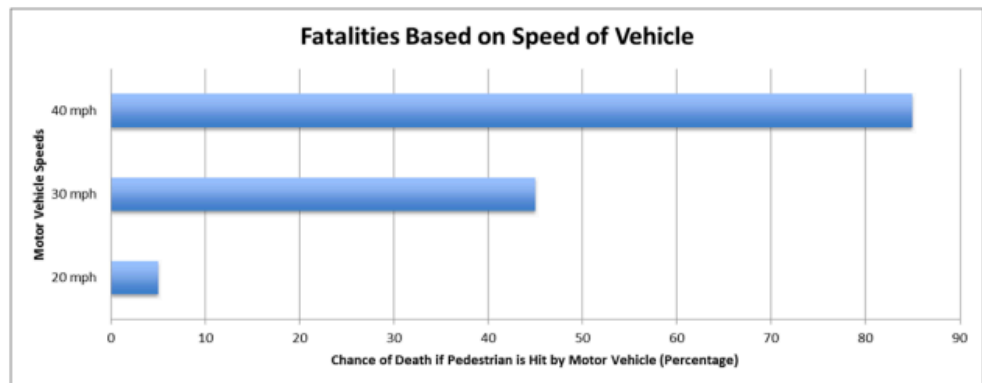


Figure 2.1: Fatalities Based on Speed of Vehicle (reproduced from U.K. Department of Transportation, 1987)

As this 30 plus lot subdivision is being discussed please take these comments, as well as the many other comments, to heart. I am one of the many concerned pedestrians and parents of elementary and secondary students that live and walk on Salem Heights Ave each day. I am not asking to widen the road and put sidewalks on both sides with a designated bike lane (which would all be wonderful). I would just like to see the City provide a safe place to walk, or reduce the speed limit so everyone has more time to react in a potentially tragic situation.

Sincerely yours,

Brandon Riggle
