

LETTERS

Citizens predicted traffic problems

We recently read about the major increase of accidents at Summit at Touhy. Our first reaction was one of sadness, but as we thought of it, anger set in. Here we go again! Another traffic consultant, this one at the taxpayer's expense, hired to try and solve the problems a developer's traffic consultant said wouldn't occur.

Yes, that is what they said, putting a light at Summit would correct a lot of Uptown's traffic problems and there would be no impact at the intersection of Prospect and Summit. The developers' consultants stated that Uptown could handle the new traffic flow, traffic wouldn't be any worse, any increased traffic would be *diminimus* (insignificant) because the residents of the development wouldn't have any cars, and

traffic would go elsewhere in the system to avoid the six-corner intersection. One consultant didn't even know there is a bus stop at Northwest Highway and Prospect as he proposed removing all parking on Northwest Highway.

Where was the planning to ensure the safety of drivers and pedestrians using Uptown Park Ridge? Did any of them even sit at the six corners intersection (Prospect, Touhy and Northwest Highway), Prospect and Summit, or Summit and Touhy, and envision the gridlock that could occur and how drivers would safely negotiate these intersections? With only a small portion of this project complete the accidents at Summit and Touhy have increased three-fold and at times the gridlock at Prospect and Summit at the railroad tracks is a major

accident waiting to happen. Mr. Derifield knows it, as his parting recommendation indicates. We would have preferred he do something in the planning stages when the consultants said there would be no impact. He just sat there and said nothing.

Another question is what will these intersections be like when the development is fully occupied (at substantially more density than should have been allowed) and the retail opens? In addition, another large development, also approved with more density than allowed, will be going in just two blocks away. The same traffic consultants that worked on the Uptown project stated there would be no impact from the increased density, (that) as a matter of fact there would be less traffic. Huh?

Residents protested the density of both these projects and expressed their concern for the traffic flow through town. They realized the potential problems because they use these streets daily. Some even mentioned the problems that might occur at Summit and Prospect if more drivers took advantage of the light at Summit and Touhy to avoid the six corners. They didn't need a degree in traffic engineering to know their quality of life would change and not for the better. They understood the potential for cars, northbound on Prospect, being stuck on the tracks while waiting for cars to turn left on Summit and other cars going south on Summit blocking the northbound lanes. Not one consultant addressed or planned for the increased use of Summit and the safety hazards people turning left would create at Prospect and at Touhy.

It is very encouraging that there is support, three votes on City Council and two votes on Planning and Zoning, against increased density but there are some, both elected and appointed officials, with the dubious distinction of having voted for all the exceptions on all the developments and (they) didn't see the problems. We must be ever vigilant, more is on the way.

There is an action now that would allow for the highest and most dense use to creep into the residential neighborhoods adjacent to Uptown. Will the current traffic problems also move into the neighborhoods surrounding Uptown?

The residents have been speaking out and as always, we encourage them to continue to do so. Perhaps more of our officials will finally get the message and start looking out for the residents.

Judy Barclay
Spokesperson
C.U.R.R.B.

**Citizens United to
Retain Residential Balance**

See **LETTERS**, page 16