



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Department of Public Works

123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800

www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

To: Dave Ramsay, City Manager

From: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director
David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager

Date: June 20, 2008

Subject: CORRESPONDENCE FROM MS. JILL DEROCHE

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Ms. DeRoche who wrote to express her concern with pedestrian safety and facilities in and around downtown.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Ms. DeRoche is concerned about conditions at the existing Parkplace development and in other areas of her neighborhood. Her concerns include accessible restrooms at Parkplace, design of curb ramps, trimming of sight obstructions, and completion of sidewalks.

From: Jill DeRoche [mailto:jill.deroche@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 11:02 PM
To: KirklandCouncil; David Godfrey; Angela Ruggeri; aphurd@touchstonecorp.com
Cc: Cam & Francesco Greco
Subject: Handicapped accessibility, traffic

Because Kirkland's Council is dealing with Park Place changes, this may be a good time to describe some accessibility and traffic issues that I have.

I am disabled, cannot walk or drive a car, so I use a scooter. Our number is growing as residents age and as more people move into and visit Kirkland. A Kirkland goal is to become more of a walking town. The Moss Bay neighborhood needs to be more walking friendly for everyone. I have lived in the Moss Bay area for about 12 years with my husband and our son, now a student at Kirkland Junior High.

The main issues for people with disabilities shopping at Park Place are:

- A fully developed Park Place Shopping Center could be a great resource and draw for visitors and residents. (Right now, there is not enough retail.) For a person like me, and for people pushing baby strollers, there are major accessibility problems:
 1. The restrooms are inaccessible to wheelchairs and scooters. A "family" restroom that also has a changing table would solve this problem
 2. Vehicles often block curb-cuts to walkways.
 3. In some locations crossing from one area to another is unsafe and confusing.
- At 6th and the Park Place entrance, as well as other corners in downtown Kirkland, two perpendicular crosswalks share one curbcut that does not connect to either one. This design makes crossing very difficult and dangerous. Often, I push the crossing button, maneuver as fast as I can so that I'm ready to go down the ramp, and then miss the light. Worse, the location of the single curbcut puts me in danger of being hit by cars turning right or stopping into the crosswalk.

Other traffic issues address safety for everyone:

- Too many driveways and street corners all over town have shrubs that create blind spots for vehicle drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- Eastern Moss Bay needs better walking access to the Everest, Houghton, and Norkirk neighborhoods:
 1. The sidewalks along 6th St. are piecemeal and in places are blocked by poles. Most wheelchairs and scooters can't cross the railroad tracks safely, if at all. (When my son was in grade school, I would have to go down to State St. then up 68th to get to Lakeview. At least I could get there safely.)
 2. The alternate route to Everest is even worse, and yet often used by kids. Kirkland Way needs more sidewalks. Kids in my neighborhood run across Kirkland Way to get to the other side. To get to my son's Little League games and practices at Everest Park, I had to use the crosswalk at 6th and Kirkland Way (a four-way stop that should have stoplights). Then I would go east up Kirkland Way under the train trestle, turn right onto Railroad St., go up Railroad/8th St. S without a sidewalk, then cross the street to the sidewalk along Everest Park. The route is unsafe.

- The crosswalk across Central to Park Place is treacherous. It should have a stoplight that pedestrians can trigger.

Thank you for considering my input. I hope it's helpful.

Jill DeRoche
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July 2, 2008

DRAFT

Jill DeRoche
Kirkland Parkplace Condominiums
929 5th Ave. #2
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Ms. DeRoche:

Thank you for your email to the Kirkland City Council concerning pedestrian safety and facilities in and around downtown. As you mentioned, making Kirkland neighborhoods safe for pedestrian travel is an important goal of the City.

Any redevelopment of Parkplace would include new, accessible restrooms — it's a requirement for any new commercial development. The streets within Parkplace are currently private, meaning that the City of Kirkland is not responsible for day-to-day enforcement of parking violations or making sure that moving from area to area is as easy as it should be. Any redevelopment of the site would potentially better address these issues and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles within the property. You may sign up for email updates on this project at the city website http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/Planning/Code_Updates/Touchstone_Orni_Altom.htm. A new signal at the intersection of 6th Street and Kirkland Way is being contemplated as one of the mitigations for the proposed Parkplace redevelopment.

Although there are older intersections that have one steeper curb ramp, our new standards call for two flatter ramps wherever possible. These facilities get rebuilt whenever the pavement is overlaid and when other construction projects are built. If you have some specific areas that are in immediate need of attention, please notify David Godfrey in the Public Works Department at dgodfrey@ci.kirkland.wa.us or 425-587-3865.

Keeping sidewalks clear of blocking shrubs and overhanging trees is an on-going effort. Each year property owners are reminded of their responsibility to keep sidewalks clear. Most of these reminders are in response to specific complaints.

You mentioned several other locations that we know to be problematic. On 6th Street, the new Google project is placing several hundred feet of new sidewalk, but there are still segments where sidewalk is needed. The bridge that carries the railroad over Kirkland Way is an impediment to building sidewalks and to pedestrian travel. At this time, no funding is allocated in our Capital Improvement Plan to remove this bottleneck.

Thank you again for your comments and suggestions. If you have further questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Godfrey.

Sincerely,
KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

By James L. Lauinger
Mayor