

TRAFFIC CALMING MEETING AT LOWELL SCHOOL, 10/10/2012

I attended the meeting that Marsha convened at Lowell School last night. There were about 15 or 20 people in attendance. Marsha and I were the only people there who did not live in the immediate neighborhood. The “immediate neighborhood” I’m referring to is the four square block section bordered by Atwood, Fair Oaks, Emmet, and Garrison, situated just west of the little park adjacent to Olbrich Gardens.

The neighborhood experienced a lot of cut-through traffic during the closure of the Atwood-Fair Oaks intersection last summer. Although there seemed to be consensus that the problem had lessened considerably since the intersection was reopened, there was a feeling that some motorists are still using Garrison and Emmet as a cut-through. (Emmet is the street that parallels the bike path in this area, so those who use that bike path are probably familiar with Emmet.) Several people felt that some motorists go up to 40 mph on these streets (my experience with perceived speeds vs. actual speeds as measured by speed boards indicates that people consistently overestimate speeds by over 10 mph). Yet a vehicle going 30 mph can inflict a lot of damage on pedestrians or bicyclists.

Marsha went over some options citizens can use, mostly suggesting that a traffic engineer attend a neighborhood meeting or that they petition for traffic calming measures, usually speed humps. I suggested that if cut-throughs were a serious enough problem, they could possibly block off Garrison St. between Buena Vista and Lindbergh; neighbors rejected this since apparently some of the streets ice up in winter and they would want their access options kept open. The neighbors agreed that cut-throughs by pedestrians and bicyclists were not a problem.

The neighbors are meeting again on Sunday to decide what they want to do.

--Submitted by Tim Wong, member of the SASY transportation committee