

Dear Mr. Uebel:

Thank you for your letter email of October 27, 2015.

Ever since our September TID meeting when RHP representatives appeared and raised concerns about the proposed roundabout I have been doing a deeper dive into the issue; the facts and the process. Between the September and October meetings I met with the Township's administrator Mike Lemon; the project consultant Jon Wiley; consultant project engineers from ODOT; the County Engineer and TID consultant. I did a site visit; walked around the intersection and observed it from all angles. I spoke with RHP Reps Jen Wright, Joe Hook and Chris Wissman. I also spoke with UDF's property manager Tim Kling.

I have also been able to obtain a significant amount of project related materials including site plans, maps, letters of interest and the like. I am compiling a complete list of available information and commit to making the information available to all.

I am aware that economic development is being stressed as the lead reason for the proposal. That does not make the proposed roadway improvement illegitimate. Transportation enhancements are often used as catalysts for economic development; and the use of transportation improvements to spur economic development is the primary reason cited by the Ohio Legislature in creating TIDs in the first place.

The Hamilton County TID has resolved as a primary Mission element to work proactively with local jurisdictions and use transportation infrastructure improvements to serve as catalysts for new economic development and job creation in the local jurisdictions and in the county. We do, however, rely upon the local jurisdictions to vet the projects and to engage in the public involvement required. We did that here. And until our September meeting there was no indication that anything was amiss with this project.

I have maintained that I will let the facts dictate whether this project will be advanced or not and that to get the facts we will apply the brakes so that the community can catch up to the project and make sure we have all of the facts before us.

At this stage I am still asking that the following questions get answered and that we circulate the answers to all parties.

So far Columbia Township and the incumbent Township trustees remain in support of the project. The main candidate for Trustee, non-incumbent, opposes the project; as do the majority of project commentators from the business district; from adjoining communities; and from the residential section of Columbia Twp. A petition is being circulated but it has yet to be presented to me.

One of the more important commentators I have spoken with is with UDF's Tim Kling. I say that because UDF locates its stores on corner intersections for the most part and his observations will, because of that, carry great weight. Mr. Kling told me that:

- Like you, he does not consider this to be a problem intersection;
- He does not see the accidents; safety concerns or congestion that he has seen at other UDF corner intersection locations;
- UDF does not consider this location to be a high “cut-through” location;
- He does not believe there are unreasonably high motorist or pedestrian safety issues at this location in its current configuration;
- His experience with roundabouts is that they create pedestrian safety concerns;
- He is worried about pedestrian safety if this roundabout is built because it will negatively impact people walking from the area to this UDF food mart;
- Construction of the roundabout, or modified intersection will not impact or impair the gasoline storage tanks underground at this location; and
- If it was up to him he would leave the intersection “as is”.

I have asked for information on, and am awaiting the answers about, 1.) The standard design and circumference of roundabouts and whether the proposed roundabout here meets those criteria; and 2.) whether statistically roundabouts increase accidents immediately after their construction, and if so, for how long; and 3.) whether the history of other roundabouts demonstrates increases in accidents after construction; and 4.) how will pedestrian crossing at this intersection be accommodated if a roundabout is constructed; and with the same, whether pedestrian safety will be accommodated.

While I have not previously asked for it, I am calling on the Township to explain, with supporting data and documentation, what its economic development expectations are for this intersection and how the roundabout will benefit the same.

If there are other questions that you and others have, please make sure you tender those to the TID ASAP so that we can meet our deadline of answering all questions and closing the public involvement component on or before November 23, 2015.

Thank you for your email and for sharing your comments on this important policy issue before the Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Portune

Todd Portune
Hamilton County Commissioner
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From: david uebel [mailto:duolh@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2015 11:22 AM
To: Portune, Todd
Subject: traffic circle

Commissioner Todd
Portune
138 E. Court Street, Room 603
Cincinnati, OH 45202

October 27, 2015

Commissioner Portune,

I am David Uebel, the owner of the property upon which the proposed traffic circle would be built at Plainville and Bramble.

I attended the TID meeting yesterday, and I want to thank you for allowing the concerns expressed by the community to move you toward a cautionary stance to allow time for all parties to assess the merits of moving forward with this project.

I have concerns from many different angles with this project; the dishonest way it has been run, the reason why it exists, the integrity of those behind it. None of which hold water.

I also believe in the greater good, and I know that eminent domain is a tool that often serves that purpose. That is not the case here.

From 1974-2011, I worked behind the counter of my neighborhood auto parts store looking out through my glass door and windows at this intersection in action, mere feet from the curbs. I can tell you that any safety issues here are not due to the 'offset' of Bramble that the two proposed 'build' options address. I also know that statistically this intersection is well within norms as far as safety per rate of traffic. All this intersection needs to be EVEN SAFER is a re-engineering of the lights and limitation of two of the private access points. Both of these concerns are addressed by the 'no-build' option that we uncovered. That no-build option, by the way, costs us a pittance compared to the two 'build' options.

The engineer said the 'no-build' (improved safety) option may induce a slight back up on Bramble approaching Plainville during peak traffic hours. Any decrease in traffic flow through the Plainville/Bramble intersection is a moot point. In recent conversations with the area residents and small business owners I have been told that their everyday observations are that it does not back up at all in any direction now, and the intersections that it feeds; the six-way toward Mariemont, and the intersection at Madison toward Madeira; both currently back up anyway. Bramble toward Hyde Park is the only other feed-out from the intersection and it does not back up.

There is no reason, from a traffic or safety standpoint for the 'build' options of this project.

Of course, now we are being told, after the Township sold this thing in the papers and at the September meeting as a safety improvement (for the greater good); that we have it wrong - this project exists for the purpose of economic development.

I can find no above-board logic as to why that would be true, and I certainly am not party to what the below-board reasons would be as to why a traffic circle would spur economic development.

I do know that since Woeste owns the entire block on his side up to the six-way from UDF, that my side of Plainville (toward Indian Hill) is the only place development can occur. And my property is a pretty large chunk of that strip. It certainly is the most visible and important chunk, because it sits across from a very busy UDF, and car dealership, where people stop, get out of their cars and look straight at my lot and building, a marketer's dream. How is removing that important chunk from the available stock, for no reason, as discussed above, a boost to economic development?

My minions understand these machinations, while alas, I do not.

Also, I don't want to sell now because I believe this strip will be developed soon, no traffic circle necessary, and that I will benefit from that due to increased value of my land.

I've waited since '74, being, through my small business, a positive, needed, entrenched, integral force in the neighborhood; all the while experiencing a very flat, gradual increase in my property value. I've handed off to Real Human Performance, and I am very proud to be associated with them. They've worked their collective butts off improving the building with their own hands and they too serve a positive purpose through their work.

Now, just as that property value curve is about to steepen upward (my opinion, my patience, my gamble, my money), I am being forced to sell in the guise of benefiting the greater good.

There surely must be a reason that this project is being pushed, but that reason is just as surely not of any benefit to the public and it is the public's money being spent. Let's find something useful to do with it.

Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance Mr. Portune.

Thanks,

David Uebel
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