

**Williams, Brenda**

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**From:** Kenkel, Hillary on behalf of Mann, David  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 3, 2019 3:08 PM  
**To:** Williams, Brenda  
**Cc:** Paraskevopoulos, Ioanna  
**Subject:** FW: [External Email] Westwood Crime and Safety Concerns That Must Be Addressed  
**Attachments:** Independnet Speed Study Harrison Ave. 3139 September 21st 2019.xlsx

201901840

Hi Brenda,

Councilmember Mann requests that this correspondence be added to the Council Calendar.

Thank you,

**Hillary Kenkel | Community Affairs Advisor**

ph. (513) 352-4611

**Office of Councilmember David Mann**

Cincinnati City Hall

801 Plum Street, Suite 349 | Cincinnati, OH 45202

**From:** Bill Rich <[redacted]@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 22, 2019 8:53 AM  
**To:** Cranley, Mayor <mayor.cranley@cincinnati-oh.gov>; ClerkOfCouncilEmail <ClerkOfCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <#COUNCIL@cincinnati-oh.gov>; info@westwoodcivic.org; Jones, Aaron <Aaron.Jones@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Subject:** [External Email] Westwood Crime and Safety Concerns That Must Be Addressed

External Email Communication

Mr. Mayor, Council Members and Valued Organizations,

I will begin by stating that I and my family are long time, proud residents of Westwood. We are engaged in community events and affairs and promote the neighborhood and the city with confidence and vigor. Recently, my entire family decided to take a large risk and invest several hundreds of thousands of dollars into the neighborhood by purchasing the entire old Keidel Plumbing Supply Campus from Keidel, Inc., improving properties and venturing into the formation of our own small business concept, Wondercade. Our business will be an all ages, welcoming and unique space not only for Westwood but our city as a whole. The neighborhood and its new and growing entertainment businesses are enthusiastic supporters in our endeavors as we attempt to add to the culture and atmosphere of our revitalizing neighborhood.

However, our risk seems to be more compounded by safety concerns from both crime and traffic (more on traffic below). Our building(s) and business will be located directly across from the now former Subway restaurant. We expected to have this anchor across from us for the future to not only drive traffic to us but as a viable business partner and neighbor. So you can understand why we were alarmed to learn that the owner was moving out due to an ongoing robbery problem. That not once or twice but multiple times this business has been robbed at gunpoint. This is not only unacceptable but it makes us second guess and hesitate on our decision to place a business within the Westwood Town Hall District.

From repeated attempts to alleviate and calm the traffic issues over the last few years by reaching out to District 3, I have been repeated told that targeted enforcement was coming. I was told that there was certainly an active patrol and presence in the neighborhood to deter crime and vandalism. Well I am saying right here and right now that this is not true. There is no feeling of presence in this corner of the neighborhood. Even the promise of a traffic speed indication sign was not fulfilled on Harrison Avenue in the business district. If there is indeed focused and strategic patrols, then

why wasn't a cruiser almost always present when the Subway was closing? (The predominant time of the robberies). By the owner's statement to the press there had been at least 9 robberies in 5 years. Doesn't that indicate a pattern that should be addressed?

Many locations that have been developed in the Westwood Town Hall District by Westwood Town Hall such as Westside Brewing, Henke Winery and Muse Café enjoy extra lighting, great foot traffic and an established greater and closer parking availability. Just a short block down from this bustling section is now our noticeably darker, less traveled and more park and short walk establishment. Now made darker and quieter by the closing of Subway.

We plan to open our establishment early in 2020 (read as February – March) As started we have sunk many hundreds of thousands of dollars already into our properties and will continue spending many thousands more in order to bring the businesses that will occupy these spaces to life. One of our businesses tenants will be an office of Cradle Cincinnati, an initiative by Cincinnati Children's Hospital to decrease the infant mortality rate in Cincinnati by providing education and information about those critical first months and years of life to families. Are we to expect TWO family orientated businesses to be the constant victims of crime and always in danger of injury and death due to reckless driving and speeding?

We are told as business owners to keep good lighting and keep cameras on premise and we shall. And while light is indeed a deterrent and cameras are helpful they are nothing to the reputation that a consistent police presence can provide. Cheviot, just to our north, has bright white lights lining their business district on BOTH sides of the street. I had to work with the city for months to convince them to put up two more of our dim orange cast lights on the opposite side of Harrison Avenue from my buildings. Cheviot also has well posted speed limits and crosswalks and that speed is enforced to the point where Cheviot has the reputation of a speed trap. This reputation is invaluable because it precedes active enforcement and therefore becomes enforcement itself. Below I will address my own personal observations of speeding and traffic in the last 6 months since taking possession of the building at 3143 and 3139 Harrison Avenue. I have provided data on the attached spreadsheet of recorded speeds and the correlating information concerning them. I can assure you Harrison Avenue in Westwood Town Hall District has only one speed limit sign facing one direction that is difficult to see and that in 6 months of working at our buildings on Harrison and 16 years of living in Westwood I have never witnessed what I would call significant if any traffic enforcement.

In the end shouldn't the independent, tax paying, job creating, neighborhood building and law abiding business owners be able to expect a noticeable and felt police presence for our customers, our employees and our very treasured businesses. Failing this a growing feeling of insecurity will work to undo all that so many in this neighborhood have worked so long to set right in it? So much progress of community building and investment within the city limits, within the neighborhood where we live, play, worship and learn can be all for not without innovating the way businesses are supported for security and safety. This is NOT an indictment of our valued police officers and city officials. It is merely a call action for a change of tactics and focus. It is time for the city to re-examine how District 3 functions and patrols our streets. It is time to re-examine how our streets are lighted and marked. This time is HERE and the time is NOW. Westwood business owners have risked and sacrificed their sweat and treasure. We should not be left to shed our blood.

Please see traffic opinions and data below and attached.

Respectfully, Sincerely and Seriously,

Bill Rich

NewStep Properties, LLC

Supercade, LLC

To whom it may assist:

Attached and below are the results of an informal traffic study of speed, congestion, signage (or lack thereof) and observations of the overall need for traffic calming and enforcement in the corridor of Harrison Avenue in the Westwood Historic Business District from the Cheviot line to Montana Avenue. Attached are results of a speed study taken with a radar detector.

**Observations:**

- 1) Harrison Avenue entering the business district at Westwood Town Hall is chaotic. Very often the two lanes entering the district become a "drag race" as cars in the right lane try to pass the left lane traffic before running into legally parked cars of patrons to the many new and vibrant businesses on Harrison Avenue. It would make a great deal of common sense to make the right lane a turn only lane. Only a short time watching this intersection function as such would lead to this common sense conclusion.
- 2) The traffic entering the business district from the direction of Cheviot are traveling extremely fast and are also practicing the same type of "drag race" to get in front of other cars as they rapidly and dangerously approach parked vehicles of people visiting and patronizing businesses. Results of the excessive speeds are recorded and averaged in the attached spreadsheet.
- 3) There is only one speed limit sign on this entire stretch of road. Even if people were inclined to follow the speed limit of 30 MPH they would have little to no way of knowing that limit as there is only one speed limit sign in front of Westside Brewing facing Northbound traffic. This sign is also frequently difficult to see. No other sign exists approaching the business district for northbound traffic well before Montana Avenue. There is also no sign concerning speed from the Cheviot line through Montana Avenue at all.
- 4) Even though recently there have been improvements in Pedestrian marking the neighborhood remains exceptionally unmarked and dangerous for walkers. If this neighborhood is to become and remain a walnut community there must be more crosswalks and crosswalk designations. There is no crosswalk at all crossing Urwiler Avenue. This effectively cut off the northern section of the business district from the southern section. And it cuts off this northern section from the public parking lot next to the Henke Winery.
- 5) There must be a concerted effort to enforce any improvements. After repeated requests and pleading by many residents and business owners there has not even been a speed sign placed in the heart of the business district much less active patrol to hand out traffic citations. It is obvious from other neighborhoods such as Cheviot that traffic citations work as a deterrent. A few well enforced days would go far to designate this strip as a "speed trap" in people's minds. If this enforcement has been attempted it has eluded my noticing from many hours of observation.

**Speed Data Attached:**