

**Statement to Westfield Town Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 17, 2023**

**Marvin C. Gersten**

**725 St. Marks Ave.**

**Mayor Brindle and Westfield Town Council Members:**

**A Westfield resident since 1972, I am a retired Professional Engineer and Life Member of both the American Society of Civil Engineers and Institute of Transportation Engineers. I have been involved in traffic and transportation engineering studies and plans for my entire professional career and have been appointed by Westfield Mayors over the years to the Union County Transportation Advisory Board.**

**I have reviewed the Kimley Horn Traffic Impact Study and sent my comments and questions to you all. Mr. Gildea forwarded my review to WSP's Traffic Consultant John Federico who advised me that they and K & H are reviewing my memorandum and will get back to me by the end of this week. Since time is of the essence, I want to share several of my major comments and questions with you tonight and to state that:**

**In my professional opinion several of the mitigation actions recommended in the Traffic Impact Study report are needed and doable now and should not be contingent upon financing by the developer. This will result in immediate pedestrian and traffic safety benefits and reduced implementation costs to Westfield.**

**Let me explain a few of my comments and questions.**

- 1. There appeared to be a conflict with the forecast annual background traffic growth stated in the report of .26 percent with Mr. Canning of K & H's stated .75 percent at the November 28<sup>th</sup> live session with HBC Streetworks. The difference results in an additional 200 vehicles per hour in the 2027 AM peak hour and 400 more in the 2027 PM peak hour at eight intersection approaches I selected to study out of the seventeen intersections analyzed by K & H.**
- 2. Were the peak hour vehicular trip generation rates used to predict traffic volumes in 2027 under the full development plan comparable to actual rates in similar local area developments? Not clear in the report.**
- 3. Were the intersection approach delays per vehicle and average approach vehicle queue lengths calculated by the computer model verified by actual field surveys of delays and queue lengths at the Westfield intersections modeled? Not indicated in the report.**
- 4. Were pedestrian counts and accident data used as part of the analyses of critical pedestrian crossing locations? Not indicated in the report.**

5. As I noted previously, I summarized the traffic analyses results for eight of the seventeen intersections studied by K & H, tabulating AM and PM peak Hour traffic volumes and Levels of Service for high traffic volume “critical approaches” in each of the 2022 and 2027 “No- Build” and “Build” conditions presented in the report’s Appendix. The analyses showed that under existing 2022 and the forecast 2027 “No-Build” conditions, the critical approaches at the Roundabout, Clark Street, Prospect Street, and East Broad Street / Mountain Ave. were all operating beyond Westfield’s acceptable Level of Service (LOS). For those non-traffic engineers here tonight, that LOS is “D”, or an average peak hour signalized intersection approach delay per vehicle of 26 to 35 seconds. The unacceptable LOS’s at those approaches were at LOS “E” – 56 to 80 seconds per vehicle and LOS “F” – over 80 seconds per vehicle. Proposed mitigation projects at these locations varied from signing, pavement markings and improved traffic signal timing to new traffic signals, intersection reconfiguration, and new lane construction. No cost estimates were provided.
6. Couldn’t Westfield implement the low-cost traffic signal timing, signing, pavement marking and pedestrian crosswalk improvements under existing public works budgets? Aren’t the higher cost new traffic signal and construction projects eligible for State and Federal infrastructure project funds?
7. The mitigation proposed at Prospect Street & East Broad Street is a new traffic signal. Why not consider a simpler solution, like the left turn prohibition recently implemented at the southbound Prospect Street approach? Sign the Prospect Street northbound approach for right turns only. The thru and left turn peak hour traffic volumes are low, and this would reduce pedestrian crosswalk conflicts at this busy intersection.

I look forward to receiving WSP’s and Kimley Horn’s responses to these and the other comments and questions I submitted on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Thank you.