

To: Town of Guilderland Zoning Board
Subject: Proposal for the properties near the Best Western on Western Avenue
Date: October 16, 2001
From: Don Reeb, Vice President, McKownville Improvement Association

The proposal for the "strip mall" on the two parcels near the Best Western Motor Inn needs to be modified in the following ways:

- * The building needs to be relocated to the front of the parcels with the parking placed at the rear. This will maintain a street scape that is more residential in appearance.

- * Larger plantings need be added. The shrubbery should not be the smallish bits that commercial buildings usually put in their required green spaces but something more like mature and sizable shrubs, trees and other plantings that are to be found in front of the residences in McKownville and along Western Avenue from Manning Boulevard to the properties.

- * Pedestrian controlled crosswalk signals need be provided for those crossing Western Avenue together with a safety island in the middle of Western Avenue. At this point on Western Avenue the roadway is very wide. Older persons need to have some place for their protection if they find themselves in the middle of Western Avenue when the lights change.

- * The traffic lights need to be controlled by the pedestrian crosswalk signals for turning vehicles. A "Walk" signal is dangerous if it does not stop vehicles from turning through the intersection while the "Walk" light is on.

The entrance for the strip mall will be near the Western Avenue entrance to the State University. The traffic exiting the strip mall may well want to cross Western Avenue and enter the University while vehicles coming out of the University will assume they have the right of way. Parking lots and strip malls do not have traffic signals, only streets do, usually. Some method need be put in place to tell the drivers exiting the University that the traffic exiting the strip mall has a traffic signal also.

It is basically a mistake to permit these two residential buildings to be destroyed. The owner has permitted them to decay and now wants relief from low rents caused by his own misadministration. The owner should be forced to improve and maintain the residential buildings at a level that is found commonly along Western Avenue, from Manning Boulevard to the City line. It is truly disgusting to see the Town pandering to slum landlords and providing them the easy relief of ripping down residences and putting in their place commercial buildings that are neither attractive nor beneficial in any other way. The officers of the Town of Guilderland should be ashamed of their cooperation in the "slumming" of Western Avenue and other major roads in the Town.