

Safe Crossings for Admiral Pedestrian Signal Project

Applicant(s): Katy Walum & Karl de Jong

Location: Requesting a pedestrian signal to provide enhanced pedestrian safety at 47th Avenue SW and SW Admiral Way

Problem: Admiral neighbors share growing concerns over safety issues at the crosswalk at SW Admiral Way and 47th Avenue SW. This is the very crosswalk where, on the morning of November 14, 2006, Tatsuo Nakata, City Councilmember David Della's Chief of Staff, was struck by an errant driver and tragically killed at the age of 29. While Mr. Nakata's death at this crosswalk received much press, many other pedestrians in recent years have been struck or "nearly missed" by vehicles going through this intersection. The location of this crosswalk is important to our neighbors as an access to a popular bus stop, local businesses, and recreation areas, but its position in the middle of a steep incline and curve on Admiral Way makes it difficult for drivers to be aware of if they are not giving their full attention to the road. Flashing indicator lights, hanging signs, and a curb bulb have done little to lessen the incidences of screeching tires and daily threats to pedestrian safety. Many, many people use the 47th/Admiral crosswalk; children cross regularly on their way to and from local schools, commuters cross to catch the bus to work, the elderly residents of the nearby Life Care Center and other neighbors cross to access popular local businesses, joggers and parents with strollers cross as part of their regular jaunt through the neighborhood. This is a much-utilized crossing in a very precarious section of SW Admiral Way. Even drivers traveling at the posted speed limit often do not observe the posted "Crosswalk" sign and flashing yellow lights in time. Frequently, they must slam on their brakes to avoid colliding with a pedestrian, and pedestrians continue to be struck by vehicles while attempting to make their way across Admiral at this crosswalk.

Proposed Solution: A pedestrian signal for the crossing at 47th Avenue SW and SW Admiral Way. Both City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen (Council Transportation Chair) and Mayor Mike McGinn are aware of the dangers at this intersection and supportive of our ongoing request for a pedestrian signal there. A pedestrian signal (i.e., a full traffic light activated by pedestrians attempting to cross Admiral at the crosswalk) is what is needed at this intersection to prevent further serious accidents. SDOT conducted a pedestrian count at this intersection in September of 2010, and while it determined that this intersection did warrant a pedestrian signal, SDOT placed the Admiral intersection 11th on a list of pedestrian signal requests citywide. Due to funding limitations, only up to 2 such requests can be granted per year. SDOT itself has suggested that the Admiral Neighborhood Association explore Department of Neighborhoods or other funding to fund the installation of a pedestrian signal at 47th Avenue SW and SW Admiral Way.

City Staff said to be contacted: Yun Pitre (DON), Luke Korpi and Valerie Lee (SDOT), City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Former City Councilmember David Della, Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn

Asserted benefits: Neighborhood character, Quality of Life

Included elements: Pedestrian-activated traffic signal