



September 30, 2011

WHITTEMORE AVE TRAFFIC CALMING UPDATE

Dear Resident,

The replacement and upgrade of sewer and drainage utilities in the neighborhood is complete. Surface restoration is on-going and final paving is scheduled for October. Prior to construction, city staff worked with residents to discuss physical changes to the street to increase pedestrian safety and slow vehicle speeds. Three community meetings were held in 2009 – 2011, where residents worked with staff to develop a plan of traffic calming improvements that could be incorporated in this project: chicanes and curb extensions on Whittemore Avenue, new pedestrian crossings, and a curb extension at the intersection of Kimball Street and Columbus Avenue.

During the course of construction, city staff received requests for additional traffic calming measures on Whittemore Avenue. In response to those requests, staff hosted a community meeting on September 8, 2011 to discuss the desirability of constructing a raised intersection at Whittemore Avenue and Kassul Park. Residents gave feedback at the meeting as well as via email afterwards. At this time, there is not a clear neighborhood consensus on whether or not a raised intersection should be constructed at this location.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the chicanes and other changes, allow additional time for community input and ensure that paving can be completed this year, the final decision on a raised intersection will not be made until next year. Over the next 6 to 9 months, city staff will complete observations of the project, including speed studies and conduct a resident survey. We will use this information to determine how the traffic calming measures are working and as a mechanism to gather additional feedback from residents about the potential of a raised intersection at Whittemore Avenue and Kassul Park. If there is a neighborhood consensus about the need for additional traffic calming measures, a raised intersection can be constructed next summer.

Once again, we thank you for participating in the community process. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact Jim Wilcox, Project Manager at jwilcox@cambridgema.gov or 617.349.6426.

Sincerely,

Owen O’Riordan,
City Engineer / Assistant Commissioner for Engineering