

Sending cars to Morton, the main way students might go home, is a little bit nuts

The Bethlehem Gadfly Lehigh University, Southside February 22, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts about Lehigh University and the Southside* 

Resident Al Wurth raises three main objections to closing Packer Ave. at last Tuesday's Council meeting: closing because of pedestrian concerns is overkill, it sends a bad signal to residents of the Southside, it endangers Broughal students.

Only one of Wurth's concerns — the last, about the Broughal students — will be addressed by the pilot traffic study.

Though a pedestrian study now is more clearly articulated as part of the pilot, Gadfly's worry from the beginning has been that the proposed — and now approved — study will not be studying all that needs to be studied. And it may not even be studying the main thing or things that need to be studied. For instance, though suggestions were made at the January 23 Broughal meeting about how to receive or collect resident commentary, nothing concrete has been heard about that yet.

Gadfly is a bit haunted by a comment Lehigh made at the January 23 Broughal meeting, that their preliminary study indicated that driving around the vacated area (for instance, Vine to Morton to Webster back to Packer) would only take 13 seconds more than the direct route between Vine and Webster on Packer. As if time on the road is the prime criterion for a decision. So that if the east-west/west-east delay for skirting the vacated area is reasonably modest, then the proposal would be acceptable.

Must be on the alert for that kind of thinking.

https://youtu.be/_HDU5-3FWA4

- You only really need to be concerned about the pedestrian interaction . . . during a few hours of the daytime.
- To close the road permanently would seem to be unnecessary.

- The smartest thing to do here is some sort of traffic calming.
- I'm a little bit anxious about the signal that it sends to say to the residents of the Southside that the road is closed and now it's Lehigh only.
- When you take all the cars that are now crossing at Packer and send them deliberately past Broughal . . . I'm guessing the junior high school students are even less careful than Lehigh students.
- Pedestrian-car interaction and enhancing that by sending cars down Vine to Morton and Morton being the main way students might go home is also a little bit nuts and probably is unnecessary.
- To invite more cars to go by Broughal . . . ?
- It seems to me that there's a simpler solution.
- We're going to have a road there, and we're gonna have the run-off, and we're actually turning the cars and the pollution down the hill to the community and away from the campus.
- I'm thinking of the kids at the school, and we really ought to pay more attention to the impact on them.
- I'm not sure the road needs to be closed and certainly if it's closed 24hrs. all the time.