

## Arlington Heights Civic Association

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*Via email*  
May 27, 2016

Re: Arlington Heights' 1<sup>st</sup> Priority Project

Dear Ms. Marshall:

Arlington Heights Civic Association nominates the following project as its first priority project for NCAC funding in the next round:

Traffic calming and intersection redesign on 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S (between S. Glebe and Old Glebe)/

As detailed in the enclosed presentation, Arlington Heights requests funding for this project to alleviate the speeding, wrong way driving, and other illegal and unsafe practices that pose a major safety threat to the residents and property located on the 3600 block of 1st Rd S, which is comprised of 22 homes, with 15 children under the age of ten.

Multiple accidents have occurred on this street. Despite years of engagement, residents have been unsuccessful in securing increased enforcement. The planned construction of a new elementary school on the TJ site just steps from these residences, including a parking structure with an entrance and exit at the intersection of 1st and S Old Glebe threatens to exacerbate the unsafe traffic conditions. This issue was recently highlighted in an article in ARLnow on May 23, 2016: (available at <https://www.arlnow.com/?s=speeders+and+wrong+way>).

Our proposed traffic calming includes narrowing the intersection at Glebe, adding speed bumps on 1st Rd and an elevated crosswalk at Old Glebe, and improving signage.

The vast majority (85%) of residents on the 3600 block of 1st Rd S strongly recommend this project for Neighborhood Conservation funds. No residents oppose this proposal.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Best regards,



Molly Calkins, President  
Arlington Heights Civic Association

Enclosure

cc: Eileen Janas, NCAC delegate for Arlington Heights Civic Association

## Project Nomination for NCAC Funding

(for fall 2016 funding round)

Arlington Heights Civic Association, including the majority of residents of the 3600 block of 1st Rd S, recommends the following project for Neighborhood Conservation funding:

### Traffic Calming & Intersection Redesign on 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S

Arlington Heights requests funding for traffic calming measures and intersection redesign to alleviate the speeding, wrong way driving, and other illegal and unsafe practices that pose a major safety threat to the residents and property located on the 3600 block of 1st Rd S (between S. Glebe and Old Glebe). Supporters representing 85% of residents on this block of 1<sup>st</sup> Rd are listed below. Proposed traffic calming includes narrowing the intersection at Glebe, adding speed bumps on 1<sup>st</sup> Rd and an elevated crosswalk at Old Glebe, and improving signage.

#### JUSTIFICATION

The 3600 block of 1st Rd S is comprised of 22 homes, with 15 children under the age of ten. A map of the area is attached hereto as Exhibit A. Multiple accidents have occurred on this street. Despite years of engagement, residents have been unsuccessful in securing increased enforcement. The planned construction of a new elementary school on the TJ site just steps from these residences, including a parking structure with an entrance and exit at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and S Old Glebe threatens to exacerbate the unsafe traffic conditions. This issue was recently highlighted in a May 23, 2016 ARLnow article (available at <https://www.arlnow.com/?s=speeders+and+wrong+way>). The text of the article is attached hereto as Exhibit B. Photographic evidence of traffic violations on 1<sup>st</sup> Rd are attached hereto as Exhibit C. A fact sheet about this block is attached as Exhibit D.

#### SUPPORT

The vast majority of residents on the 3600 block of 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S strongly recommend the project described herein for Neighborhood Conservation funds. 85% of the residents affirmatively support this proposal and have listed their names in support. No residents oppose this proposal.

Supporters include:

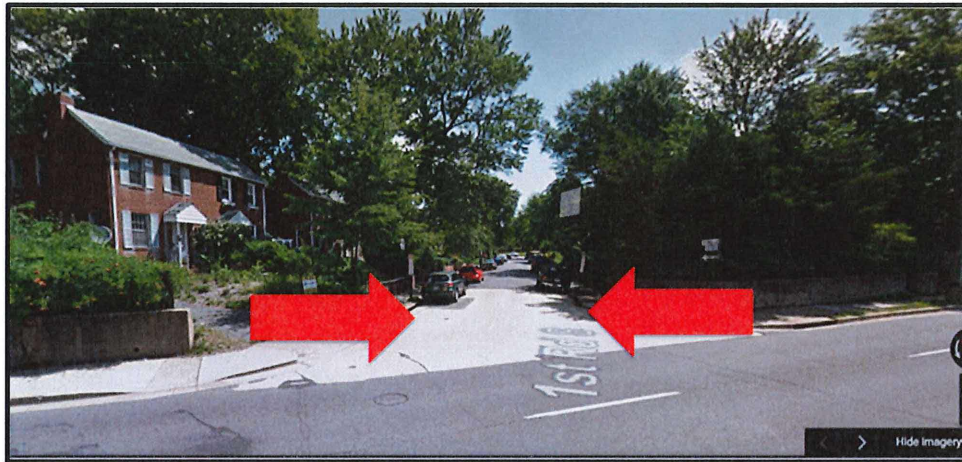
Leisa Richardson, 3605 1st Rd S  
Josh and Maura Canary, 3606 1st Road S  
Chris & Mary Carbone, 3607 1st Rd S  
Alec & Rebecca Strong, 3608 1st Rd S  
Bruce Boyd, 3609 1st Rd S  
Pete & Emily Bluvas, 3610 1st Rd S  
Patrick & Gretchen Kearney, 3611 1st Rd S  
Jen Bookbinder and Zach Wynne, 3612 and 3614 1st Rd S  
Erin Heath, 3613 1st Rd. S  
Jen Prophet & Reina Escobar, 3615 1st Rd S  
Matt & Jenna Pietropola, 3616 1st Rd S  
Brian & Lacey Meenaghan, 3617 1st Rd S  
Kelly Nguyen & Michael Washburn, 3618 1st Rd S  
Greg Deist & V. Reid Smith, 3621 1st Rd S  
Mike Nguyen, 3623 1st Rd S  
Jorge Ortiz, 3625 1st Rd S  
Christopher Collins & Amy Bischoff, 3627 1st Rd S

Detractors:  
None

## PROPOSAL

### 1. Redesign (narrow) the intersection at S Glebe & 1st Rd S

Currently drivers on Glebe make high-speed, last-minute turns onto 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S to avoid the traffic signal at 2<sup>nd</sup> St and cut-through to the TJ site. The intersection is wide enough to invite sweeping, high-speed turns onto 1<sup>st</sup>, which then narrows dramatically and cannot sustain those speeds. Any pedestrian or bicyclist near the mouth of 1<sup>st</sup> at Glebe faces great danger from turning vehicles. Narrowing this intersection would force vehicles to slow down and look more carefully before turning onto 1<sup>st</sup>, and thereby deter speeding and improve pedestrian safety.



Proposed Narrowing of Entry to 1st Rd S

### 2. Speed bumps

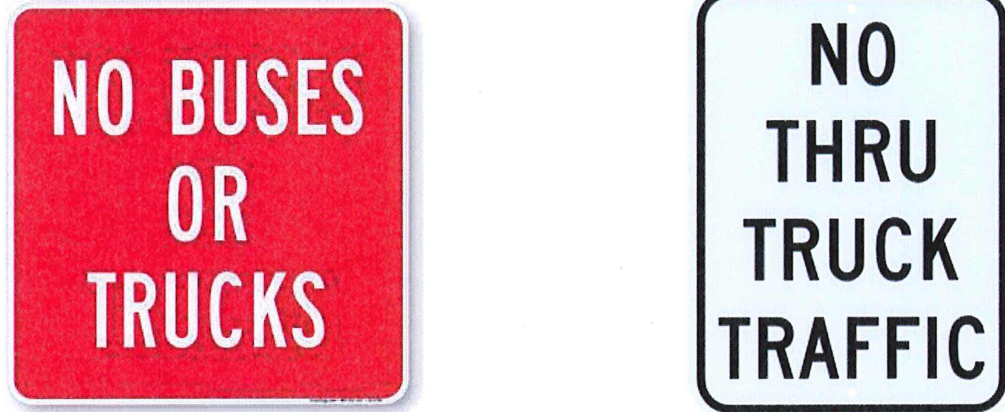
Currently vehicles travel too fast down 1<sup>st</sup> Rd, which is a narrow, one-block, one-way residential street. Installing speed bumps similar to those currently employed on North Fillmore Street across from Long Branch Elementary would slow vehicle speeds.



Example of Speed Bumps on N. Fillmore

### 3. "No Bus or Truck" signs

School buses, public transit buses and large trucks are not supposed to traverse the very short, narrow 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S, but they do anyway, as demonstrated in the exhibits and described in the attached ArlNow article. During construction of the new elementary school on the northwest corner of the TJ site, work trucks are likely to use 1<sup>st</sup> Rd as a shortcut. And once the school opens, the number of school buses illegally using 1<sup>st</sup> Road will increase too. Signs would remind bus drivers of this prohibition and deter them from using 1<sup>st</sup> as a shortcut.



Notional "No Buses or Trucks" Sign Examples

### 4. Elevated crosswalks

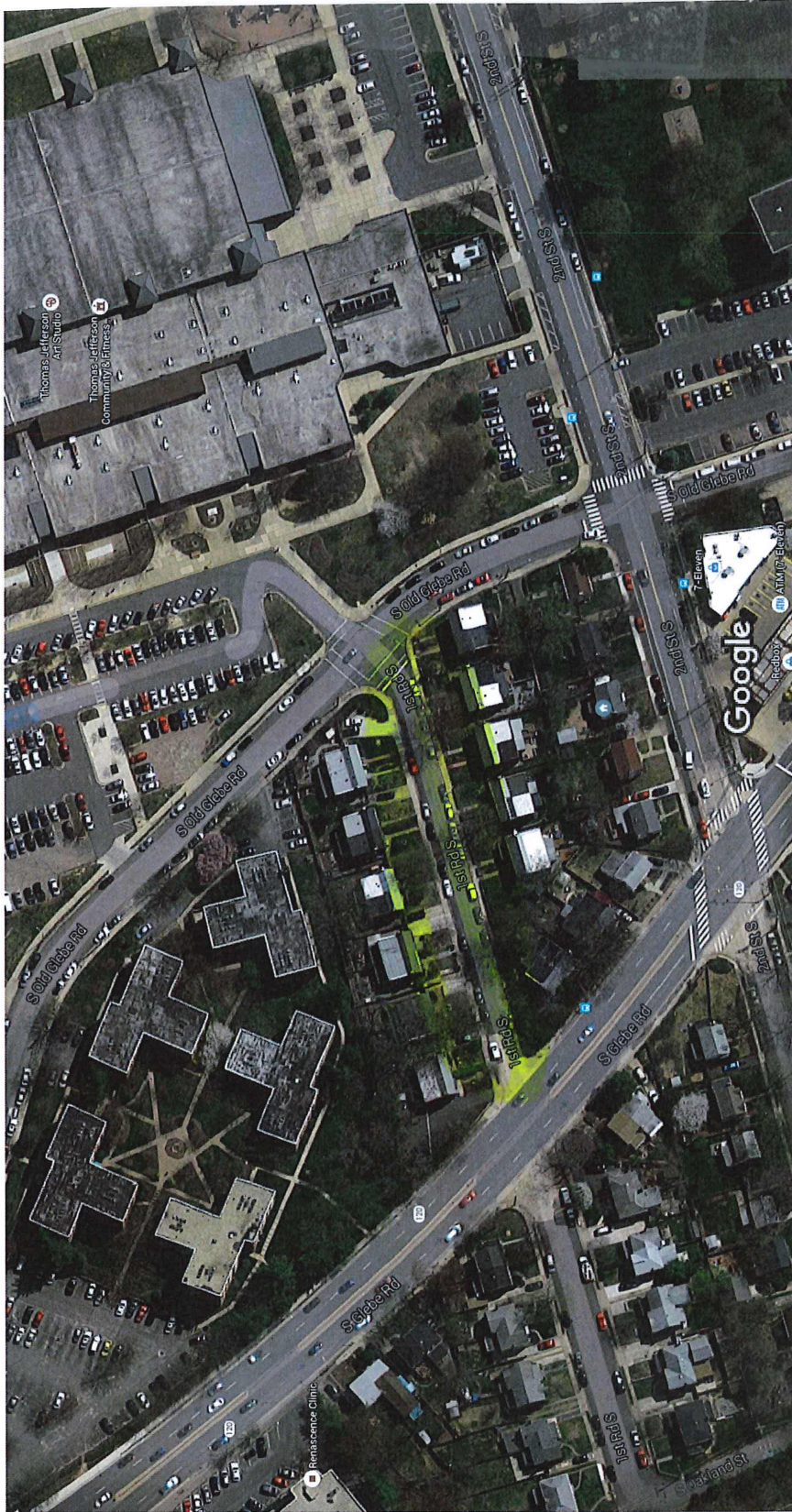
Currently painted lines on the ground mark the crosswalk at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Old Glebe. Vehicles tend to roll through without looking for pedestrians. Raised crosswalks have been used effectively around the country, including in Arlington, and have been found to substantially slow traffic and increase compliance rates of motorists yielding to pedestrians.



Elevated Crosswalk Example

# EXHIBIT A

This map shows the section of 1<sup>st</sup> Rd at issue, and now narrow it is compared to surrounding streets:



Imagery ©2016 Google, Map data ©2016 Google 50 ft

Google Maps

Google Maps Traffic calming is proposed for 1st Rd S.

Google Maps

## EXHIBIT B

### ARLnow article

(available at <https://www.arlnow.com/2016/05/23/resident-of-one-way-street-is-shaming-speeders-and-wrong-way-drivers-on-twitter/>)

#### **Resident of One-Way Street is Shaming Speeders and Wrong-Way Drivers on Twitter**

by Adrian Cruz — May 23, 2016 at 2:40 pm 80 Comments



In past years, Arlington has been ranked as having some of the worst drivers in the nation. That doesn't surprise Brian Meenaghan, who has started a Twitter account to document what he views as a never-ending parade of bad drivers on his block.

Meenaghan, an Arlington Heights resident, started the Twitter account @BadDriversof1stRdS at the end of April. The account focuses on the worst offenders on the 3600 block of 1st Road S., a one-way street located in a high traffic area around S. Glebe Road, Route 50 and the Thomas Jefferson middle school and community center.

"I started this account as a cathartic thing because we've had a lot of frustrations on our little block. We're about 400-450 feet long as a block and we dead end at a middle school," said Meenaghan. "We have people whipping up this block and people coming the wrong way from the middle school. Because of the oddity of the exit for Route 50 around Glebe Road, we also have a lot of people turning around in driveways and going back up the wrong way, trying to go back to 50."

Meenaghan's main concern is drivers going the wrong way on the one-way street (traffic is supposed to only flow from S. Glebe Road to Old Glebe Road). From cars to school buses and even Metrobuses, Meenaghan has caught all types of drivers driving the wrong way or speeding — or both — on the narrow street. Photos and video posted to the Twitter account document the broken traffic laws. (See some of the tweets, below.)

"I work downtown and I'm not here physically during the day all that much and I personally see three or four people turning around every day. I'm probably outside maybe 45 minutes to an hour before dinner with my daughter and I see in just that short amount of time a lot of people going the wrong way," said Meenaghan.

The Twitter account is a joint venture with his neighbors, who often supply the photos he uploads to the website. Meenaghan said he and his neighbors have been trying for years to convince Arlington County to implement traffic calming measures on the block.

"My neighbors are all very involved in this," said Meenaghan. "I'm not here that much so I'm not here to take a lot of these pictures. You miss a lot of them because they happen so quickly. Probably six of my neighbors have given me photos over the last couple of weeks. It's kind of a group-wide effort."

Part of the impetus for the effort is that the block is now chock full of children.

"We now have 15 kids on this block. There are only 23 houses and there are 15 kids under the age of 10. There have been five kids born in the last six months," said Meenaghan. (One could perhaps see the block as a microcosm of the challenges with burgeoning enrollment facing Arlington Public Schools.)

Along with the kids living on the block, the presence of Thomas Jefferson Middle School at the end of the block means that there is a constant stream of kids on the block during the school year. It's only set to become busier, with continued growth at the middle school and the construction of a new elementary school on the middle school's former parking lot.

Meenaghan feels that the persistent speeding and wrong-way driving represent a tragedy waiting to happen. He says he and his neighbors have been advocating for traffic calming measures on the block since 2012, writing letters to Arlington County but being met by frustration.

Arlington will typically only implement traffic calming — speed bumps and other preventative measures — if a traffic study reveals that the average speed of vehicles driving down a street exceeds the speed limit by a significant margin. The problem with Meenaghan's block, he says, is that it's too short and narrow for most drivers to work up the speed to break the 25 mph limit.

Without that, county officials said they would need some other form of documented proof of persistent traffic law violations. That, Meenaghan said, was his final motivation for launching the Twitter account.

"One of the things we were told was that the county didn't believe there was a problem," said Meenaghan. "They wanted photographic evidence. This is almost a flippant response to that. Here's some photographic evidence that's going to go out into the great wide world. Ultimately yes, we want change."

EXHIBIT C

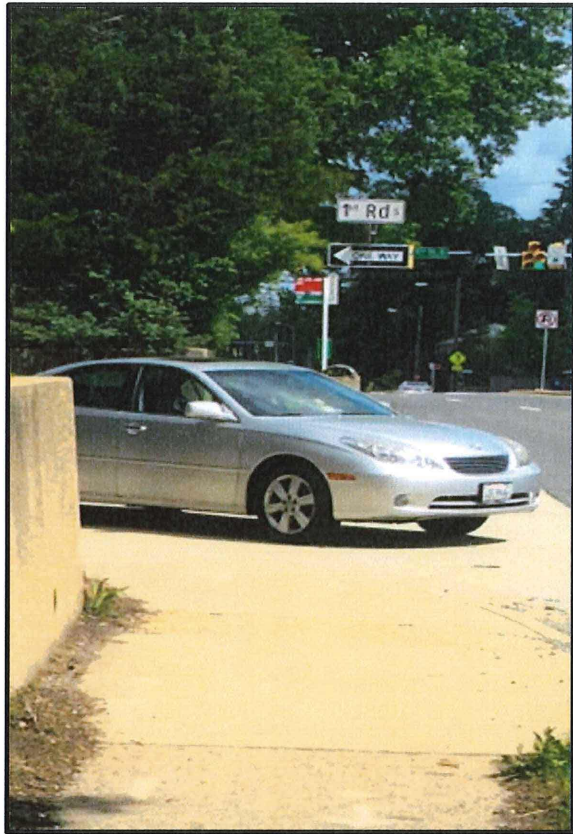
Violations recently photographed on 1<sup>st</sup> Rd S:



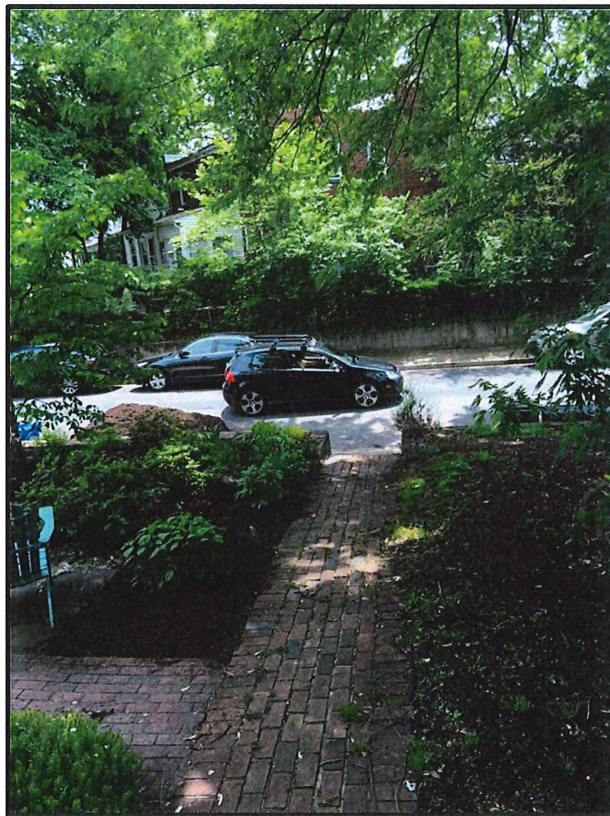
Metro Bus Driving Wrong Way Down 1st Rd S



Wrong Way Driver



Wrong Way Drivers

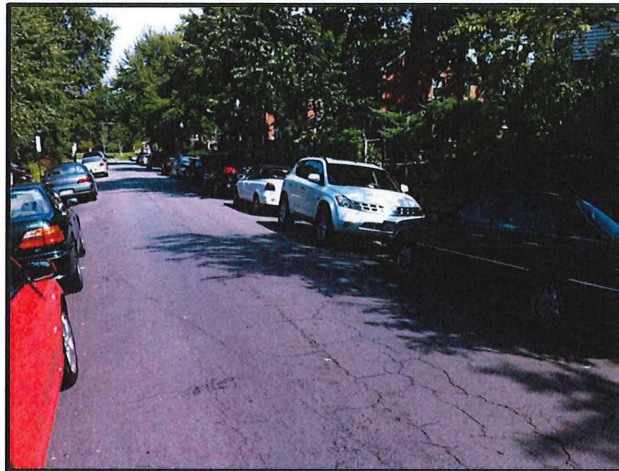


Wrong Way Driver





Wrong Way Driver



Wrong Way Driver & Parker



School Bus and Wrong Way Driver

## EXHIBIT D

### Fact Sheet: 1st Road South

Built: 1938 - 39

Number of Houses: 22 Duplexes - 11 Structures

Number of Resident/Tenant Cars: 16 on the side w/o driveways 25 w/driveways (both estimates)  
does not include the houses on S. Glebe that don't have driveways.

Zoned Permit Parking Only: Zone 2 (24 hours a day)

Number of Children (under age 10) Who Reside on the Street: 15

Number of Houses with Driveways: 8 have driveways, additional 4 share

Number of Houses with No Driveway: 10

Total Off-Street Car Capacity: ~ 17 (~26 on street capacity)

Overflow Parking Alternatives: S. Old Glebe Road, TJMS Parking Lot

Length of the Street: 400-450 feet

Last Traffic Study Completed: Summer 2012 (and 2007)

County Interactions about Traffic Calming: 2012 - Present