

Chapel Hill Citizen Petition

Pause Traffic Emplacements on Honeysuckle Road

February 2025



In the past two years there have been substantial efforts by the Town of Chapel Hill to mitigate excessive speeds on Honeysuckle Road. These efforts have included the construction of a traffic circle (at the intersection of Honeysuckle and Red Bud Lane/Road) and more recently the placement of bollards (on Honeysuckle). These placements have been in response to several resident complaints and subsequent speed studies.

We believe that vehicular speed mitigation on Honeysuckle is important, and that it should include systematic, widespread citizen input and address stakeholder concerns. The Traffic Calming Policy of Chapel Hill specifies that before traffic calming installations are made, nearby residents and other stakeholders will be consulted on the design and timeline for installation. The Policy also states that road user and community feedback will be sought and

considered both before and after emplacements. Moreover, unintended consequences of the traffic calming measures will also be reviewed and weighed.¹

While the traffic circle and new bollards on Honeysuckle Road affect a large swath of the Eastwood Lake area, most residents and neighborhood groups in the area have not been engaged by the Town. Nearby residents on Red Bud Lane and Half Moon Point, who encounter the traffic circle every time they leave their house, have not been consulted on these measures. In addition, data from the speed studies is not posted on a community-accessible website, and is only available by special request (sometimes resulting in the proliferation of misinformation).² Finally, unintended consequences of the measures are substantial. For example:

- The traffic circle on Red Bud and Honeysuckle results in school buses and longer trucks, such as the UPS or moving trucks, unable to make a left turn from Red Bud onto Honeysuckle. This results in the school bus going the wrong way in the traffic circle and/or dropping elementary school children on the wrong side of Honeysuckle (when there is a substitute driver) requiring children to cross traffic.
- The traffic circle forces vehicular traffic into the area where pedestrians would normally walk along the marked path that breaks at the intersection, endangering walkers.
- The narrowing of Honeysuckle with bollards makes it dangerous for vehicular traffic on the hill when there are icy patches on the road in the mornings
- The bollards make one of the main emergency and large vehicle routes traversing the Eastwood Lake area much more dangerous

While excessive speeding in neighborhoods should be mitigated in residential areas, we believe there has been insufficient consideration from the Town of the opinions and views of the neighborhood's residents and users of the roadways on the solutions being pursued, and insufficient follow-up by the Town on the benefits and costs of measures implemented. There are also very limited mechanisms for the residents to provide feedback or seek broad community engagement with respect to these traffic decisions. Finally, the decision-making process of the Town and how it considers citizen feedback is a black box. **We are concerned that in February, the Town intends to evaluate the effectiveness and determine the permanence of the bollards on the Honeysuckle hill between Booker Creek and Red Bud in an opaque manner, without the necessary community input and access to data.**

¹ Town of Chapel Hill Traffic Calming Policy, Section 3, May 1, 2024.

² Moreover, there has been a propagation of incorrect data on social media. As one example, there is a Substack post headlining that speeds reach 76 mph on Honeysuckle. However, data provided by the Town clearly mark this and other uber-high-speeds as measurement errors. Data emailed on December 19, 2024, from Town official on speed study. Handwritten marks are on the original Town copy.

We ask that the Town:

- 1. Immediately pause all planned traffic emplacements in the neighborhood on Honeysuckle Road, pending community engagement.**
- 2. Make available on a shared server or website all data, reports, and plans on traffic and traffic mitigation on Honeysuckle/Lakeshore since 2019.**
- 3. Hold a minimum of two community meetings or public hearings to explain the Town’s actions to date on Honeysuckle, and obtain feedback on the current emplacements.**
- 4. Provide a transparent process as to how it considers citizen feedback.**
- 5. Design and implement a mechanism for organized regular feedback from the local neighborhood and community groups on traffic calming in the Honeysuckle and Eastwood Lake area.**

Petition Signed by:

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6	Andrew de Figueiredo	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
7	Ayesha Chaudhary	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
8	Barbara Fuller	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
9	Bronwyn de Figueiredo	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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11	Chris Eubank	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
12	Chuck Grabowski	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
13	Cynthia Whiting	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
14	David Seidenfeld	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
15	Douglas Townsend	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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22	Jackie Gray	Chapel Hill	NC	27517
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25	Jeanne Schwartz	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
26	Jennifer Woods	Chapel Hill	NC	27516
27	John Clapacs	Chapel Hill	NC	27516
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29	Julie Cavanar-Hining	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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32	Lonnie Merrick	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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36	Miha Lucas	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
37	Miranda Wright	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
38	Nelda Lay	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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45	Sarah Knowles	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
46	Shannon Grabowski	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
47	Sharon Halperin	Chapel Hill	NC	27514
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