



Residents Discuss Traffic Calming

By ANGELA DELGADO The Tampa Tribune

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WESTCHASE - Elizabeth Taylor is terrified to walk across Countryway Boulevard.

She lives across the street from the Upper Tampa Bay Regional Library, but doesn't feel safe trying to get there on foot.

"I drive to cross the street," Taylor said.

She's not alone.

Taylor, along with 45 other residents, attended a meeting Tuesday evening at the library to view proposed traffic-calming measures for the street.

Twenty residents in the area of Countryway Boulevard from Race Track Road to Waters Avenue asked Hillsborough County officials to consider adding traffic-calming devices, such as speed feedback signs and other deterrents, to their stretch of road.

Residents told Robert Brown, senior vice president of TBE Group, the county's engineering firm for the project, that the intersection of Oaksbury Drive and Countryway was particularly dangerous and needed a crosswalk.

Between Race Track and Waters, Brown said, only certain traffic-calming tools were possible for Countryway. Those include speed feedback signs, lane narrowing, raised intersections and raised crosswalks. Speed humps are not an option.

The overall plan proposes narrower lanes and the addition of bicycle lanes from Waters north to the railroad tracks. From the railroad tracks to Peabody Lane, a raised intersection and raised crosswalk could be added, and from Peabody to Oaksbury Drive, a raised intersection and reduced lanes plus bike path are planned. High-visibility crosswalks are proposed for the final portion of Countryway between Oaksbury and Race Track Road.

Only residents in the areas near Peabody Lane, Woodbay Drive and Ashville Drive will receive ballots to vote on the proposed traffic-calming measures.

Sixty percent of the ballots must favor the traffic calming for it to be placed on the county commissioners' land-use consent agenda. Brown expects the ballots to be sent out no sooner than June. Residents have 30 days to return the ballots.

"My hopes are [we] have a safe place for our family to play and not have to get into a car to go a block," said Joe Lechman, 36. "If they do everything they talked about, it'll be very effective."

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