

## Brighton to address ‘ridiculous’ traffic after student hit on bike

Parents have been clamoring for town to act for kids’ safety

### Georgie Silvarole

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle USA TODAY NETWORK

When a 12-year-old girl was hit by a car while riding her bike to Twelve Corners Middle School in Brighton last week, parents in the area were furious — but they weren’t surprised.

“It’s lucky that there haven’t been more accidents,” said Robin Wells, a mother of two who lives near the school. “This is the nail in the coffin — here’s proof that this is an issue.”

The accident, which sent the unidentified middle schooler to Strong Memorial Hospital with non-lifethreatening injuries, happened near the intersection of Torrington Drive and Monroe Avenue on Thursday morning.

Torrington serves as a quick cut-through for drivers getting from Monroe to Elmwood Avenue — something residents say has been a dangerous problem for years.

“It does not surprise me that someone was hit on a bike because these people are crazy drivers,” said Ann Cilino, another mother who also lives on Torrington. “The drivers here on this road are ridiculous.”

Cilino and Wells, along with other parents on the street, have repeatedly reached out to Brighton’s Public Safety Committee and suggested several solutions. Speed bumps were shut down and the idea of a oneway street was rejected too, they said.

The “Drive like your kids live here” signs used to help, they said, but the town asked them to move the signs away from the road, saying they couldn’t be placed in the berm between the road and sidewalk.

The next Public Safety Committee Meeting will be held at 8 a.m. Tuesday in the Town Hall’s lower-level meeting room, 2300 Elmwood Ave. The meeting is open to the public.

from some parents who are very upset about the accident,” Henderson said. “I’m a parent. I understand that we want our children to arrive at school safely.”

Pedestrian safety has been something Henderson said he’s very focused on. During the first week of school in early September, Brighton Police carried out an initiative to make drivers in the Twelve Corners area more aware of speed limits and pedestrian traffic.

There was an increased police presence in that area and Henderson said police wrote dozens of tickets during that high-traffic time.

“It was a specialized, focused effort,” he said. “There’s kids everywhere, there’s an increase in traffic — we wanted to get the message out.”

But an increased presence isn’t something that they can always provide, he said.

“We’re doing the best with the staffing that we have,” Henderson said. “We can’t be everywhere all the time.”

Dan Goldman, communications coordinator for the Brighton Central School District, confirmed that the accident involved a Twelve Corners Middle School student. He praised the Brighton Police Department’s work in increasing the safety of students walking and biking to school.

“We’re very supportive of everything they do to focus on pedestrian safety,” Goldman said. “We obviously work very closely with the police department and appreciate the support they’ve given to us, even before all this.”

While a temporary, increased presence is helpful, Wells said something more permanent needs to be in place.

“We’d love to see increased police patrol all the time,” Wells said, almost pleadingly. “We pay taxes to pay them, so do something to help us with the money we’re paying your salaries with.”

When the accident happened last week, the school didn’t communicate with parents to let them know about the accident. Cilino said she found out from a friend, and that she wishes the accident — and the greater issue of safety — had been taken more seriously.

“I don’t think the rest of Brighton realizes the problem that this is here,” Cilino said. “We’re making sure that we’re a thorn in their side because we’re done with this.”

Brighton Police Chief Mark Henderson said he knows Torrington is a major cut-through street, but a lot of other elements played a part in the collision last week.

The intersection of Monroe Avenue with Brooklawn and Torrington drives is a little funky. There’s a light, but Torrington and Brooklawn don’t line up perfectly across Monroe, and a driver has to curve a little to one side to cross Monroe’s four lanes of traffic.

Around 7:30 a.m., when the crash occurred, the student was on her bicycle. The light was green for drivers traveling from Torrington to Brooklawn, and vice versa, across Monroe, Henderson said.

A driver on Brooklawn stopped at the green light to let the student cross the street. A second driver, coming from Torrington, crossed Monroe and hit the student as she was riding her bike across Brooklawn in the crosswalk, parallel to Monroe.

Police issued the unidentified driver two traffic citations, for failure to exercise due care with a bicyclist and failure to reduce speed in an intersection. Even though the light was green, the driver had a “higher degree of responsibility” in the situation, Henderson said.

“There’s an email circulating

“No text, no email, no phone call about a kid getting hit on her bike,” Cilino said. “We need to know that people are getting hit, that our kids in our community are getting hit.”

[GSILVAROLE@Gannett.com](mailto:GSILVAROLE@Gannett.com)



**Signs posted in yards along Torrington Drive in Brighton command drivers to slow down, but are no longer as close to the road as they were.**

GEORGIE SILVAROLE/ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE