

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING THE  
INTERSECTION CHANGES  
AT MASS. AVE/MILL ST./JASON ST.  
(SEE ATTACHED)

**11/5/15**

Comments from Paula Herman & Thomas K. Brown - residents of 6 Bacon St.:

They are against the changes to the lights at Mass. Ave and Jason/Mill Streets.

Thomas is visually impaired and finds it very difficult and unsafe to cross these streets now.

**From:** "MaryAnn Sullivan" <MSullivan@town.arlington.ma.us>  
"greeleycom@aol.com" <greeleycom@aol.com>, "Diane Mahon" <dianemahon@verizon.net>, "Dan  
**To:** Dunn" <dunster@dandunn.org>, smbyrne1987@gmail.com, "jcurro@alumni.tufts.edu"  
<jcurro@alumni.tufts.edu>  
**Cc:** "Marie Krepelka" <MKrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>, "Fran Reidy" <FREidy@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 11/04/2015 04:58 PM  
**Subject:** Lights at Mass. Ave. and Mill/Jason St.

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Hello All-

I'm forwarding information called in by Kate Crohan (31 yr. resident and a visually impaired/blind walker):

I'm having a very difficult time crossing at this intersection. You cannot make it across the street while cars can turn at the same time. even though the pedestrians have the right away. It's very dangerous and someone is going to be hit. It took me 3 times returning back to the curb and someone else crossing at the same time before I could cross. It freaks me out and I feel as though I won't make it home anymore. I have been walking these streets in Arlington for many years and at night use a reflective cane and 2 flashlights attached to me front & back. I'm not new to walking and crossing these streets for years. This is a safety issue for all that I'd like the Selectmen to address. I feel safer crossing Mass. Ave at the Library crosswalk on Mass. Ave (which is bad) then at the lights now at Jason/Mill/Mass. Ave. I have talked to the Town Engineer and am told there is a 7 second delay to cross the street before cars have a green light. If cars are traveling up Mill St to Mass. Ave. you can't see people easily crossing. I also think the audible sound signal is out of sync with the light but am not sure-can it be checked?

Please re-think this decision Thanks, Kate

Please feel free to contact me: work until 4 PM 617 972-7270 and home after 781 648-3484

Mary Ann Sullivan  
Town of Arlington  
Selectmen's Office  
(781) 316-3024  
(781) 316-3029 FAX

**From:** dianemahon@verizon.net  
**To:** Adam Chapdelaine <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>, msullivan@town.arlington.ma.us, mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us, freidy@town.arlington.ma.us  
**Date:** 11/04/2015 12:30 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: [arlington] Petition regarding the new Mass. Ave./Jason St./Mill St. traffic configuration

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FYI only.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Dianne Schaefer <[djschaefer@gmail.com](mailto:djschaefer@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** November 4, 2015 at 12:11:15 PM EST  
**To:** Suzanne Leone Lindner <[suelndnr@gmail.com](mailto:suelndnr@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** Ron via arlington <[arlington@arlingtonlist.org](mailto:arlington@arlingtonlist.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: [arlington] Petition regarding the new Mass. Ave./Jason St./Mill St. traffic configuration

I agree, now when making a left turn from Mass ave onto Mill street, the left turn signal is at the end of the cycle - it used to be at the beginning of the cycle so the left turning cars were out of the way. Now they sit there backing up traffic and polluting the air.

Dianne

On Nov 4, 2015, at 11:55 AM, Suzanne Leone Lindner <[suelndnr@gmail.com](mailto:suelndnr@gmail.com)> wrote:

A [change.org](http://change.org) petition has been started in regard to the new traffic light configuration at this intersection. Anyone who has been through this intersection lately knows the issues - it's dangerous for pedestrians (including the many students who cross here on a daily basis), traffic backing up on Jason and down Mill, the impossibility of taking a left from Mass. Ave. onto Mill and the line of cars that back up behind the person who's trying to do so, etc. Maybe it's slightly easier to take a left from Jason and Mill onto Mass. Ave. now, but that one improvement does

not

negate the other issues.

[https://www.change.org/p/arlington-board-of-selectmen-change-the-jason-mill-st-mass-ave-intersection-back-to-an-exclusive-pedestrian-crossing?recruiter=1066742&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink](https://www.change.org/p/arlington-board-of-selectmen-change-the-jason-mill-st-mass-ave-intersection-back-to-an-exclusive-pedestrian-crossing?recruiter=1066742&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink)

The issue will apparently be discussed at next Monday's Board of Selectman's meeting, and the petition will be presented there, along with the comments that people have posted on the petition page.

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Dianne Schaefer

[djschaefer@gmail.com](mailto:djschaefer@gmail.com)

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Please help keep the list organized by tagging your message see <http://arlingtonlist.org/rules/keywords> for details

**From:** Nicole Eaton <nicole.eaton@gmail.com>  
**To:** achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us, mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us  
**Date:** 11/05/2015 09:43 AM  
**Subject:** Mass Ave/Jason St. Intersection

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Dear Adam and Marie,

I wanted to add my voice to the growing concerns about the safety of the intersection due to recent changes. It is now extremely dangerous. Last week I was almost run over! In addition my personal safety, I will also comment that it now takes 3 times as long to cross the street. I strongly urge you change the intersection back. Thank you.

Nicole Eaton  
74Cutter Hill Rd.

**From:** Lynne Eisenberg <lynneisenberg@outlook.com>  
**To:** "achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us" <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>,  
"mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us" <mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 11/05/2015 09:32 AM  
**Subject:** Mill St/Jason St intersection

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I am writing to add my voice to the many people in town who are horrified by the new traffic configuration at Mass Ave, Jason and Mill Street. This was brought to my attention by my blind friend, a longtime Arlington resident like myself. She is a fearless independent traveler who found this new intersection system to be highly dangerous. She was almost killed trying to cross. I am a professional in the field of visual impairment so I can guarantee that my friend crosses streets properly and safely. Cars are turning when pedestrians are following walk signals. The sign to yield to pedestrians is totally inadequate and dangerous.

I am baffled by the thinking behind this change and by the lack of communication from the town to the public. I hope this situation can be remedied immediately before some gets hurt.

Thank you for your help in advance.

Lynne Eisenberg  
52 School Street  
Arlington, MA 02476

----- sponsored  
link: yahoo recommended - <http://msn.medsplacex.com> -----  
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**From:** Sp SpSp <1spspsp@gmail.com>  
**To:** achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us, Marie Krepelka <mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 11/05/2015 08:53 AM  
**Subject:** mill/jason/mass ave traffic light/pedestrian light

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Dear town manager and head of the BOS,

This new light timing at Mill/Jason/Mass Ave is a hazard, an accident waiting to happen.

Please re-think this issue and change the lights back to the way they were, or a new way that actually helps traffic flow AND is safe for drivers and pedestrians.

thank you  
sylvia peretz



**From:** "Rubel, Noelle" <NRUBEL@PARTNERS.ORG>  
**To:** "msullivan@town.arlington.ma.us" <msullivan@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 11/05/2015 11:23 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Safety Concerns Jason St/Mass Ave

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**From:** Rubel, Noelle  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 05, 2015 10:53 AM  
**To:** 'townmanager@town.arlington.ma.us'  
**Cc:** 'rubno@aol.com'  
**Subject:** Safety Concerns Jason St/Mass Ave

Mr. Chapdelaine:

I am writing to you today to express my concerns re: the intersection off Jason St. & Mass. Ave. I have owned/lived in Arlington for over 15 years, but just recently became aware of this seemingly very dangerous situation. My daughter just started AHS this fall & has been walking after school to the public library. I have walked the route with her & have seen firsthand the difficulty w/ safely crossing. It appears that the cars have a green light at the same time that the crossing light for pedestrian's signals to walk? I also recently experienced it from the perspective of a driver of a vehicle - coming down Jason St., light turning green, going to take a right turn onto Mass Ave, and having a young boy go to cross in front of my moving car at the same time!

I am very concerned & wanting to know what can be done to rectify this situation **before** someone is badly injured?

Thank you for your time,

Noelle Rubel

71 Decatur Street

Arlington, MA 02474

617-855-3404

[nrubel@partners.org](mailto:nrubel@partners.org)

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File: [ATT00002.txt](#) Size: 2k Content Type: text/plain  
File: [ATT00003.html](#) (Shown Inline) Size: 4k Content Type: text/html

**From:** Kara M <karrotabq@gmail.com>  
**To:** mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us  
**Date:** 11/05/2015 07:45 AM  
**Subject:** For Board of Selectmen

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I'm writing regarding the loss of pedestrian protected crossing at Mill Street and Mass Ave. Please restore it.

Six years ago, I collided with another car at this intersection. I was turning left from Mill Street onto Mass Ave.

It was my first accident ever. I've had my license for 30 years. I drive a minivan, often filled with small children. I'm a cautious driver.

But I never saw the car I hit that day. I had to ask the police officer what color it was. The other driver and I both left in ambulances.

Let it be clear: had I hit a pedestrian that day, I would have killed them.

As someone who frequently walks to the town center, the previous pedestrian protected crosswalk was my safe refuge when I didn't feel like staring down traffic at the Library Way or Town Hall crossings.

Since this change, I've told my 12-year-old son he can no longer cross at Mill Street and Mass Ave alone.

While Traffic Control Officer Rateau has suggested that "pedestrians will eventually learn... to cross with it says to cross while being cognizant of other traffic," this intersection serves community members who may have difficulty crossing nimbly.

It's not just children like my son who need protection. The nearby facilities serve seniors, those with disabilities and illnesses, younger children, and visitors to our town.

I realize thought and planning went into these changes. This is serious intersection that demands a serious and thoughtful solution. Stating, however, that "this is how it's done in Cambridge and Boston" (source: TAC) isn't quite enough. Not right now. Not after the pedestrian deaths we've already seen in our town.

I love living in Arlington more than anywhere else. I want to be proud of our town. Please return protected pedestrian crossing to Mill Street and Mass Ave immediately.

Thank you,

Kara Madden  
71 Cutter Hill Road, Arlington  
617 903-0081  
[karrotabq@gmail.com](mailto:karrotabq@gmail.com)

**From:** Patricia Worden <pbworden@hotmail.com>  
**To:** arlington list <arlington@arlingtonlist.org>  
"fryan@town.arlington.ma.us" <fryan@town.arlington.ma.us>, Kevin Greeley <greeleycom@aol.com>,  
**Cc:** Adam Chapdelaine <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>, Marie Krepelka  
<mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 10/09/2015 12:02 PM  
**Subject:** Intolerable Traffic Light Situation at Mill St. & Mass. Av.

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## Intolerable Traffic Light Situation at Mill St. & Mass. Av.

Kate Crohan's message (see below) is very important. An extremely dangerous situation has been created by the installation of the new traffic lights at Mill Street and Massachusetts Avenue.

The walk signals for the East-West pedestrian crossing and the North-South pedestrian crossing have been separated. In the case of the North-South crossing - i.e. across Massachusetts Avenue - autos waiting at the corner to turn into Mass. Av. in the direction towards Lexington frequently do NOT wait for the walk signal to terminate (although that would be only a few seconds). They become scofflaws and simply ignore the remaining seconds on the walk signal and turn the corner even when pedestrians are still in the intersection as long as in their view there is enough room for them to go. The walk signal is apparently meaningless for these drivers.

In addition, the time period assigned for the walk light in the Massachusetts Avenue crosswalk is much too short. It is unsuitable for the handicapped and elderly using that crossing and the separation of the East-West (Mill Street) and North-South (Mass. Av.) makes the audio signal very confusing for blind residents. These walk signals need to be returned to their original simultaneous configuration. In that way the Mass. Av. crossing could be returned to an appropriate duration, the confusion of the audio signals avoided, and, most importantly the illegal driving round the corner from Mill St. to Mass. Av. would stop. In my thirty plus years of using the traffic lights at this intersection I have never seen these corner violations of the walk signal until the recent new traffic light installation. Noticeably our school students are now avoiding this crossing and simply crossing Mass. Av. without any traffic lights at the painted crosswalk and bump-outs at Whole Foods or further along the Avenue.

A traffic "observer" with an official-looking jacket and a clipboard probably would not notice our new breed of driver scofflaws since they do not take the illegal turn while he is standing there. Whoever the traffic gods are who made this mess should reverse it and go back to Valhalla.

Patricia Worden

Hi,  
IMPORTANT FYI: Please be aware that the light at Mill Street and Mass. Avenue isn't working properly. The audible signal is very definitely not coordinated with the light so it's very dangerous to follow the signal. When it indicates that you can cross Mass. Ave., cars can turn left from Mill Street so it is just not at all safe. There are times when the traffic appears to be stopped but the audible signal is not saying to cross. Please tell anyone you know who is blind or visually impaired since it is really dangerous. The police know and the company has been notified.

Kate Crohan

**From:** "Richard L. Schmeidler" <schmeidler@alum.calberkeley.org>  
**To:** Patricia Worden <pbworden@hotmail.com>  
arlington list <arlington@arlingtonlist.org>, Adam Chapdelaine <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>,  
**Cc:** "fryan@town.arlington.ma.us" <fryan@town.arlington.ma.us>, Marie Krepelka  
<mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>, Kevin Greeley <greeleycom@aol.com>  
**Date:** 10/09/2015 12:47 PM  
**Subject:** Re: [arlington] Intolerable Traffic Light Situation at Mill St. & Mass. Av.

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I live close by, and have also noticed the very recent change in the operation of the traffic lights where Mill Street and Jason Street intersect with Massachusetts Avenue.

The former arrangement, a "Barnes Dance" or "scramble" that let pedestrians cross diagonally without having to dodge cars that were turning, was good for pedestrians.

I presume that the new arrangement, in which cars can flow in one direction or the other, and make whatever turns they wish, but never have to wait for pedestrians, may have been considered better for drivers. [I could argue that the net benefit to drivers would be low if the risk to drivers of hitting pedestrians is factored into the calculations, but I do not know how to evaluate how much the community of drivers is affected if one of their number is involved in a catastrophe. And on the subject of catastrophes, see [http://www.cafepress.co.uk/+cat\\_ass\\_trophy\\_shot\\_glass,1269424850](http://www.cafepress.co.uk/+cat_ass_trophy_shot_glass,1269424850) 8-)  
]

Who was responsible for the change? Was there any public notice or discussion of the change?

To whom should requests that the change be rescinded be directed?

Is this a matter within the purview of the Supervisors? Of Town Meeting?



**From:** barbara jones <jonesbl@comcast.net>  
**To:** Lisa Deeley Smith <smith196@aol.com>  
"Arlington@Arlingtonlist. Org" <arlington@arlingtonlist.org>, Adam Chapdelaine  
**Cc:** <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>, Fred Ryan <fryan@town.arlington.ma.us>, Marie Krepelka  
<mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 10/10/2015 01:24 PM  
**Subject:** Re: [arlington] Intolerable Traffic Light Situation at Mill St. &Mass. Av.

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There should be a dedicated walk signal with a 4 way stop for pedestrians as it was in the past.

At Mystic and Pleasant the audible signal engages when traffic moves East and West with no other traffic turning onto Mystic or Pleasant. When the audible engages with a different sound going North to South, again there is no turning traffic onto Mass. Ave.

Whoever made the decision for the install at Mill Street clearly was not considering pedestrian traffic.

If the lights can be adjusted, they need to do ASAP and given the state of the art traffic signals these days, it has to be possible.

What is not so easily done is getting the powers that be to make it happen.  
Barbara

On Oct 10, 2015, at 9:47 AM, Lisa Deeley Smith via arlington  
<[arlington@arlingtonlist.org](mailto:arlington@arlingtonlist.org)> wrote:

> Well, I must say I enjoy being able to turn left safely from Mill St without battling oncoming cars from Jason St. Which is not to say that unwanted consequences from that change don't exist.

>

> Lisa Deeley Smith

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: "Gene Benson" <[GeneBenson@verizon.net](mailto:GeneBenson@verizon.net)>

> Sent: 10/9/2015 10:14 PM

> To: "Patricia Worden" <[pbworden@hotmail.com](mailto:pbworden@hotmail.com)>; "arlington list"  
<[arlington@arlingtonlist.org](mailto:arlington@arlingtonlist.org)>

> Cc: "Adam Chapdelaine" <[achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us)>;

"[fryan@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:fryan@town.arlington.ma.us)" <[fryan@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:fryan@town.arlington.ma.us)>; "Marie Krepelka"  
<[mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us)>; "Kevin Greeley" <[greeleycom@aol.com](mailto:greeleycom@aol.com)>

> Subject: Re: [arlington] Intolerable Traffic Light Situation at Mill St. &Mass. Av.

>

> Hi Patricia.

>

> I agree.

>

> I don't know what problem the town was trying to fix, but whatever it was  
> they created a different set of problems.

>  
> In addition to what you wrote:  
>  
> There are much longer back ups on Jason St. to get through Mass. Ave.  
This  
> evening it took two light cycles to get through Mass Ave from Jason. In my  
> 25+ years in the neighborhood I have not seen that before. And there is a  
> long wait for each light cycle. Going the other way, from Mill St. to  
Jason,  
> there are many times with one or no cars in the left turn only lane and so  
> many cars in the right turn and straight head lane that it sometimes  
become  
> a two light cycle wait, something we never had before. It is especially  
> tied up when cars in the right lane correctly wait to turn right until  
> people get through the cross walk. Consequently I have seen cars cut into  
> the left turn only lane just to go straight ahead.  
>  
> Best,  
>  
> Gene  
>



15 Jason St. #6  
Arlington, MA 02476  
Oct. 29, 2015

Dear Board of Selectmen/women,

Several weeks ago, the Town of Arlington, Mass. changed the traffic/pedestrian configuration at the Jason St./Mill St./Mass Ave. intersection. One key aspect of the change is that pedestrians no longer can cross this intersection while the traffic is stopped. Now, after a few second delay for pedestrians, traffic is allowed to turn (both right and left). Succinctly put, the intersection has changed from an "exclusive" pedestrian crossing to a "concurrent" pedestrian crossing.

Many people are highly concerned about the new intersection, regarding it as a public safety hazard. For that reason, I would like to have the intersection at Jason/Mill/Mass Ave. put on the Board of Selectmen agenda as soon as possible.

There are multiple problems with the new configuration, but three major ones are as follows:

1. The "Walk" signal goes on to allow pedestrians to cross Mill St., after a few-second delay, the traffic on Mass Ave. is allowed to make a left turn onto Mill Street, right through the crosswalk. There is NO SIGN telling these drivers who are taking a left turn to yield to pedestrians. (The same is the case for drivers turning left onto Jason St.) During a busy time, if the drivers do stop for pedestrians in the middle of the intersection, then they will be blocking the cross-traffic when it gets a green light. In addition, in the dark, even if there were a sign, it would be very difficult for a left-turning to see a pedestrian in the cross walk (see my video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe9yKC18E>). A recent Boston Globe article tells the story of a man who was severely injured (and his dog killed) by a school bus in such a scenario in a concurrent pedestrian crossing ([http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/10/22/busvictim/Rx9ehLyPTHeOtKvJCgO6sO/story.html?s\\_campaign=bostonglobe%3Asocialflow%3Afacebook](http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/10/22/busvictim/Rx9ehLyPTHeOtKvJCgO6sO/story.html?s_campaign=bostonglobe%3Asocialflow%3Afacebook))

2. Another major issue is associated with the "yield to pedestrians" signs at the right turns. At the corner of Jason St. and Mass. Ave., drivers now have a "right turn" lane that starts near the bottom of Jason St. Especially during peak commute times, when there are also many pedestrians, drivers must wait during their green light for all the people trying to cross Mass Ave. (as they should), only a few cars can turn right during the green light. (Although my personal experience is that the cars try to zoom around the corner while pedestrians try to cross; that can also be seen in the above YouTube video.) And since most of Jason St. is one lane, the traffic backs way far down Jason St. during the commute hours.

3. Lighting in this area is very poor. There is currently just one functioning street lamp at the intersection -- the one by the Arlington Historical Society buildings.

There may be other issues as well, but these are the ones I have noticed.

Many senior citizens, students, and people with mobility and vision disabilities walk through this intersection. I have seen a couple of "near-miss" incidents, and so I am very concerned about the safety of Arlington citizens and visitors who are trying to navigate this intersection. As a Technical Memorandum on a Pedestrian Signal Phasing Study for the Boston Region Metropolitan Transit Planning Organization (June 2015; ([http://www.ctps.org/Drupal/data/calendar/htmls/2015/MPO\\_0604\\_Pedestrian\\_Signal.html](http://www.ctps.org/Drupal/data/calendar/htmls/2015/MPO_0604_Pedestrian_Signal.html)) states, two "Conditions for Application" of a concurrent pedestrian crossing include "Signalized intersections with low concentrations of older pedestrians, students, or very young pedestrians" and "Simple intersections with good sight distance. The Jason/Mill/Mass Ave. intersection has NEITHER of these characteristics.

Given that the current arrangement is raising safety concerns, I sincerely hope that you will add this item to the next possible Board of Selectmen/Selectwomen meeting agenda.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna Maurer". The signature is fluid and includes a large, sweeping loop at the beginning.

Donna Maurer, Ph.D.

**From:** Jennifer Saulnier <jenmck@hotmail.com>  
**To:** "mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us" <mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 10/30/2015 01:15 PM  
**Subject:** Letter to selectman

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Dear Selectman,

I am writing to express my concern about the pedestrian crosswalk signal at the corner of Mass Ave and Mill St. A couple of weeks ago, I was attempting to cross from the corner in front of the fabric store, across Mass Ave. I came upon the walk signal, and proceeded to the corner to cross while the walk signal was still in effect (white signal -not blinking any warning.). Cars just kept taking left turns in front of me (because they had a green light) while I stood to cross, thank goodness I didn't just go because I would have been hit. At no time did anyone turning left attempt to yield to me, even though I was obviously trying to cross. I can't imagine how people cross this road at night - it is dangerous during the day. I can't help but worry for kids, elderly folks and others that have to cross here.

Can you go out there and see what you think? I was really concerned by the situation and would hate to see someone hit. I feel like it is a very risky situation. I personally feel uncomfortable crossing here and would not allow my children to cross here.

Thanks for your time,  
Jennifer Saulnier  
Arlington resident  
781-488-8485