City Council and Student Government Propose to Make St. Mary Boulevard Safe for Students to Travel

By Paul Williamson
News Editor

Ah, yes! We have all heard about it so many times - the St. Mary Boulevard traffic problem and it is a problem indeed.

The students think that they have right of way while the drivers (who are in such a rush to get to and from work) think that they have the right of way. There is probably varied opinion on who the school belongs to, who the street belongs to and who has priority over its use.

Recently, however there have been proposals which hopefully resolve the problem to the benefit of both parties.

Several meetings have been conducted with representatives from the USL administration, the student body and the city of Lafayette, making this all possible.

City councilman Jan Heymann said, "We (SGA president Ronnie Owens, Harold Trahan, Dean Tekell and herself) seem to be in agreement on two proposals to make St. Mary Boulevard safer for USL pedestrians."

The proposals include the following:

1. Placing raised reflective rumble strips on each side of the five student crosswalks and
2. Placing a Pedestrian Walk/Do Not Walk traffic light at the Rex Street intersection (either by moving the existing light at Hebrard Boulevard or by erecting a new traffic light).

Heymann also said that it is "essential for USL and city officials to work together in order to establish a mutual understanding and workable solution to problems we face."

Glen Menard, director of the student union sent a letter to Dr. James Caillier, vice president of Administrative Affairs concerning the St. Mary controversy.

The letter reviews notes from a meeting held August 13 concerning pavement markings and signaling. Most of the reflectors have already been replaced with the white facing the drivers and the red facing opposing traffic," Menard said.

"The Hebrard signaling will take a few months because specifications must be written and contracts bet," he added.

The reflectors are meant to aid a driver's sight of pedestrians at night and to slow traffic, he also said.

The pedestrian buttons should be fully operable by now and are aimed at providing for a safer crossing of students during the "peak class times."

The proposal reads: "Markings shall be applied to the crossings at the following locations:"

"McKinley Street, Wharton Hall, Billeaud Hall, Hebrard Boulevard, Rex Street and Smith Street."

"And at the Rex crossing, the two current crosswalks shall be updated as stated above and two additional diagonal crosswalks will be added, excluding the approach warning reflectors (for the diagonal crosswalks only)."

The proposal also listed that there should be "one new signal at the Rex-St. Mary intersection. It would be equipped with Walk/Don't Walk indicators, pedestrian demand buttons and an audible signal to indicate the approach of the Don't Walk Command."

"It goes on further to say, 'This intersection will be redrawn to allow full width crossing at peak conditions, no vehicle travel or turn will be allowed."

Finally, while listing more stipulations, the proposal mentions that "the Student Government Association will purchase a radar speed detector to be used by the University police to enforce the speed limit between Johnston and McKinley streets. We feel that this enforcement will greatly increase the safety factor for pedestrians crossing in this area.'"