



Traffic Discussion

Poplar Hall Apartment Proposal

Equity for the Eastside Coalition

September 29th, 2021

Purpose

Address traffic concerns of Civic Leagues surrounding the proposed development of the Poplar Hall School and adjacent property.

Identify development limitations of the property and encourage the city to require a traffic study prior to development.

Encourage the city to study traffic concerns on the east side related to increased development.

Discussion

- Property – Poplar Hall School and former “Grate Steak” location
- Piping Rock Road (Inside Poplar Hall neighborhood)
- Military Hwy Frontage – North of Pebble Lane
 - Including Hoggard Road intersection
- Military Hwy Frontage – South of Pebble Lane
- Military Hwy Exit to Frontage at Pebble Lane
- Military Hwy Convergence with I-264

Concerns

- Location not suitable for large number of multi-family housing units
- Location not suitable for high traffic commercial use
- Expected traffic increase on Military Hwy due to development
- Expected traffic increase on Piping Rock Road to access Poplar Hall Drive

Concerns (cont.)

- Location has a long history of traffic issues/concerns
 - Military Hwy exit to Frontage at Pebble Lane
 - Military Hwy Frontage – Curves and Width
 - One-way Best Thrift Center Entrance at Hoggard Light
 - Traffic on Curlew Drive (surrounding roads and The Tide crossings)

Recommendations

- Identify compatible and acceptable use of existing property
- Complete traffic study of noted areas
- Public – Private partnership for road/traffic improvements
- East side traffic study as part of Military Circle Mall Development

Specific Area Discussion

Specific Traffic Concerns

Development Location

- Poplar Hall Elementary School site History
- Adjacent Property has sat vacant for many years
- The Breeden Co to purchase both parcels for use
- The Breeden Co has high marks for working with communities
- What will this location support, regardless of developer?

Piping Rock Road - Description

- Narrow neighborhood road
- Connects Pebble Lane with Poplar Hall Drive
- Single Family Homes
- Families, small children, and pets
- Sidewalks on one side

Piping Rock Road - Concerns

- Cut-through from development
- Access to Poplar Hall Drive and Military Hwy Light

Piping Rock Road - Recommendations

- Limit or block traffic from development
 - “Burden to the user”
 - Could negatively impact the neighborhood
- Would require widening and markings
- Only other exit if frontage road blocked or busy

Military Hwy (Frontage) – North of Pebble Ln Description

- Likely the preferred route out of development
- Parallels Military Hwy
- Hoggard Road Light – North or South Military Hwy
- Hoggard Road Light – Primary entrance



Military Hwy (Frontage) – North of Pebble Ln Concerns

- Best Thrift Shopping Center illegal exit
 - Long term problem will be made worse
 - Traffic danger – entering and exiting neighborhood
 - Blocking of frontage road
 - City and Property Manager – No action
- Backup on Frontage from Hoggard Light (curve)



Military Hwy (Frontage) – North of Pebble Ln Recommendations

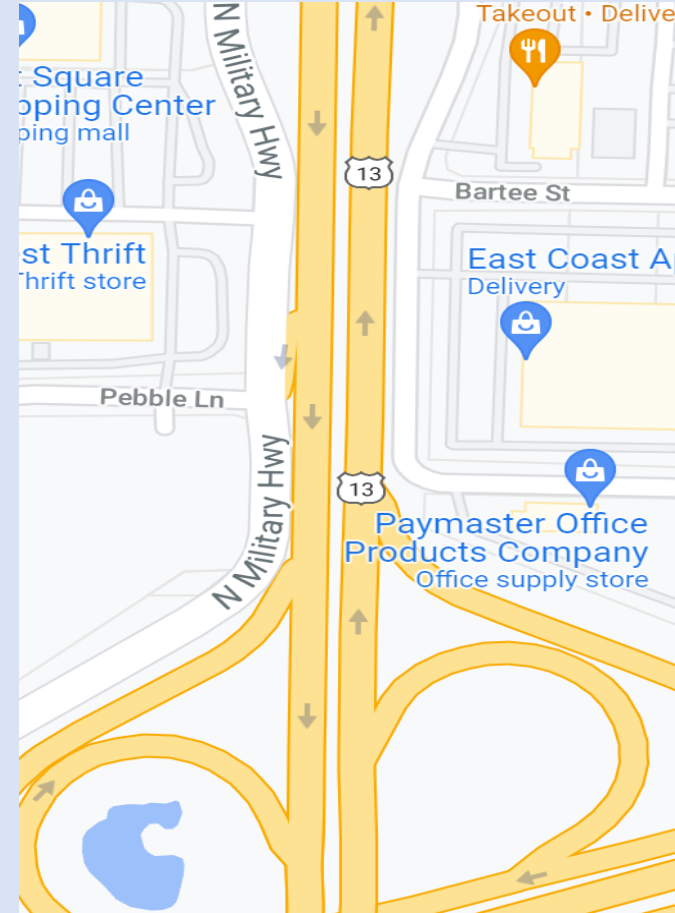
- Rework of this problematic intersection
- City and Property Owner to discuss driveway fixes!



Military Hwy – Hoggard Road Light (Inbound)

Description

- Inbound traffic to development
- Right turn from northbound
- Left turn from southbound
- U-turn from southbound to Pebble Lane exit



Military Hwy – Hoggard Road Light (Inbound) Concerns

- Traffic from I-264 to Military Hwy
 - Short merge distance to Hoggard Light
 - U-turn Poplar Hall
 - Virginia Beach Blvd next opportunity
- Traffic from Southbound Military Hwy
 - Right at Hoggard
 - Shopping Center illegal exit concerns
 - Bus stop concerns
- Exacerbated by Military Circle Mall development



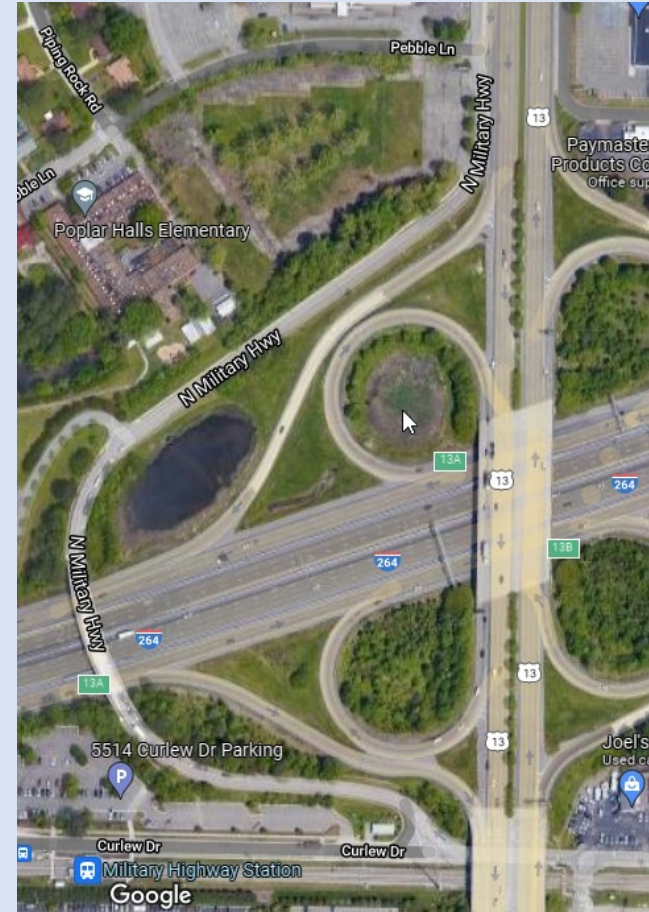
Military Hwy – Hoggard Road Light (Inbound) Recommendations

- Rework of Intersection
- Traffic Study to determine course of action



Military Hwy (Frontage) – South of Pebble Ln Description

- Expected to be second choice for exit from development
- Critical crossing between North and South of I-264
- Two lane road
- Bridge recently repair, but still in poor shape
- Tight curves
- Decreased visibility in some spots due to trees
- Frequent pedestrian route to The Tide



Military Hwy (Frontage) – South of Pebble Ln Concerns

- Visibility of road through curves and foliage
- “Choke Point” curve parallel to Interstate Entrance
- Increased traffic on Curlew (Tide Crossings, Corporate Blvd, Frontage)
- The Tide station pedestrian traffic blocked by buses
- Buses block visibility
- Buses frequently block road (more than two buses)



Military Hwy (Frontage) – South of Pebble Ln Recommendations

- Widening (especially curve), road improvements
- Bike/pedestrian improvements
- Landscape trimming in problem areas/curves
- Curlew Bus stop relocation/lengthening



Military Hwy Exit – Pebble Ln Description

- Directly adjacent to development property
- Direct inbound access to Pebble Lane
- Frontage Road access
- Immediately before I-264 W entrance



Military Hwy Exit – Pebble Ln Concerns

- LONG history of frustration with the exit (decades)
- Problematic with increased traffic hotel/restaurant on site
- Accidental or shortcut entrance to Military Hwy (wrong way)
- Exiting vehicles ignore stop sign. Stop signs often knocked down by vehicles.
- Visibility of oncoming traffic behind exiting vehicle
- Only room for 4-5 vehicles currently before blocking Military Hwy lane



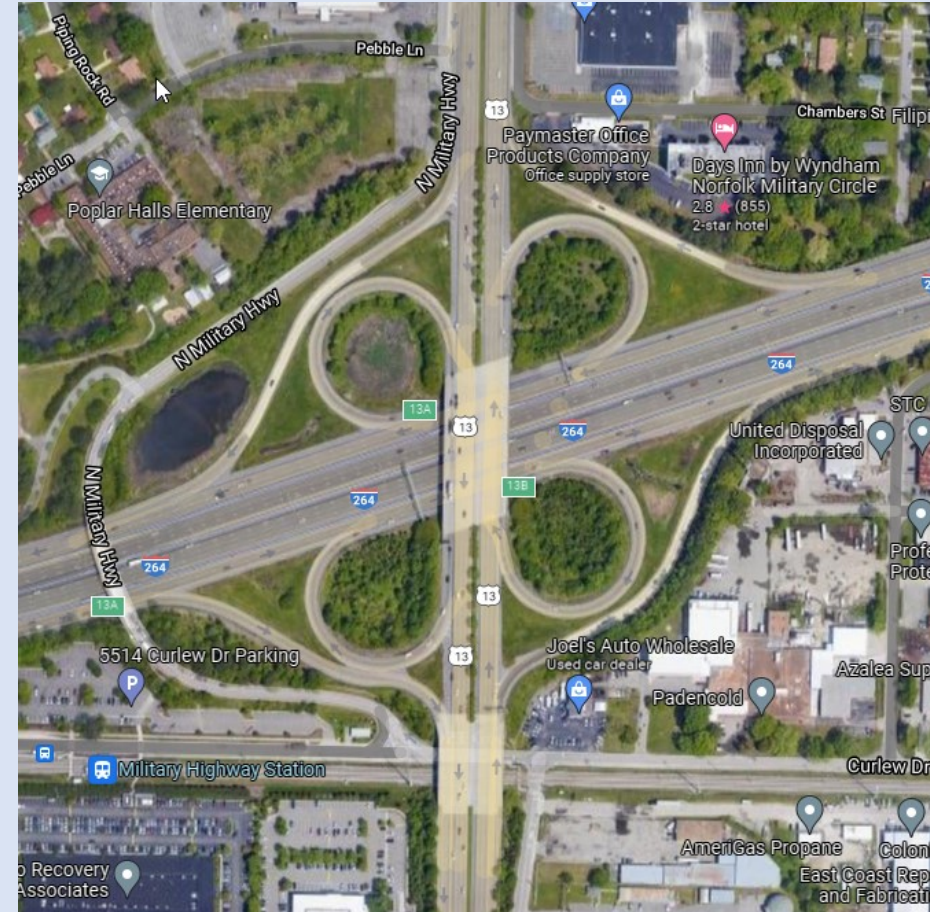
Military Hwy Exit – Pebble Ln Recommendations

- Permanent closure
- Part of frontage road redesign
- See Military Hwy (Frontage) North of Pebble Lane section



Military Hwy and I-264 Crossing Description

- “Crossroads”
- Convergence of interstate with 8 lane thoroughfare
- Merging traffic worsen with development projects



Military Hwy and I-264 Crossing Concerns

- Already significant traffic volumes increase with development projects
- Worsening traffic merging situation



Military Hwy and I-264 Crossing Recommendations

- Impact not just local but all Hampton Roads
 - Arena/Amphitheater traffic can benefit
- Study of full I-264 and Military Hwy interchange configuration
 - Coordinated with VDOT
 - REQUIRE for Military Circle Mall development
- Funding or in-kind contributions from developers



Conclusion

- Expect PROACTIVE traffic planning from Norfolk for east side developments
 - After-the-fact remediation is disastrous
 - Still waiting to Norfolk Transit meeting
- Poor disclosure/involvement with Eastside Task Force and residents
 - Recurrent history on other projects
 - Recreation Center Plans
 - Development/Land sale plans

Conclusion (cont.)

- Concern for ONE project
 - Recurrent history on other projects
 - Other projects coming with no traffic discussions seen
- Need overall east side planning effort
 - Multiple developments in the works
 - Very little mention on Planning Department documents
- Extremely important with Military Circle Mall development
 - Will significantly change the traffic landscape of the east side

Closing

When a municipality commits to a modus operandi of doing something to its community rather than doing something with its community, the result will never be a good one. As east side Norfolk will soon become the focus of massive redevelopment, now is the time to ensure the hallmark of this effort is meaningful collaboration. The onus for implementing such an approach begins with Norfolk city leadership. We look forward to being part of a partnership to ensure quality development for east side Norfolk.

