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"As a service to its Planning Partners, the **Southwestern PA Commission (SPC)** has developed a Road Safety Audit program as part of its Transportation Operations & Safety planning efforts. An RSA is a proactive process that provides recommendations which can be implemented in stages as time and resources permit.

The aim of the RSA is to answer the following questions:

- What elements of the road may present a safety concern?
 - to what extent,
 - to which road uses, and
 - under what circumstances?
- What opportunities exist to eliminate or mitigate identified safety concerns?" (RSA Report, 2014; available on on the Edgewood Borough website)

In a response to the Regent Square Civic Association's request, Edgewood Borough and Swissvale Borough actively participated in an RSA, which occurred in April 2014. The Boroughs provided all crash data, previous police studies of the area, and made employees/officials available for RSA key person interview. The RSA team performed its audit of the roadway by looking at traffic patterns during morning and evening peak hours, off-hours, and at night to determine how the roadway is used under different circumstances. Additionally, the team walked and drove the roadway to gain a practical understanding, and interviewed community members including members from the Regent Square Civic Association. Borough Council received results from the audit and agreed with the majority of the recommendations for the sections of S. Braddock that Edgewood owns.

In Fall 2015, the SPC made grant funding available for its Transportation Alternatives Program. The Boroughs of Edgewood and Swissvale believed this grant would allow for the implementation of many of the RSA recommendations and agreed to submit a joint application for grant funding. The grant application totaled \$479,500.00 and addressed pedestrian and bicycle improvements recommended in the RSA.

The application was to update all intersections on S. Braddock Avenue

- to have ADA compliant ramps,
- install stamped concrete crosswalks at existing crosswalk locations,
- up-to-date pedestrian crossing signals,
- bicycle safe storm sewer grates,
- electronic speed minder signs,
- and signage directing pedestrians to crosswalks.

All of these items were recommended in the RSA. Edgewood and Swissvale were happy to learn in February 2016 that the grant application had been accepted. The Federal Highway Administration levied the grant money and the bid letting must be conducted via the PennDOT system. The Boroughs solicited proposals for a traffic engineer to prepare the bid specifications since the grant funding did not cover initial engineering. Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. (CEC) was selected for this work and are currently working on the bid specs.

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Major changes to the construction plan cannot occur since the grant has already been awarded. Grant money will be used for the purposes outlined in the application.

The preamble to the petition circulated on change.org stated that Edgewood and Swissvale Councils were banning people and forbidding people from crossing at Sanders even though there was a rather long discussion during a Council meeting about the safety concerns due to the topography and that previous traffic studies did not recommend designating a crosswalk there for safety reasons because of driver sight issues. At that time, Edgewood Council stated that signs would be placed referring people to the designated cross walk for safety reasons. It was acknowledged that people do and will cross where ever they want including the middle of the block between parked cars.

The petition's preamble implied (and later on Edgewoodswissvaleslopes it was commented) that with the "plan" the two Councils were focused only on traffic (choosing traffic) over pedestrians and local businesses. And a statement was made that the RSC supported the petition. Nowhere was the grant mentioned; that the two neighboring municipalities had worked together and with the Regent Square Civic association on the Roadway Safety Audit and that a specific designated crosswalk across S. Braddock at Sanders was not part of the recommendations.

The Council members of Edgewood and Swissvale are dedicated to our communities and this region. We live here as your neighbors and friends. We raise our families here.

Here are some of the things your council members have worked on.

- In support of businesses Edgewood revised its restaurant ordinance to permit outdoor dining.
- Mr. Wainright wrote a Food Truck ordinance for our local businesses and it was passed by Council.
- We have worked with Swissvale and Rankin on a comprehensive plan for Edgewood Avenue to the waterfront.
- We revised the Park and Rec. Comprehensive Plan so that we could work on a designated dog area.
- We are member of CONNECT and the Turtle Creek valley COG.
- When there were a series of robberies in Regent Square Edgewood, Swissvale, Wilkinsburg and the City of Pittsburgh worked together to quickly restore safety and order.
- When PennDot was going to meter our access ramps to the parkway, we worked together with Senator Costa and CE Rich Fitzgerald to recognize the impact of shaving 5 minutes of commuters' time would have on our communities.
- And we intend to further cooperation with joint bidding shared street repairs.

These are some of the things we're doing and have done with due diligence on what could and should be done in taking the responsibilities of our elected office and governance seriously. None of these things were done for traffic... but for the safety and quality of life for the residents of our communities.

Now, sometimes due diligence brings information such that we can't do what is popular because what is popular is not the right thing for community safety-- and what seems to be a "simple fix" isn't always so simple. To that end, our intent always is to do the right thing the right way for the right reason.

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We acknowledge that the Road Safety Audit did not address a designated crosswalk at Sanders. And, we have not designated a crosswalk there under the advice of *past* traffic studies. We also know that changes have occurred in our neighborhood with the addition of more local restaurants along S. Braddock Avenue and that the attraction of a walkable urban community is something to be supported.

Now, we can't amend the awarded grant; we certainly aren't going to turn away \$479,500 of improvements.

But, we don't have to work within an "*either/or*" premise. We believe we can work on an "*And*" here.

So in response to our residents, and to make sure that we **can** designate a safe crosswalk at Sanders, Edgewood Council passed a motion to permit the Borough Manager to get a cost estimate for a traffic study from the CEC in order to utilize information we already have with the RSA and in partnership with Swissvale Council to do a joint traffic study specifically on the *safety* of a crosswalk at Sanders and with the RSA to address these questions:

- Would a designated crosswalk at Sanders be safe?
- If yes, how could we optimize the safety of putting one there?
- Can we secure funding for those safety measures? Requesting grants, funding available.
- And if the answer is no— we will have all done our due diligence in response to and for the safety of the residents of Edgewood and Swissvale.