

COMMUTING SAFELY TO ECOLE LARONDE

Report presented by Ecole Laronde and Laronde PAC

May 2013

In January 2013, Ecole Laronde initiated a meeting with representatives from the School District's Transportation department and the city of Surrey's Traffic Engineering department to develop a common understanding of the parking/drop off situation/challenges at Ecole Laronde, and to find solutions to those challenges. In subsequent meetings the school PAC president as well as representatives of Amble Green Drive residents joined the meetings. Together we considered the recommendations from the School Safety and Operation Review for Ecole Laronde completed by the city of Surrey on April 30, 2010 as well as brought up new ideas. The following table provides information with regards to the feasibility of these options.

Short Term Options	
Place orange cones at critical areas to deter unsafe parking activities	This was tried on Amble Green in the fall and did not work. Cones would work if the area was supervised.
Install pedestrian advisory devices at the main crossing areas on Laronde Drive and Amble Green	Not implemented.
Promote safer pedestrian routes to school and install a marked crosswalk and parking area on Amble Green	<i>Crosswalk has been approved by the city as of February 2013.</i>
Intermediate Term Options	
Facilitate pick-up and drop off activity along Laronde Drive in association with sidewalk construction	No parking zones allow pick up and drop off. *The city of Surrey will look into the possibility of extending a pathway on the south side of Laronde Drive and moving back the log fence in front of the park to facilitate drop off from this area.
Promote safer pedestrian routes to school and install a marked crosswalk and parking areas on Laronde Drive	Crosswalk not warranted due to low usage. PAC may want to look into the possibility of providing a crossing guard at an unmarked crosswalk in front of the pathway east of the parking lot entrance.
Long Term Options	
Provide alternative pick up/drop off capacity and a sidewalk along the north side of Amble Green	Not monetary feasible as it involves moving the drainage. Amble Green was not designed to accommodate parking along the sides – it is too narrow.
Extend Laronde Drive to connect to 20 th Avenue north of the school	Not feasible for now - property blocking the way.
Other recommendations	
Installing traffic calming on Amble Green	<i>Approved by the city – December 2012</i>

Discussion

There is no one solution that will “fix” all of the parking/drop off issues at Laronde. The reality is that although small improvements can be done to improve student safety i.e. traffic calming speed bumps and a painted crosswalk on Amble Green, no major improvement is planned in the foreseeable future. Therefore we need to work within the limitation of the school location, and maximize the options that are available to us.

To that effect, **we strongly encourage parents to stop using Amble Green as a pick up/drop off zone and keep this area for pedestrians only.** The configuration of the road does not allow pedestrians to walk safely to and from school while cars are parked or pulled over the side of the road. If driving to school, parents need to use Laronde Drive.

As mentioned earlier, our only option is to make the most out of the structures that are in place namely:

- Implement a Kiss & Ride program at the school drop off area to increase turn around time of vehicles. This would require a couple of parent/student volunteers at drop off and pick up time to help move traffic in a timely and orderly manner.
- stagger drop off and pick up times - plan to arrive 5-10 minutes prior to the bell in the morning and 5-10 minutes after the dismissal in the afternoon
- park a few blocks away and walk a few blocks – there is a lot of parking space along Laronde Drive west of and on 131st Street
- walk/bike to school
- carpool
- prioritize parking on the school premises for Kindergarten and grade 1 parents
- use the No Parking zone on Laronde Drive around the intersection of 131st Street as a drop off - The city of Surrey is looking into the possibility of extending a pathway on the south side of Laronde Drive and moving back the log fence in front of the park to facilitate drop off from this area.

Conclusion

Parents are encouraged to consider the alternatives and options mentioned above, and choose one that will work for them and their family – have a good look at the colour map below indicating where parking and drop off is and is not allowed around the school. **It is imperative that parents work together, with each other and with our neighbours on Laronde Drive and Amble Green, to make the daily commute to school as safe as possible.** We encourage all Laronde families to consider the options above and choose one that is most convenient for you. Safety of all students must take precedence over convenience. Please keep this in mind when developing your plan for your family.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!