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## NEWS

# Stoplight's construction shelved until next year

BY MATT NIKSA  
Daily Post Correspondent

The Menlo Park City Council has voted to shelve construction of a \$350,000 pedestrian-controlled stoplight on Middlefield Road at Linfield Drive and Santa Monica Avenue until next year.

The decision came even though the Menlo Park Fire Protection District board voted last month to go forward with the stoplight project near Fire Station No. 1. The district hopes to share the installation costs with the city.

Council members Kirsten Keith, Catherine Carlton and Rich Cline voted Tuesday in favor of adding the stoplight project to next year's council work plan, with Councilmen Ray Mueller and Peter Ohtaki absent.

### Lack of resources cited

Keith said the Public Works Department had no resources at this time to inspect the proposed stoplight site or to do community outreach for the project.

Resident Jennifer Wolosin, who is chair of the grassroots organization Safe Routes to Schools, rec-

ommended the council postpone construction of the stoplight project until next year.

She had asked the district for the stoplight on Middlefield and originally wanted it to be completed this year, but said it would be better to reschedule the project so it wouldn't hinder the city from completing other transportation projects that Safe Routes wants completed this year.

### 'Agonizing decision'

"It was an agonizing decision to ask council to move the stoplight project to next year, but we're not going to forget about it," Wolosin said. "We want the stoplight to be at the top of next year's list of projects on council's work plan."

District Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said his agency met with a city liaison about two months ago to discuss the stoplight but hasn't met with the city since. Schapelhouman said he wishes he could have more meetings with the city to discuss the stoplight, but understands that the district's priorities may not match the city's.

The fire board on June 20 vot-

ed unanimously in favor of giving Schapelhouman permission to start talking with city officials about installing the stoplight.

Schapelhouman sent an email to Menlo Park City Manager Alex McIntyre on June 26, asking council to add an item on the stoplight to its next agenda. Although McIntyre didn't respond to his email, council did discuss the stoplight Tuesday.

### Paying for it

The fire district and the city have yet to sign a financial agreement that would outline how the city and the district would pay for installing the stoplight. The board voted in June to front the entire cost with the hope that the city would reimburse half of it at a later date.

The stoplight would be similar to one the fire district and the town of Atherton installed on El Camino Real at Almaden Avenue last August. Wolosin said the stoplight would make it easier for drivers to see pedestrians crossing the intersection and would make it safer for children to travel to and from school.