

# Mars Way Safety Concerns



# Narrow Road

Mars Way is a residential street. The road is very narrow (20' wide with each traffic lane slightly over 9') and cannot safely accommodate large trucks, a lot of traffic, parked vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists in the street.

Many vehicles drive in the middle of the road to avoid parked cars, pedestrians or simply because their vehicles are too large for the 10' lane. Many parked cars encroach into the driving lane.

In addition, the road has an incline which creates line of sight issues for drivers that can't adequately see what they are about to encounter.

The FDOT standard for a 2 way roadway is 24' (12' travel lanes) to allow for reasonable separation of vehicles.



# Pedestrians

Residents and visitors of Mars Way do not have safe passage to get to the beach or for a walk along Ocean Drive. They have to traverse a narrow busy two-way street with no sidewalks and line of site issues. This is a hazardous situation for residents, their children and grandchildren.

A 2020 traffic study showed over 700 vehicles per day during the work week travel on this road and speeding is a major issue.

Many trades, trucks and other service personnel use Mars Way as the thoroughfare into and out of Town. Many of their vehicles are too large for such a narrow residential street.



# Pedestrians (cont.)



# Pedestrians (cont.)





## Trucks

Although the Town adopted a No Truck Ordinance for Mars Way there are large trucks constantly driving on the street, as shown in the pictures. Truck drivers also use the road for parking to make deliveries to Oceanfront (see top right picture of the parked Zephyrhills Water Truck at the end of the street). The car hauler in another picture is not servicing a Mars Way resident.

The 'No Truck' signage is ineffective and there has been no tickets issued and negligible enforcement.



# Trucks

This is another slide of trucks that have recently been on the street. This is a common occurrence.

Many of these trucks encroach on the other lane, which is indicative that they are too large for such a narrow residential street with no sidewalk.

# And More Trucks...





# Speed Concerns

- Many of the drivers on Mars Way speed. The street is rarely policed and as such, no one worries about being ticketed for speeding.
- The speed trailer has been used sparingly, and is placed just above the incline on the west side of the street and does not capture the vehicles true speed (vehicles are turning onto the street from US-1 and driving up the incline, which is not their maximum speed). The Police tell the residents there is no significant speeding on the street and that is simply not correct.
- Empty patrol vehicles have infrequently been placed on the street but typically only when the matter is brought up at a Town Council meeting.
- The last traffic study indicated that a significant number of vehicles were going well above the speed limit. It is our belief that the speed levels have not changed since the study and since the speed limit was lowered to 20MPH.

# Parking

Much of the time, cars are parked all along the first half of the street. Many of these vehicles do not belong to Mars Way residents. The parked cars belong to people servicing the Oceanfront condominium and beach visitors. Mars Way residents have to deal with poor to zero visibility pulling out of their driveways, lack of parking for their own visitors and trades and no where to go to avoid oncoming traffic when walking to Ocean Drive.

No other condominium sends their service vehicles to neighboring residential side streets. Why is it acceptable for Mars Way?

Note the picture at the lower left. The signage is in front of the Oceanfront gate and states "All service & vendors park outside gate."



# Parking (Cont.)



Over the years, service vehicles parking on Mars Way loiter, litter and are a nuisance to the residents. At times landscapers have to park in the road because Oceanfront service vehicles are using the available spaces. This creates a safety issue for the landscapers, pedestrians and other vehicles.



## Parking Permit Program

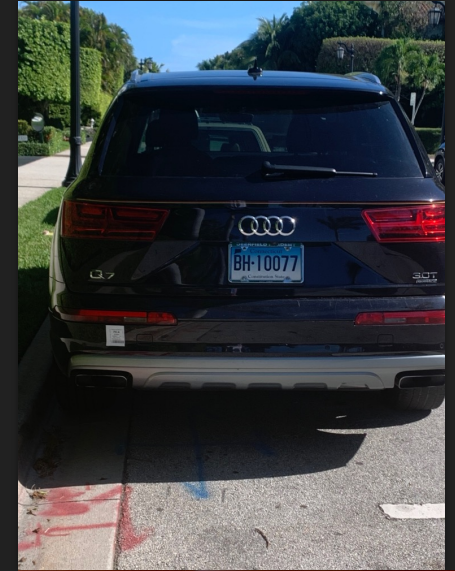
A residential parking permit program for Mars Way could be implemented.

The picture on the right top corner shows a vehicle in Palm Beach with a Residential Parking permit on the left bumper. The picture on the top left corner shows a visitor permit hanging on the rearview mirror of a vehicle in Palm Beach. The lower picture shows signage in Palm Beach and a sample resident sticker and visitor placard.

This program allows the vehicles to be easily identified for compliance.

Palm Beach has over 20 years of experience in creating legally defensible parking permit programs.

The program is easy to administer and enforce for the 17 homes on the street. Enforcement can be done with civilian Town employees or police officers.



# Safety Concerns and Options

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety
  - Nowhere to walk except the narrow road
  - Bicycles have to share a very narrow road with large trucks and cars
  - Residents do not have safe passage to the beach and Ocean Drive
- Options
  - Make Mars Way a one-way East to West
    - Eliminate east bound traffic
    - The road could be narrowed by adding a bike lane
    - Should not be an issue for FDOT, PBC or PBCFR based on recent traffic study
  - Close the Median at US1
    - Reduce amount of traffic coming onto Mars Way
    - Should not be an issue for FDOT, PBC or PBCFR based on recent traffic study

# Safety Concerns and Options Trucks

- Mars Way is being used as a Truck Route
  - Large Trucks are using the street to access the Town.
  - The narrow residential street is not appropriate as a truck route
  - Google Maps directs drivers to Mars Way to access the Town
  - The No Truck Ordinance is not enforced
- Options
  - Make Mars a one-way East to West
    - Would eliminate the truck traffic coming into Town using Mars Way
    - Visible Signage at Ocean Dr – NO Trucks Strictly Enforced
  - Close the Median at US1 and Mars Way
    - Would eliminate the truck traffic coming into the Town from the North using Mars Way
    - Visible Signage at US1 and Ocean Dr – NO Trucks Strictly Enforced

# Safety Concerns and Options

- Speeding Vehicles
- Options
  - Speed Limits should be as strictly enforced as they are on Ocean Drive
- Parking by non-Mars Way vehicles
  - Service Vehicles for Oceanfront and Beachgoers use the street for parking
  - Palm Beach County population is increasing and there are only a finite number of public beaches. This issue is only going to become worse
- Options
  - Resident Permit Parking should be adopted for the Street
    - A Permit Program would reduce number of vehicles parked on street
    - The Beach Permit would NOT be negatively impacted
    - Enforcement can be done by civilian Town employees and/or Police officers
    - Town can legally charge a fee and increase fine amounts to pay for any additional costs

# Summary of Options to Improve Safety

- Make Mars Way a one-way street east to west.
  - Low cost option and would eliminate incoming truck traffic and two-way traffic
  - Could add a bike lane to narrow the road
  - Visible signage stating NO Trucks strictly enforced at Ocean Drive with enforcement, should significantly reduce truck traffic
  - Shouldn't be an issue for FDOT, PBC or PBCFR based on recent traffic study
- Close the Median at US1 and Mars Way
  - Reduce amount of traffic coming onto Mars Way
  - Shouldn't be an issue for FDOT, PBC or PBCFR based on recent traffic study
  - Would reduce the truck traffic on Mars Way coming into the Town from the North
  - Visible Signage at US1 and Ocean Dr – NO Trucks Strictly Enforced
  - We have been told FDOT would pay the cost for closure
- Enforce the speed limits on Mars Way
- Adopt a Resident Parking Permit Program for Mars Way



# Conclusion

- The quantity of traffic, type of traffic, speed of traffic, line of site issues, narrowness of the road and lack of sidewalks are the main issues facing the residents of Mars Way.
- Making Mars Way a One-Way street will significantly reduce the traffic and will eliminate all truck traffic coming into Town from the North using Mars Way.
- Traffic Study showed for closing the median: *The redistribution of traffic from Mars Way will only have a minimal impact to each of the study intersections and will not result in any detrimental impact.*
- As the Palm Beach County population grows, the traffic and parking issues will only grow
- The severity of the problem is getting worse
- Now is the time to make changes before someone gets hurt
- The decision is between safety or convenience
  - Residents can adapt to new traffic patterns if an one-way is implemented and use Donald Ross to enter the Town instead of Mars Way slightly increasing their travel time
- Resident safety should always come first!