

David (Pat) and Becky Galvez  
127 S 1420 West  
Virgin, UT 84779

July 6, 2022

**RE: Traffic safety considerations at Virgin Town street intersections with SR9**

To Virgin Town Planning and Zoning Committee and UDOT representative,

We are unable to attend this important meeting; however we want to present our concerns to the P&Z Committee and UDOT representative. Please have these concerns ‘read into the record’ for this July 13<sup>th</sup> P&Z meeting.

In March of 2021, on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, Virgin Town held meetings (one or both for ‘public input’) on CUP issues for the ‘Labrie Project’ – the proposed business development on SR9’s south side between Sheep Bridge Road(SBR) and 1420 West. As this same project is currently on this July 13<sup>th</sup> P&Z meeting agenda, we wanted to contribute traffic concerns relative to March 2021 plans on this development.

David (Pat) provided public input at that March 29, 2021 Town meeting, with concerns on SR9 traffic. We will provide these concerns again, with possible alternatives for consideration for this phase of the P&Z Labrie review/meeting:

POINTS OF CONCERN provided at Town 3/29/21 meeting (gathered from notes we prepared prior to 3/29/21):

1. SR9 westbound(WB) approaching Sheep Bridge Road(SBR) - No proper left turn lane exists! This area is presently a 55 MPH speed zone.
2. The Labrie Site Plan shows 2 entrances for the development – west entrance, paved, on 1420 West; east entrance, unpaved, on Sheep Bridge Road (SBR).
  - a. Eastbound SR9 traffic (in the same 55 MPH zone) entering/exiting the site may likely be equal traffic for both entrances.
  - b. Westbound SR9 traffic (in the same 55 MPH zone) entering/exiting via the 1420 West entrance is likely to be much higher traffic on 1420 West than SBR, due to:
    - i. A proper, safe, high-visibility left turn lane in place on WB SR9 at 1420 West intersection.
    - ii. Paved access exists at 1420 West intersection.
    - iii. For departing traffic, a proper WB SR9 ‘merge lane’ exists at 1420 West intersection.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES of concerns 1 & 2 above:

1. WB SR9 traffic seeking to turn left when approaching/entering the SBR entrance, via the current minimal/narrow start of the center lane, will -
  - a. slow (with uncertainty and hesitation), brake and cause surprise/accidents to following vehicles, as they attempt to enter this minimal/narrow center lane in order to turn left on SBR. This is a high driving risk situation in a 55 MPH zone!
  - b. ‘crowd’ the approaching eastbound (EB) traffic on SR9 at this narrow center lane section, as the EB traffic lane shifts toward the center of SR9 in advance of the upcoming steel and concrete guard rails over the drainage. This is also a high driving risk situation in a 55 MPH zone!
  
2. Labrie Site Plan entrances – expected higher traffic/use at 1420 West entrance than SBR entrance – causing increased driver/customer/resident frustrations and hazards:
  - a. 1420 West is the only entrance into the Desert Garden Estates (DGE) residences, with its own daily traffic count (not disclosed in Labrie Site Plan) on & off SR9.
  - b. Labrie Site Plan will increase daily traffic count (also not disclosed) on & off SR9 at 1420 West intersection.
  - c. Possible traffic stacking issues at 1420 West northbound are likely to be common occurrences and frustrations to both Labrie Site Plan customers and DGE residents.
  - d. Increased traffic frustrations at the SR9 & 1420 West intersection increase traffic risks on SR9 due to impatient drivers pulling onto SR9 either WB or EB.

ALTERNATIVES/IMPROVEMENTS for this situation, if the business development continues:

1. Under UDOT regulations, Developer to build (and pay all costs) for a proper left turn lane on WB SR9 for SBR access!
  - a. Left turn lane could begin approximately 280 to 400 feet before SBR intersection.
  - b. On SR9, east of SBR, a steel and concrete guard rail exists over a drainage approximately 410 feet east of SBR intersection, of which -
    - i. The eastern 130 feet of SR9 is approximately 20 feet wide (from white line marking to white line marking), and
    - ii. The western 280 feet of SR9 is approximately 30 feet wide (from white line marking to white line marking).
  - c. Developer would likely need to expand SR9 to 40 feet wide for the complete proper left turn lane on WB SR9 for SBR access ( to match the comparable left turn lane existing at 1420 West intersection – see following ‘FOR COMPARISON’ information).

FOR COMPARISON – at the 1420 West intersection on WB SR9, the developer of DGE had to build and pay for a proper left turn lane, on SR9 by UDOT regulations, for a safe turn-lane access into the residential area.

- a. Left turn lane begins approximately 310 feet before 1420 West intersection.
  - b. Left turn lane is ‘fully marked’ approximately 210 feet before 1420 West intersection.
  - c. SR9 is approximately 40 feet wide (from white line marking to white line marking) for the entire 1420 West left turn lane.
2. Town and UDOT to change the 55 MPH speed zone in this area to 45 MPH or lower, as deemed ‘proper and safe’ by UDOT!
- a. Virgin Town SR9 maintains a 45 MPH speed zone through the center of town.
  - b. WB SR9 increases to 55 MPH speed zone approximately 1,200 feet east of SBR intersection.
  - c. WB SR9 increases to 65 MPH speed zone approximately 700 feet west of 1420 West intersection.
  - d. Virgin town sign, on west end of DGE, is approximately 3,900 feet beyond (west) of the current 55 MPH speed zone increase on WB SR9.

ACTIONS based on above alternatives:

Town and UDOT could change/ extend the 45 MPH zone to the west end of Virgin; an increase of approximately 3,900 feet; then up to 55 MPH and 65 MPH as appropriate by UDOT west of the Town’s present commercial zones and rural residential zones.

With a new 45 MPH zone on SR9 across the entire Labrie Site Plan area and DGE residences, UDOT and Town would require Labrie Site Plan to have their own entrances on/off SR9, with their own safe, access turn lanes into their site; without causing risk and congestion to SR9 traffic and DGE residents at 1420 West intersection.

IMPROVED OUTCOMES:

Expanding the 45 MPH speed zone by UDOT and Town to the west end of DGE, would make both WB and EB SR9 traffic safer for the Labrie Site Plan’s future customers, for current DGE residents, and for the other yet undeveloped Commercial Zone properties on this west end of Virgin adjacent to SR9.

The 45 MPH zone could also allow each development to have their own SR9 access points, as is done currently within Virgin’s central town 45 MPH zones – without causing extra traffic congestion and traffic stacking issues by adjacent properties.

Thank you! We appreciate being able to state our concerns; we are sorry we could not attend this meeting in person

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127 S 1420 W Virgin, UT 84779

FOLLOW-UP NOTE: These traffic safety issues were such a concern to us, in April/May/June of 2021, we took these same concerns to Utah Lt. Governor's Office, Utah Attorney General's Office, UDOT, and Washington County Road Department. It has been a long time since – but we recall that most answered that they couldn't provide assistance, they provided referrals, or they needed more time to look into the concerns – but then dropped the ball without follow-up or answers/actions for us. (We can, if requested by P&Z, search back on email contacts from spring 2021, and provide more specific details – just ask us). Thus, we are glad a UDOT Representative is participating with this upcoming P&Z meeting!