

Exploring Asylum Hill - The Trident



The intersection of Asylum, Farmington and Broad has been a problem for decades. It has been the focus of attention off and on for all that time. Most recently it received “block-the-box” status with painted markings, and in 2018 it was an important part of the I-84 Hartford Project, a planning effort to replace the I-84 Viaduct with a ground level highway. Before that, in 2008 it was a subject of the Hartford 2010 Trident Committee for Asylum Hill, part of a City wide effort to improve all of the Tridents in Hartford.

This year the trident was affected like all of Connecticut by the pandemic and the resulting regulations that dramatically reduced traffic in that area. But somehow, in the last few months, it seems that the timing of the lights there were changed and things got much worse.

This week, I met with Hartford’s newest Traffic Engineers, Sebastian Tata and Bahman Moghimi, to try to understand what happened, and what can be done. Sebastian comes to Hartford after retiring from a long career with CT DOT, and Bahman is a young engineer from New York.

They both just started with the City in the last three months, so as far as what happened they weren’t able to offer much, but in terms of what can and is being done, they were very helpful.

Suffice it to say that the equipment that controls the timing of these lights is very old, it can only be adjusted on location at the control box on the northeast corner of Cogswell and Asylum. The City is in the process of replacing all of the traffic signals with newer ones that can be centrally controlled. They have begun downtown, and you may have noticed newer ones painted black. Clearly, this is a work in progress, and up until now this intersection wasn’t even on the list to be replaced next. Thanks to Jennifer Cassidy’s efforts, they are well aware of the issue and it seems that there has been an incremental improvement. AHNA will continue to monitor this problem, but technology is on our side. It is possible now to connect cameras and computers to intersections like this to adjust the timing of the lights in real time for optimal performance. We just need to get there.

For more photos of the intersection go to; <http://bit.ly/tridentraffic>