

Councillor Monette on the roundabout

Orléans Star - May 7th 2010

This past February, the city approved a plan to implement a roundabout at the Jeanne d'Arc and St. Joseph intersection. I did not support this plan. I approached the community directly and visited over 70 businesses on St. Joseph Boulevard that are in my ward and all commented unanimously that the money could be better spent improving St. Joseph. As many residents know, St. Joseph Boulevard is an important hub for commercial activity in Orléans and it carries a few traffic related challenges. None of these challenges will be solved with the implementation of a roundabout.

I have also had concerns raised over safety. Residents who have experience with roundabouts have expressed driving concerns. Contrary to staff's expectations, residents who have spoken with me indicate that round-

abouts are stressful for drivers, hazardous and are vulnerable to pile-ups. Once an accident does occur in a roundabout, all traffic flow can be interrupted regardless of the travel direction of drivers.

Other residents further raised issues surrounding pedestrian movement. My understanding is that research on pedestrian safety at roundabouts is not well known. It seems to make sense to me that if a roundabout's goal is to enhance traffic flow, then it will be done at the expense of pedestrian accessibility.

Currently, the intersection has an audible system to allow those who have eyesight challenges to be able to cross safely at red lights. I understand that this system will be removed once the roundabout is completed. If this true, I question the wisdom of removing the system.

I respect the democratic process, the Heart of Orléans BIA and my colleagues who supported this roundabout. With their support, this project will go forward. I sincerely hope that in the future I can be proven wrong on this issue, however I must admit that I remain pessimistic on this happening.

Bob Monette, Orléans Ward Coun.