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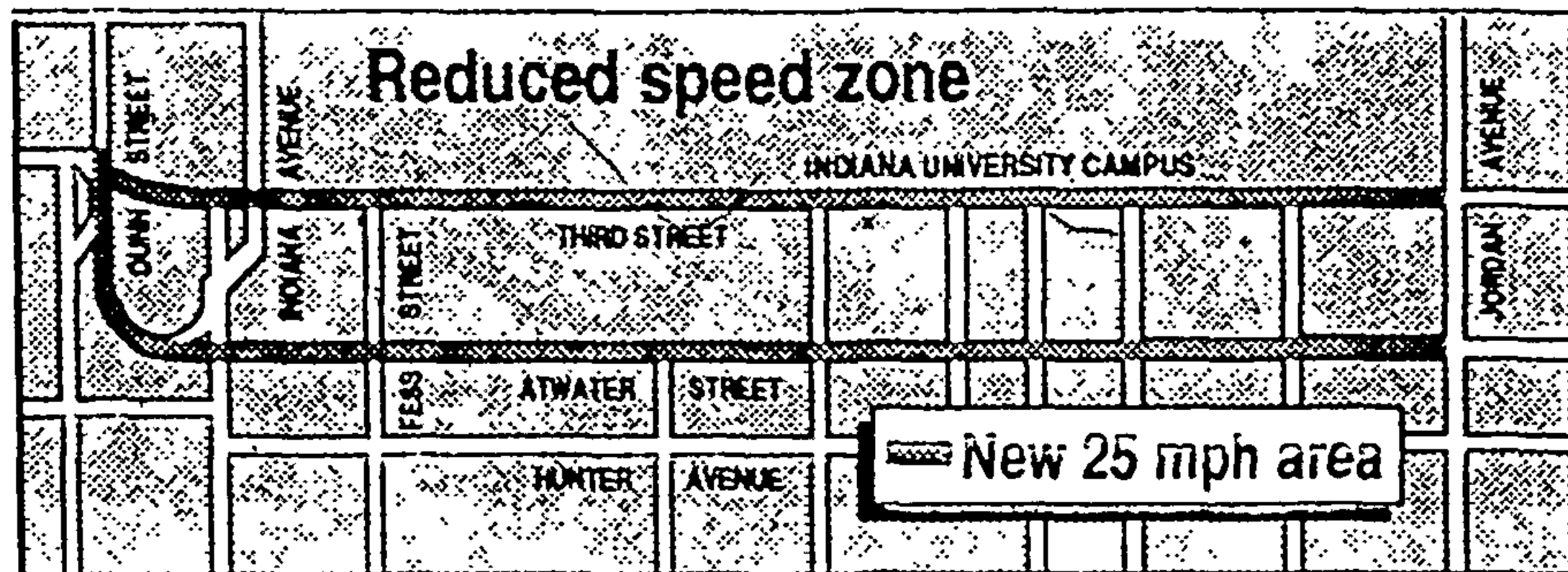
# Pedestrian safety at campus border a concern

By Richard Gilbert  
H T Staff Writer

Students, faculty, staff and visitors to Indiana University who must dash across Third Street and Atwater Avenue to enter and leave the southern border of campus will be counted this fall in an attempt to justify state funding for up to five new traffic lights.

Already the speed limit has been lowered from 30 to 25 mph. The Bloomington city council voted in July to lower the speed limit between Jordan Avenue and Dunn Street, based on a recommendation from the Bloomington Traffic Commission.

The commission heard pedestrian safety concerns at its June 1 meeting and agreed that measures have to be taken to make the area safer. Commissioners also urged the public works department to trim or remove trees that block visibility on city rights-of-way.



Commissioners denied a request for multi-way stops on the streets because they would impede traffic flow. They are delaying making a recommendation on lights until after fall semester begins so that an accurate count of pedestrians can be made.

Many students, faculty and staff must cross Third and Atwater, which delineate the southern border of IU. There were several severe accidents last school year.

In December, at the intersection

of Atwater and Woodlawn Avenue, an 8-year-old boy ran into the path of a car and was injured critically. His father, John Little, a post-doctoral researcher in the IU chemistry department, pleaded with the commission at its June meeting to recommend traffic lights for the area and to have trees trimmed to "give people a chance."

His son's momentary lapse and lack of clear lines of sight for drivers were a tragic combination, he said. The boy is undergoing rehabilitation in a Delaware hospi-

tal, where he is struggling to walk and to read again.

"You can talk all day about students dodging cars on those streets, but when you see somebody that's injured, somebody that's dear to you, and you see a bright kid mowed down, you know something has to be done," Little said.

In March, 81-year-old Distinguished professor emeritus of history Ssu-yu Teng was struck as he tried to cross Atwater at Hawthorne Drive. He died April 5 of complications from his injuries. Members of the IU history department led a petition drive for safety measures.

Historian Lana Ruegamer, who lives on Hawthorne and who crosses the street daily where Teng was hit, presented petitions with 2,501 signatures to the traffic commission.

"When he was struck and when he died, it hit me that I had been

crossing those streets for years and had thought, 'This is dangerous. Someone ought to do something about it,'" Ruegamer told commissioners during their meeting in the city council chambers.

"There is a strong sense in the university community that this is an obvious need, that people shouldn't have to take their lives in their hands to cross streets," she said.

In all, eight people spoke before the commission in favor of installing traffic lights and taking other measures, such as flashing lights and warning signs, to improve safety. Attorney Philip Hill spoke against lights or stop signs on behalf of a family that lives at Faculty Avenue and Atwater.

Stop signs have "some immediate appeal," Hill said, "but when you

look at our city, one of the problems is we've got too many stop signs."

He called for enforcement of speed limits, removal of trees and towing of illegally parked cars that obstruct views.

City engineer Dean Behnke, a member of the traffic commission, said the biggest problem on Third Street is illegal lane changes and rear-end accidents caused by IU buses stopping to pick up riders. On Atwater, the worst accident cause is failure of motorists entering from narrow side streets to yield to traffic.

Speeding problems are slightly worse on Atwater, Behnke said. A recent sample of 10,000 cars showed that 37 mph was the average speed last summer when the speed limit was 30 mph.

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