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Intersection gets new stop signs

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Stop signs have been placed at the intersection of Hyde Park Boulevard and Cornell Avenue after a group of Hyde Park parents and residents petitioned Ald. Will Burns' (4th) office.

"I used to avoid Cornell," said Dara Henning, who walks from her home in Regents Park to work as a teacher at Akiba-Schechter Jewish Day School, 5235 S. Cornell Ave., and also frequently

visits the Hyde Park Arts Center (HPAC), 5020 S. Cornell Ave. "I would cut through the school parking lot and go on Hyde Park Boulevard so I wouldn't have to go to Cornell."

Henning said whether she's walking or driving, it's not easy to cross that intersection. She said every time she mentions the intersection to a friend they express how much they hate it.

"In the spring I take middle schoolers across that intersection and my blood pressure rises all the

time, hoping that they all make it across safely," Henning said.

Tired of just exchanging stories with friends and neighbors, Henning decided to take action and advocate for stop signs at the intersection. She said she was surprised at how easy the process was.

Last summer, Henning, whose child also attends Akiba-Schechter; Kelli Harris, who is a parent and teacher at Akiba-Schechter; Yael Hoffman, Akiba-



The new stop signs at Cornell Avenue and Hyde Park Boulevard.

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Schechter parent and Greg Lane, Ancona Elementary School, 4770 S. Dorchester Ave., parent who takes his child to arts programs at HPAC everyday attended 4th Ward night and met with Will Burns personally to discuss the matter.

Burns said he has received several requests from parents at Akiba-Schechter, Ancona and Kenwood Academy, 5015 S. Blackstone Ave., for stop signs at the intersection. He sent a request for a traffic survey to the Chicago Department of Transportation

(CDOT). He said once he learned that CDOT had a long list of previous requests for traffic surveys he decided to skip that process and introduce an ordinance to the City Council.

"By the time the survey was completed a big part of the school year would have been gone," said Burns, who said he was almost sideswiped at that intersection on his way to a meeting at HPAC. "My No. 1 concern is for the safety of the kids."

So far, the Herald has witnessed a few cars slowing down to make rolling stops past the sign but most of them continue to speed through the intersection.

Hennings said that in the two weeks that the signs have been up she has seen progress and she has "been getting thank you calls and e-mails saying how grateful people are — people feel safer."

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