



State House Square Safety Concerns Raised At Alton Meeting

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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ALTON - Karen Wilson with Pride, Inc. made a public comment at last night's Alton City Council meeting raising concerns about the increasing traffic accidents and diminishing condition of the historic State House Square landmark in Alton, which is technically a circle currently functioning as a roundabout.

"It's a very historic place - and as you all know, it's a source of pride for the city," Wilson said. "It's a focal point. It's an entryway to our city for visitors to the hospital or those entering the city from Martin Luther King Boulevard. We give directions based on it ... most importantly, it's a very important historical location."

Wilson also expressed a need for enhanced traffic safety measures around the square, citing an "ever-increasing number" of accidents in the area.

"That circle has seen an ever-increasing number of traffic incidents that have caused damage to the circle," she said. "I get phone calls every time something like that happens, because Pride does take pride in that circle and we have concerns about it."

"Having an area that's constantly torn up and slow to be fixed ... it creates an eyesore instead of a gem. So our concern is twofold - obviously, the circle has become a safety hazard. For whatever reason, people are having difficulty navigating this roundabout and it needs some preventative measures ... our concern is that the aesthetics of the circle be maintained. As stated before, it is a focal point. We don't want unfriendly guard rails or stanchions that would detract and possibly create more of a hazard for the drivers."

Some solutions she suggested include:

- Brighter lighting at the square
- Improved pavement around the square
- Reflective paint on the curbing around the roundabout
- Solar-powered lighted roundabout warning signs on the four streets approaching the roundabout
- Solar-powered lighted yield signs at the four entries into the roundabout

Pride, Inc. is a local nonprofit beautification organization that has worked to maintain the square along with other organizations, which Wilson said have donated several dollars and volunteer hours to revitalize the circle. She said the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club also paid for a new fountain to replace the old one in the square, and Pride paid for a new landscaping design, but the square will need additional funding for future beautification efforts and enhanced safety features. She suggested using some of the city's ARPA funding to cover the expenses.

A full recording of the April 12 meeting, including Wilson's public comment, is available at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](https://riverbender.com/video).

