

ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting Minutes
Capitol Hill Towers (900 G Street NE)
January 25, 2010

I. Call meeting to order at 7:05 pm

II. Introductions

- A. Committee members present: Shane Artim, Lance Brown, DeLania Hardy, Diane Hoover, Marlon Smoker and Omar Mahmud (Chair)
- B. Committee members absent: Sean Lovitt
- C. Others in attendance: John Sullivan, Diyar Bozkurt and Margaret Gentry from MACTEC; ANC 6A Commissioners Gladys Mack and David Holmes; Marie Claire Brown; and Anwar Saleem, Director of H Street Main Street.

III. Community Comment.

- A. Commissioner Mack raised a concern about a proposal to convert 17th Street NE and 19th Street NE from one-way streets into two-way streets. She indicated residents have expressed concern to her about possibly losing parking on one side of each street in order to facilitate this change. Mr. Brown asked whether DDOT has announced parking would be lost. Commissioner Mack told the committee DDOT hasn't indicated whether parking would be removed yet. Commissioner Mack reiterated that residents in her SMD do not want two-way traffic on these streets and do not want to lose street parking spots.
- B. Mr. Saleem raised a concern about efforts to identify temporary parking for H Street merchants during streetscape construction. He indicated DDOT promised to identify temporary parking while street parking is unavailable. He is concerned about merchants losing business during the construction project. Mr. Saleem informed the committee the City needs to revisit underutilized parking lots around H Street to identify places where parking should be made available (e.g. the lot near Murray's grocery store, the church near 4th Street NE and I Street NE, the lot near RL Christian Library, Hechinger Mall, etc.). Mr. Mahmud recalled a conversation Mr. Saleem, he and others had with Karina Ricks at DDOT about identifying temporary parking before the construction project began. At that time, Ms. Ricks indicated DDOT would work on identifying temporary parking during the construction project. According to Mr. Saleem, this has not happened. Mr. Mahmud promised to follow up with Ms. Ricks on this matter if Mr. Saleem could provide a list of possible temporary parking locations he has been able to find. Mr. Saleem agreed to provide a list.

IV. New Business

A. H Street/Benning Road Streetscape Construction Update from MACTEC Engineering & Consulting

- i. Mr. Mahmud thanked the MACTEC team for agreeing to attend and present a construction update at the committee meeting. Ms. Gentry briefly explained the materials made available to attendees and introduced Mr. Bozkurt.
- ii. Mr. Bozkurt provided a brief explanation for why the H Street/Benning Road streetscape construction project is being undertaken by the City and reviewed the scope of the project. As a part of the Great Streets project, the corridor has been identified as a key corridor for renewal and economic development. He also explained that construction will include underground utility upgrades, new sidewalks and streetlights, streetcar rails, and composite materials. The total project will take a little more than three years, which would mean an early summer 2011 finish date. Originally, the project was broken up into three zones for major construction activity. However, in order to speed up the process, construction is now occurring in all three zones on one side of the street in parallel.
- iii. Pepco is currently performing underground utility work between 5th and 8th Streets. According to regulations, there can be no disruption of the streetscape for five years after construction is complete. Therefore, all H Street property owners need to ensure all utility work which may disrupt the newly constructed streetscape is performed now. Commissioner Holmes asked whether buildings which require utility upgrades post construction can still get the work done somehow. Ms. Gentry told him she is trying to get the word out to property owners now to ensure this doesn't become a problem, but that the DDOT Director can waive this requirement for "good cause," which isn't really defined. Not all buildings have this problem since some utilities enter the property from points other than from H Street.
- iv. Mr. Bozkurt next discussed construction progress to date and went over the status report dated January 25, 2010 (attached). The summary includes projected completion dates for each aspect of the project.
- v. Mr. Bozkurt then discussed parking issues related to the construction given parking is not available on the street where construction is taking place. He understands the need to identify places where parking can be temporarily located and hopes to work with DDOT on coming up with solutions.
- vi. Regarding the 5th Street intersection, Mr. Bozkurt confirmed that this intersection will have streetlights at the end of the project. Mr. Mahmud asked about DDOT's efforts to place a temporary signal light at this

intersection, as was indicated at pre-construction meetings with community members and merchants. Mr. Bozkurt informed the committee this option will be explored. Mr. Mahmud reminded Mr. Bozkurt that the community (including ANC 6C) has been told that in the past, but there has been no response regarding this request. Mr. Bozkurt promised to get back to Mr. Mahmud with a response after meeting with DDOT traffic engineers later this week. Mr. Mahmud agreed and indicated he would share this information with ANC 6C.

- vii. Mr. Bozkurt next explained the temporary intersection closings and bus rerouting necessary to due construction. The Jersey barrier at 5th street will be moved in March. 8th and 9th Streets have been closed to two-way traffic at H Street because of track construction until March 2010. This closure has caused a detour of the 90/92 bus to 10th Street NE, as has been noticed by many of those in attendance. A WMATA representative was considering rerouting the 90/92 bus line to 7th Street but changed his mind because he thought 10th Street was a better fit. Mr. Mahmud and others in attendance expressed several concerns with routing the bus down 10th Street including the narrow width of the street, several near and actual accidents involving buses and general safety concerns. Mr. Mahmud urged the construction team to propose alternatives to the current route, possibly to a wider street. In addition, he urged the construction team to probe creative solutions to completing the construction work at the 8th Street intersection faster, which would eliminate the need to continue rerouting the bus line. Mr. Bozkurt indicated he would discuss the matter with WMATA and DDOT then get back to Mr. Mahmud next week.
- viii. Mr. Bozkurt next went over the Streetcar rail construction. Ms. Gentry briefly explained the streetcar open houses held by DDOT. DDOT has said an ambitious, city-wide project is planned. Before moving forward, the following issues still need to be addressed: environmental assessment, funding, power source (overhead power lines are prohibited along H Street/Benning Road). Commissioner Holmes asked about power supplies along the corridor. Mr. Bozkurt informed him two locations have been selected thus far, near 13th Street NE and in front of the office building in the 600 block of H Street). A design firm is currently working on the housing for power supply sources.
- ix. The northbound B2 bus line has shifted over to F Street as a result of construction. Mr. Mahmud indicated he has received complaints about the rerouting from residents who have cited a disturbance of their neighborhood, car alarms going off, houses rattling, etc. Mr. Brown indicated no other routing would work based on his understanding of the area and that this street is wider than 10th Street, where the 90/92 bus has been rerouted. Mr. Mahmud indicated he has not had a chance to look at the street yet since he only received the complaints just before the meeting, but that he would do so soon and contact MACTEC/DDOT.

- x. Mr. Saleem proposed notifying bus drivers to be more careful when driving down residential streets during the rerouting.
- xi. Mr. Brown proposed MACTEC and DDOT look into leaving the intersection at 8th and H Street open to bus traffic only. MACTEC indicated this option was not pursued because it wouldn't be safe.
- xii. Mr. Brown also suggested more trash cans be installed at the temporary bus stop at 10th and H Street and that efforts to pick up trash on the street be increased. Mr. Saleem indicated H Street Main Street has hired someone to pick up trash now.

B. Rerouting of 90/92 Bus Along I Street, 10th Street and G Street

- i. This topic was largely covered in the prior MACTEC presentation. Mr. Mahmud proposed sending a letter from the ANC expressing concern about rerouting the bus down 10th Street and asking for the development of another solution.
- ii. Mr. Brown questioned the effectiveness of sending such a letter and indicated he would not be for it.
- iii. Mr. Artim recommended adding testimonials from residents to increase the effectiveness of the letter.

1. ***Mr. Mahmud made a motion that the committee recommend the ANC send a letter to MACTEC and DDOT expressing concern about the decision to reroute the 90/92 bus down 10th Street and that the parties instead develop an alternative solution. Ms. Hardy seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of four in favor and zero against with two abstentions. Mr. Mahmud agreed to draft the letter.***

C. Discussion of 2010 Committee Goals

- i. The committee reviewed the draft set of 2010 goals provided by Mr. Mahmud. The committee agreed to add reference to streetscape work on C Street NE in section 6.

1. ***Mr. Mahmud made a motion that the committee approve the proposed 2010 Goals (attached). Ms. Hoover seconded the motion, which passed without objection.***

V. Additional Community Comment

- A. Ms. Gentry mentioned that DDOT is considering extending circulator bus service to Benning Road and that it is seeking public input regarding the proposal. Mr. Mahmud indicated he would be very interested in reviewing the proposal and

possibly supporting it. Ms. Gentry promised to forward Mr. Mahmud additional information so the committee and ANC could consider whether to support the proposal.

VI. Adjourn meeting at 8:07 pm