

ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting Minutes
Capitol Hill Towers (900 G Street NE)
February 27, 2012

- I. Call meeting to order at 7:15 pm (delayed due to a last minute meeting room change)
- II. In attendance - George Branyan, DDOT Pedestrian Program Coordinator; ANC 6A Commission Chairman David Holmes, and Commissioners Andrew Hysell, Sharee Lawler and Drew Ronneberg; ANC 6C Commissioner Scott Price; Committee members Marlon Smoker and Omar Mahmud (Chair); Bill Schultheiss along with members of his team at Toole Design Group; and various community members.
- III. Community Comment
 - A. Chairman Holmes announced that ANC 6A voted to not implement the Committee's recommendation/motion to send a letter of support for the 2012 National Marathon. He along with Commissioner Nick Alberti spoke to Homeland Security about marathon planning and the route, and Homeland Security agreed that in future years, road races like this would not be allowed to encircle neighborhoods and tie up residential streets.
 - B. Commissioner Ronneberg announced that the no parking signs in front of the old police station on 9th Street NE and the old firehouse on Maryland Avenue NE have been removed by DDOT per the request of the ANC.
- IV. New Business - Mr. Mahmud made a motion that item IV.B on the agenda (and below) be discussed prior to item IV.A. The motion passed without objection.
 - A. Presentation and Q&A regarding Maryland Avenue redesign project - Mr. Mahmud introduced Messrs. Schultheiss and Branyan and thanked them for coming. Mr. Schultheiss provided the following information about the project and answered questions:
 1. The current effort is the result of more than ten years of work on improving safety along the Maryland Avenue NE corridor. This project came about due to a long history of complaints about safety from residents and Councilmember Wells, among others. In fact, Councilmember Wells has worked to ensure that DDOT funding is available for this project.
 2. Mr. Branyan pointed out that DDOT initially looked at addressing concerns at specific intersections along the corridor, but it soon became clear DDOT needed to look at improving conditions along the whole corridor from Stanton Park to the Starburst intersection in an effort to systematically slow down traffic and make the street easier to cross.
 3. DDOT and Toole Design are still taking comments from the community on this project while plans are developed. Nothing has been finalized yet.
 4. In doing the existing conditions study, the team found speeding at all times of the day along the corridor, especially during rush hour. There are also certain geometric safety problems based on how certain feeder streets are configured (e.g. rounded turns that do not make the driver slow down to make sharper turn). The team has tried to account for problems like this in the redesign effort.
 5. The current set of ideas to deal with speeding issues along the corridor:
 - i. Do nothing streetscape- or road diet-wise while seeking more police enforcement: Just shifts burden to MPD, not a viable long-term solution.
 - ii. Just fix the more troublesome intersections at 7th Street NE/D Street NE/Maryland, and 10th Street NE/Maryland: This provides an opportunity

to solve part of the problem by employing a minimalist approach, but as explained in IV.A.2 above, it was decided a comprehensive approach is more desirable.

- iii. Fix the whole corridor systematically: Provides a viable long-term solution, not simply an incomplete or “band-aid” fix.
6. DDOT has considered removing the traffic signal on E Street at 9th Street and Maryland Avenue to flow traffic more easily from the Starburst all the way to Stanton Park. After that, a lane of traffic can be replaced with left turn lanes and bicycle lanes with no significant impact on traffic flow. People in attendance also pointed out that this light is confusing, which causes many near accidents on a daily basis. Mr. Schultheiss acknowledged this is a safety problem.
 - i. Question: How would eliminating this traffic light do what DDOT believes it will do? Because of this extra light you need to split up the lights between three traffic groups instead of just two. DDOT can also time the traffic lights so that this change doesn’t cause traffic to speed up along the corridor.
 - ii. Question: Will people likely divert to other residential streets if a lane on Maryland is removed? Not significantly. This situation different than Constitution when a lane of traffic on that street was eliminated. That street had traffic coming from the freeway around RFK in an almost uncontrolled flow. The thing that’s unique about Maryland is that most of the traffic on this street comes from Bladensburg Road (traffic cannot turn off Benning Road onto Maryland at the Starburst). There is much less commuter traffic coming from Bladensburg. In addition, the throughput on Bladensburg road is already maxed out so all the cars that can come through are currently coming through now. This is an important point according to Mr. Schultheiss.
 7. DDOT plans to leave two lanes of traffic heading northeast going from Stanton Park to 7th Street to account for traffic cueing up into Stanton Park during evening rush hour. Similarly, two lanes would remain on the southwest direction side from 14th to 7th Street.
 8. First DDOT plans to test proposed solutions using temporary street markings and pylons in order to learn of unanticipated consequences prior to full build out. The testing phase should last anywhere from six months to one year.
 9. DDOT is looking for ways to improve the 7th Street and D Street intersection at Maryland in particular given this is a dangerous intersection for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. One idea is to reverse the direction of traffic along D Street to eliminate the problematic turn for motorists on to Maryland, but this solution may have other consequences DDOT needs to analyze. DDOT is also considering making 7th Street NE at this intersection one way. DDOT does not have a preference right now for any solution in particular and the community has a big opportunity to influence DDOT’s ultimate decision.
 - i. Question: Given the Medlink apartments will be coming soon, how is that additional traffic from the apartment building’s garage accounted for in current plans? If the garage spills out onto 7th, they will have trouble getting up to Bladensburg. ANC 6C Commissioner Price answered that the current plan is to have ingress/egress for the garage on C Street so this shouldn’t be a concern. However, there will be parking for

86 in the building so this fact should probably still be accounted for in the modeling.

10. DDOT is considering making some of the less costly physical changes to improve safety first (e.g. better pedestrian signage), then implement more costly solutions at a later time.
11. Chairman Holmes indicated he is generally happy with the proposed changes. He is particularly interested in improving safety at the intersection of 10th and Maryland Avenue NE. There is a park there and people with strollers have a problem crossing the street due to speeding traffic. He asked about getting raised sidewalks at this intersection similar to the ones around Lincoln Park, but Mr. Branyan indicated that isn't an option here given Maryland Avenue is a minor arterial.
 - i. Mr. Mahmud asked about employing other tools in the DDOT toolbox to deal with speeding traffic given raised sidewalks are not an option. Mr. Branyan indicated DDOT can look at other solutions like an active strobe light that can be activated by pedestrians. Mr. Schultheiss indicated these measures probably won't be necessary at 10th and Maryland given the road diet to be put in place should adequately address speeding concerns. DDOT would still watch to see how these solutions work before full implementation.
 - ii. Chairman Holmes also proposed closing off the small strip of E Street NE here between 10th and Maryland given no one stops at the stop sign (at 10th and E). The street area can be added to the public space triangle along Maryland Avenue and a fairly nice sized park addition to the playground area.
 - iii. DDOT also envisions there being a traffic signal at the intersection as well, which will greatly help with the pedestrian crossing safety issue.
12. Any changes the DDOT and Toole Design team wish to make will be hard to push through at DDOT given the DDOT traffic engineer side often has differing views on these matters. Mr. Branyan pointed out that he is on the planning side and therefore does dictate solution adoption by the traffic engineer team.
 - i. Chairman Holmes asked whether specific legislation calling for any recommended changes (which includes project funding for the DDOT budget) could have an impact on the engineer team's decision. According to Mr. Branyan, if there are local funds set aside for this project by the Council, then yes, that could be useful. But any project funding will likely be combined with federal funds.
 - ii. ANC 6C Commissioner Price asked for more information on the process for making this project happen. The idea is to nail down the big questions first and have them addressed in the 30% preliminary design, then fully vet the plan to ensure the community is on board. The DDOT engineers would then take this project to 100% design while maintaining the 30% plan solutions. They are looking at a 30% design by April/May. The community then gets to see the plans again once before DDOT moves toward completing the 100% design phase. DDOT plans to come back before the community in another nine months or so to get the design finalized.

- iii. Chairman Holmes asked whether DDOT can paint temporary lines now. Mr. Branyan indicated he is not sure. Mr. Schultheiss indicated he would need to put together a temporary marking and signage plan.
 - iv. Mr. Smoker asked whether bus stops would block traffic if placed in one lane sections of Maryland Avenue. According to Mr. Schultheiss, the plan is to move stops to positions after lights at intersections and outside of one lane areas so they won't block traffic.
13. Mr. Mahmud thanked DDOT and Toole Design for the presentation and again apologized to those in attendance for the delay in starting due to the last minute room change.
- B. Removal of old no parking sign at Lincoln Park Towers in the 400 block of 13th Street NE - Commissioner Lawler presented the following information in support of this request:
- 1. There is legacy no parking signage along the 400 block of 13th Street NE between D Street and E Street NE. The parking restriction is no longer needed along this block, especially considering it unnecessarily blocks much needed street parking space.
 - 2. Commissioner Lawler spoke to the owner of the adjacent Doggie Café at 413 13th Street NE about removing the signs and he in support. She also poled concerned residents, who were all in support.
 - 3. ***Committee Chair Mahmud made a motion that the ANC send a letter to DDOT seeking removal of the referenced no parking signs in the 400 block of 13th Street NE and that they be replaced with parking signage indicating the current parking restrictions on this block. Mr. Smoker seconded the motion, which passed without objection.***

V. Old Business

A. H Street Performance Parking Summary

- 1. Chairman Holmes, Commissioners Hysell and Ronneberg, and Mr. Mahmud discussed this matter briefly at the conclusion of the meeting. Mr. Mahmud provided a brief overview of the program.

VI. Additional Community Comment - None

VII. Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm