

Special Meeting of the ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee
Miner Elementary School (601 15th Street NE)
April 26, 2010

Committee Chair Omar Mahmud called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

The following individuals introduced themselves: Committee members Sean Lovitt, Omar Mahmud and Lance Brown; ANC 6A Commissioners Nick Alberti, David Holmes, Gladys Mack and Kelvin Robinson; Jamie Henson of DDOT; and Shaeda Ahmadi of the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Mahmud introduced meeting purpose-discuss Capitol Hill Transportation Study (CHTS) and the proposed conversions of 17th and 19th street to two-way traffic.

Mr. Mahmud reviewed the history of the CHTS and ANC consideration of the study along with the proposed two-way street conversions as follows:

March 2, 2006 committee minutes: In January 2006, DDOT held a community open house regarding the CHTS where over 70 people were in attendance. At the March 2, 2006 committee meeting, DDOT updated the committee on the CHTS and informed the committee that the existing conditions report is completed. The next public meeting regarding the CHTS was scheduled to be held in May and would present DDOT's initial recommendations.

May 22, 2006 committee minutes: Mr. Mahmud updated the committee on the CHTS. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Mahmud had been informed by DDOT that the next public meeting on the CHTS would be held on June 21, 2006 where DDOT would present the existing conditions report and preliminary feedback from consulting experts. The final study was to be due in September 2006.

July 5, 2006 committee minutes: Mr. Mahmud updated the committee on the June 21 public meeting held by DDOT regarding the CHTS, including the proposal to convert 17th Street NE and 19th Street NE in our ANC from one-way to two-way traffic. The committee then approved several recommendations from the study, including the two-way conversion proposal.

July 13, 2006 ANC 6A meeting minutes: At ANC 6A's monthly meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to send a letter of support for the CHTS recommendations.¹

July 16, 2006: The ANC follows up on recommendation from July 13 meeting with a formal letter of support to DDOT for the CHTS, specifically referencing support for the conversion of 17th Street NE and 19th Street NE to two-way traffic.

¹ Ms. Mack pointed out later in the meeting that she was not present at this Commissioners' meeting and was therefore not one of the unanimous votes in favor of this recommendation.

September 25, 2006 committee minutes: Mr. Mahmud announced the next CHTS open house to be held by DDOT on September 27, 2006. This open house would cover DDOT's final presentation of the CHTS.

Mr. Mahmud also pointed out several other instances in committee minutes where the CHTS and/or the conversion of 17th Street and 19th Street were discussed, including October 23, 2006; November 27, 2006; January 22, 2007; April 23, 2007; May 30, 2007 and June 25, 2007.

Resident asked who initiated change/study.

Mr. Brown: DDOT initiated study and committee asked for community response and ANC supported based on TPS Committee recommendation.

Mr. Lovitt: Other engineering aspects are also part of the recommendation.

Mr. Henson: Other engineering aspects include bulb-outs and other efforts to slow traffic and make community safer.

Resident: Who truly initiated changes? Did DDOT decide on own to convert 17th/19th?

Mr. Henson: DDOT initiated CHTS, which resulted in conversion recommendations. Study also resulted in changes to Constitution, Independence, etc.

Mr. Mahmud: Conversion was part of larger study/efforts to slow and reduce traffic.

Resident: What will happen to traffic coming south on 17th Street from the Benning Road intersection?

Mr. Henson: Traffic will divert to other areas such as Benning, Maryland, 14th, etc.

Resident: I don't believe the proposed change is due to speeding traffic concerns because there's not that much speed.

Mr. Mahmud: Mr. Henson, can you address how traffic volumes will change by conversion?

Mr. Henson: Conversions of 1-way to 2-way result in slower speeds. People will not want to take the 1-lane option because it is slower and more congestion.

Resident: I am concerned about emergency vehicles being able to move quickly if the conversion happens. Also, commuters will continue using the routes they know.

Resident: Some neighbors are concerned about conversion because it will push Capitol Hill traffic to their neighborhood. Also concerned that neighbors were not consulted. By

bringing new traffic in, you reduce livability. Resident requests new study and impact study.

Mr. Henson: Converting to 2-way will not bring additional traffic. Instead, more of the traffic will be forced west-bound. DDOT worked very closely with community and the three affected ANCs and did take into account what would happen as a result of conversion and additional development. DDOT has already conducted a thorough traffic study. An increase in amount of traffic will not occur due to the conversion.

Ms. Mack: I was not present for the unanimous vote. Did not vote for CHTS.

Resident: How will the conversion affect street parking?

Mr. Henson: Virtually no parking will be affected.

Resident: Was an onsite observation actually conducted on 17th and 19th?

Mr. Henson: Extensive on-site observations were done for these streets.

Ms. Mack: DDOT only had one meeting. How did you advertise meeting?

Mr. Mahmud: We rely on established procedures for notification including local media and listservs. We also rely on commissioners to advertise meetings to their constituents.

Resident: It is not Ms. Mack's duty to notify residents that community will be affected. Will there be additional studies to address CHTS? You are trying to push the traffic on us.

Mr. Henson: The study was done in 2006. 17th/19th are the streets I hear most about. Design process will invite community back out. 17th/19th do not need the same amount of planning as C St because it is a much smaller, more confined street. The reason we are doing conversion is to make community safer. We know that conversion will divert traffic.

Mr. Mahmud: The idea that DDOT is trying to push traffic through Rosedale is not supported by the facts. I believe DDOT is trying to make Rosedale/Kingman safer and more livable with the proposed changes.

Mr. Henson: We want to make your community safer. We want traffic to go slower.

Resident: Why were streets converted to 1-way in the first place?

Mr. Henson: Were converted to move more commuter traffic through DC.

Resident: No, it was done to make community safer.

Resident: 17th/19th have been one-way for years and don't understand why it won't be safe.

Ms. Ahmadi (Mayor's office): Normally review process involves going back to the community to ask for input. Can you describe that process? (to DDOT)

Mr. Henson: Next we will go out for 3 community meetings. 1st to reintroduce plan to community. 2nd meeting will be to address community concerns. 3rd come back to community with results.

Resident: Only on 17th for 4 years. People near me don't see how conversion will create more cars. It is quieter further west on the hill and there's less traffic where you have two-way streets.

Resident: Lived in neighborhood for 60 yrs. 17th/19th changed to 1-way because of number of accidents. Study focused on Cap Hill, not NE/SE/Rosedale/Kingman Park. Conversion must stop or politicians will be held accountable.

Resident: Are results of study available? What about speed bumps on 17th to slow traffic?

Mr. Alberti: Will make link on ANC website.

Resident: Agree that 17th was made 2-way to make it safer.

Resident: Lived on 19th and C for 15 years. Given that 17th is curvy, conversion might make it less safe.

Mr. Henson: 19th north of C will not be converted.

Resident: H St project not taken into account in study. The committee is not listening—residents do not want the change.

Mr. Mahmud: 2 separate processes-DDOT and ANC.

Resident: When is the next visual study? Is the new Rosedale Recreation Center included in the study?

Mr. Henson: All proposed development is included in CHTS. Research says that a 2-way conversion along these streets will result in slow traffic and increased safety.

Resident: Why doesn't DDOT do a census of opinions on conversion?

Resident: Only Ward 6 is being represented, why is 7 not represented? How will buses turn south on 17th from D Street?

Mr. Henson: 17th would need to be designed so D6 can make the turn, but it would be tricky.

Resident: Emergency vehicles will cause problems on 17th if the street is converted.

Resident: Are we wasting our time here?

Resident: Community meeting this Thursday at Pilgrim AME Church at 6:30.

Ms. Ahmadi: I will be at all community meetings. Nothing is set in stone. Please attend DDOT meetings. I will be at the meeting this Thursday.

Mr. Henson: I want to echo sentiment asking people to come to all DDOT meetings.

Mr. Mahmud: Being no further comments or questions, opened the floor to committee/ANC commissioners for any motions. None were offered.

Mr. Mahmud adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.