

ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting Minutes  
Capitol Hill Towers (900 G Street NE)  
October 18, 2010

- I. Call meeting to order at 7pm
- II. Introductions: ANC Commissioners David Holmes and Nick Alberti introduced themselves along with committee members and the committee Chair, Omar Mahmud.
- III. Community Comment - None
- IV. New Business
  - A. Status of Bikeshare Locations in ANC 6A
    - i. Mr. Mahmud introduced Chris Holben from the District Department of Transportation's Capital Bikeshare Program and thanked him for attending.
    - ii. Mr. Mahmud asked Mr. Holben to provide an overview of the program and a summary regarding plans to install bikeshare stations in ANC 6A, including at Lincoln Park.
    - iii. Mr. Holben provided the following information and answered the following questions:
      1. Contract executed in May of this year to install 100 bikeshare racks citywide. DDOT launched the service in September with 35 racks. Three or four racks are being installed per day. There are about 3000 members so far.
      2. Bike sharing is a self serve bike rental system, like car sharing.
      3. Tomorrow DDOT expects to announce a grant which will extend bikeshare racks to another 100 locations.
      4. Question from a resident: How much did this program cost? Mr. Holben responded that it is being paid for by DDOT with federal highway funds. \$5M was used to purchase 1000 bikes and 100 stations. It costs \$1.4M per year to run the program, but DDOT estimates about 75% of these operating costs will be recouped in fees, sponsorships, etc. Mr. Mahmud asked how this compares to other government subsidized public transit programs. Mr. Holben responded that buses recoup approximately 20-30% of operating costs and that metro trains recoup approximately 50%.
      5. Question from a resident: Are the bikes secure? Mr. Holben responded that the bikes are theft-proof when in the rack, but that users are responsible for keeping the bikes secure when not in the rack. If a bike is stolen when in use and the user does not obtain a police report, the user will be charged \$1,000 to replace the bike. The replacement cost is this high because the bike has a unique design and is made with heavy-duty parts to withstand the elements.
      6. Commissioner Drew Ronneberg asked whether the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and H is still scheduled to get a bikeshare station. Mr. Holben indicated a station would be installed once streetscape construction is complete at that location.
      7. A resident indicated she and her husband are interested in having a station near their house in the Lincoln Park area.
      8. The goal is to have a station every four blocks or so to account for full racks at stations, lack of bikes, etc.
      9. DDOT thought Lincoln Park would be an ideal location for a station in the initial planning phase of the project. There are plenty of bike lanes and safe routes for biking in the area. DDOT initially looked at installing a station along the west side of the park by the florist, but there was not enough space there. Each station spans from 30 feet to 90 feet long. A 30 foot station can hold 11 bikes and a 90 foot station can hold 35 bikes. 40 feet is ideal for most locations. No

excavation is necessary to install a station and they can be moved easily or expanded. Cell phone connectivity is used so there is no need to install wiring either. DDOT also looked at other locations near and around the park including the traffic island at the southeast corner of the park.

10. DDOT evaluates the following criteria for station location sites: housing density, work place locations, attractions, proximity to bike infrastructure like bike lanes and trails. DDOT is really interested in having a station at the park and not blocks away. One option DDOT considered for a location at the park is in the street on 13<sup>th</sup> Street, but this will take away a lane of traffic and users will have to back a bike into traffic to remove it from the station. DDOT focuses on wider sidewalks and traffic islands for station locations as opposed to placement in streets because of safety concerns.
11. DDOT is now interested in installing the station at the traffic island near the northeast corner of the park. This traffic island is larger than the one near the southeast corner of the park so DDOT feels it's a better fit for a station.
12. Commissioner Alberti indicated that DDOT initially proposed the southeast corner triangle locations before neighbors raised concerns about the proposal, which caused DDOT to back down. DDOT is now proposing the northeast side instead because of pressure from neighbors near the southeast corner location. Mr. Holben indicated DDOT considered concerns raised by neighbors about the southeast corner location, including potential vandalism, noise, safety, site lines of cars, the station being an attractive nuisance to children, station's location in front of a residential row of houses as opposed to a commercial location. Mr. Alberti responded that each concern raised applies equally to the proposed northeast traffic island location. Mr. Holben indicated that DDOT did not find a majority of these concerns persuasive. Mr. Alberti then questioned how a decision was made if the concerns raised and cited were not persuasive. Mr. Mahmud asked Mr. Holben to clarify which concerns about the original southeast traffic island location DDOT found persuasive. According to Mr. Holben, DDOT thought the alignment of the station would be better on the northeast traffic island than on the southeast traffic island. Mr. Alberti then questioned why it would be valid to impose on the residents near the northeast side of the park what the residents near the southeast side found objectionable.
13. Question from a resident: Is DDOT still moving forward with the process of installing a station in the park, as opposed to just outside of it as has been discussed here? Mr. Holben responded that DDOT is still interested in locating the station in the park, but that it will likely take about a year to get that done given that a concessionaire with a contract to provide bike services in federal parks has a right of first refusal regarding bike services in park locations. Mr. Mahmud asked whether the concessionaire has been approached about whether it would exercise its right of first refusal. Mr. Holben indicated the concessionaire has said it would exercise the right of first refusal. Mr. Holben also indicated DDOT is looking into whether it is possible to change the definition of what is being offered. In other words, characterize bikeshare as a bicycle transit system as opposed to a bike rental system. That way this service would not fit the definition of the concessionaire's right. DDOT's legal team is currently researching this issue and DDOT is exploring this option.
14. Another resident raised a concern about safety issues associated with installing a station at the northeast corner traffic island, especially for children. This

location will also block the view of traffic like parking once did near this location before parking was prohibited at the location.

15. Another resident raised a similar concern about safety and proposed moving the station to 13<sup>th</sup> street instead of the traffic island location. The resident stressed that he's not against the bikes, but is concerned about the proposed location on a traffic island because of safety concerns. Mr. Holben indicated the street location presents safety issues given users will have to back bikes out of the station by entering traffic. Turning the rack around also does not solve the problem because there isn't enough space between the station and the curb. Mr. Mahmud asked about installing a concrete ramp at the curb or raising the station to curb level, which would allow users to back bikes out of the station and onto the sidewalk. Mr. Holben indicated planning that sort of work and identifying funding would take at least a year.
  16. Cody Rice indicated he is not persuaded by the safety argument raised by some residents. The northeast corner location works best from his perspective and no traffic lines will be blocked by the station.
  17. Ryan Velasco with the "Cabi Forward" group indicated about 18 people are involved in the group's effort to advocate for the system and collaborate to identify other areas for station locations. Speaking for himself, Mr. Velasco indicated a desire to have a station location in the vicinity of the park.
  18. A resident questioned whether people are analyzing the safety aspect correctly. Based on how traffic calming works, having a station on the traffic island will get motorists to slow down as they approach the island.
  19. A resident asked why the city would allow a bikeshare station on the island when it wouldn't allow construction equipment to be stored on the island during sidewalk construction. According to the resident, the city cited safety concerns for this decision, which would seem to apply to placing a bikeshare station on the island as well. Mr. Holben indicated he was unaware of this issue.
  20. A resident raised a concern about an infill plan to serve large gaps in station locations in the Capitol Hill area. Mr. Holben indicated DDOT is looking at locations around Stanton Park. One site that looks promising is the southeast corner in front of the drycleaner. There is also a small grass lot that DDOT owns at 4<sup>th</sup> Street and E. Capitol which could be used for a station site.
  21. A resident voiced concern that the station could be an attractive nuisance for children. DDOT should consider making the station smaller so it will be safer. The resident indicated her bikes have been hit at the northeast corner location by commuters.
  22. Another Lincoln Park resident indicated he wants the station somewhere near Lincoln Park and that DDOT should not decide on a location based on consensus.
- iv. Mr. Mahmud thanked Mr. Holben and all in attendance for participating and summed up the three options being explored by DDOT for placement of a location at Lincoln Park based on what was discussed at the meeting:
1. In the street along 13<sup>th</sup> Street - Safety concerns prevent this option from going forward unless DDOT can turn the station around and raise the station so users can back bikes onto the sidewalk. Mr. Holben believes it would be at least a year until this option could be implemented, if at all.
  2. Somewhere inside the park - The concessionaire's right prevents DDOT from moving forward at this time. There is no timetable for how long it will take to work out the right of first refusal issue.

3. Northeast corner traffic island - Only fully vetted option that DDOT is comfortable moving forward with at this time. DDOT could install the station at this location as soon as tomorrow.

B. 2011 National Marathon Presentation by Organizers

- i. Mr. Mahmud introduced Diane Thomas of the Sports Alliance, organizers of the race, thanked her for coming and asked her to provide an overview of community engagement efforts for this year's race.
- ii. Ms. Thomas provided the following information:
  1. This is the sixth year of the marathon. The race starts and ends at RFK Stadium. There are half, full and relay team marathon events.
  2. Organizers can guarantee when streets are opened back up because of deadlines imposed on runners at milestones. Traffic plans are worked out with MPD and residents are notified about the race and street closures by volunteers knocking on doors and distributing door hangers. Organizers also advertise information about the race in local publications such as the Hill Rag.
  3. This year there is a slight change to the route. The race will now head all the way down C Street NE instead of E. Capitol along Lincoln Park. This will cause about a 30 minute street closure on C Street at miles 1 and 2. The change is necessary because US Capitol Police indicated events can only go through the Capitol grounds one time. In past years, the race entered the Capitol grounds twice, but the restriction was never enforced.
  4. Organizers will distribute door to door hangers the week before the event for houses on the course and along the feeder streets in our ANC. Race information is also posted on street lamps the Wednesday before the race.
  5. A small working group of ANC Commissioners sat down with MPD to go over the race route last year. The group identified intersections that were more heavily traveled, "bunk cross" routes. This information was included in the Hill Rag advertisement. Organizers plan to do the same this year.
  6. WMATA is also at the table every year to discuss notification of bus route disruptions to residents. Organizers are interested in placing notifications on bus signs but they need WMATA's approval. The effort to get notifications placed in buses was not successful since buses change routes regularly. Organizers are still working on the notification issue with WMATA. Mr. Mahmud asked Ms. Thomas to provide the committee with an update, as this is a major concern for the race every year.
  7. Ms. Thomas indicated organizers would like a letter of support from the ANC.
  8. Commissioner Holmes expressed concern that a nearby dialysis center and hospital and the Seventh Day Adventist Church are all disrupted by this event every year. Ms. Thomas expressed a willingness to work out issues with these groups ahead of time this year.
  9. Mr. Mahmud identified a few key issues for organizers to work out prior to returning to the ANC for a letter of support:
    - a. Plan to collaborate with WMATA to more effectively notify residents of race day service interruption and route changes.
    - b. Plan to address patient treatment issues at the dialysis center and hospital, including letters from each indicating a plan had been worked out with race organizers.

- c. A plan to ensure the race does not interfere with worship services at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, including a letter indicating a plan had been worked out with race organizers.
  - 10. Mr. Mahmud asked that organizers follow up on these key items before returning to the committee for consideration of the letter of support.
  - 11. Commissioner Gladys Mack expressed a concern that the whole city should share the burden of the marathon, not just ANC 6A. Ms. Mack asked why organizers have not thought about moving the marathon so it does not impact ANC 6A as much. Ms. Thomas responded that the race is a loop course and that RFK stadium is a logical choice for starting/ending the race given its location and proximity to Metro, adequate parking, etc. Ms. Mack responded that she is not going to support the race if it causes disruption to the hospital.
- C. Mr. Mahmud made a motion to add consideration of support for Argonaut's use of public space application. The motion passed without objection. Mr. Mahmud introduced Argonaut owner, Scott Magnuson, and asked him to provide an overview of the restaurant's proposed public space use.
  - i. Mr. Magnuson presented a large drawing of the plans to improve the restaurant's patio area and provided the committee with the following information:
    - 1. Add additional chairs to the existing patio space.
    - 2. Place a cover on the patio.
    - 3. Add to public space use for service counter and bar stools in order to create "open air experience" for customers which will showcase H Street (six barstools and 4 seats).
    - 4. Add public space on the other side of patio for a garden type seating space. There will be no food allowed in this area.
    - 5. The building is also being repainted a "sea haze" grey color and the restaurant is currently undergoing a full renovation inside as well.
  - ii. Commissioner Mack asked that the restaurant also include the enclosed trash dumpsters stored on public space in its public space application. Mr. Magnuson agreed to do so.
  - iii. Commissioner Ronneberg made a motion that the committee recommend the ANC send a letter of support to the DDOT Public Space Committee regarding the Argonaut's installation of a patio cover, additional seating, and additional public space for a service counter, garden area and trash dumpsters. The motion passed without objection.
- D. Consideration of Proposed Parking Regulations for November 15 Hearing
  - i. Commissioner Ronneberg explained that new parking regulations will be considered at a November 15 hearing. The new regulations focus on implementing parking minimums and parking maximums for various uses. There are also other restrictions on lot sizes, uses, etc.
  - ii. Mr. Ronneberg asked that committee members and residents get him any feedback they would like considered at the hearing.

V. Additional Community Comment - None.

VI. Adjourn meeting at 9:10 pm.