

AGENDA
ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
August 15, 2022 at 7:00 pm

Community comment welcome; may be limited to 2 minutes to provide a chance for everyone to speak. Community comment time will be opened after each Old and New Business item.

- I. Call meeting to order.
- II. Introductions & Announcements
TPS Committee member present: Andrew Barnett, Hasssan Christian, Maura Dundon (Chair), Jeff Fletcher, Shaun Lynch
ANC Commissioners present: Keya Chatterjee, Laura Gentile, Amber Gove, Sondra Phillips-Gilbert
- III. New Business (15 mins)
 - A. Public Space Permit Application #395836. Proposed security fence at Brown Memorial African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church (130 14th Street at North Carolina Avenue NE) - Mr. Elliott Herald, Board of Trustees, Brown Memorial AME Church

Representatives of the Brown Memorial AME Church presented on their pending DDOT public space permit (#395836) for a six-foot tall decorative fence on public space at 14th Street and North Carolina Avenue NE. Pastor Marlene Mitchell explained that the fence is needed for security due to incidents (egging, graffiti) at the church and the increased security risk to African American churches. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing a grant for the security fence. The fence will replace an existing old 4-foot chain-link fence and will have the same footprint as the existing fence. Because the new fence will be taller than 42 inches, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) will need to grant a permit.

Commissioner Amber Gove stated her support for the security fence, referencing the church's security needs and the white supremacist attack at Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina and the continued threats to African American churches and institutions. She noted that Brown AME received a security grant from FEMA to add additional physical security measures to their facility, which was the subject of a Homeland Security Hearing in March 2022. Congress created the program to help African American institutions protect themselves.

Commissioner Gove noted that the security grant includes reinforced doors and windows, security cameras and lighting, and the 6-foot tall fence. Commissioner Gove noted that other public buildings in the neighborhood already have fences on public space that exceed the 42-inch height limit, including the Hill Center, Brent Elementary School, Sherwood Recreation Center and Christ Church Episcopal.

Commissioner Sondra Phillips-Gilbert expressed her support for the fence in light of the dangers to African American churches.

A community member stated that the fence would be “ugly” and constitute “prisonification” of the area. Charles Swinton of Brown AME replied that the fence would be 75% open and complies with the FEMA requirements for safety, and is necessary for protection of the congregation.

Two community members spoke against the fence and concerns for creating a precedent of taller fences in the neighborhood.

Chair Maura Dundon suggested that those concerned about the appearance of the fence and the detracting from neighborhood aesthetics could volunteer to plant and maintain flower beds along the fence.

Commissioner Gove made the motion *that the TPS Committee recommend that ANC 6A send a letter to the DDOT Public Space Commission in support of Brown AME's application to replace their existing chain link fence with a decorative black metal fence no taller than 72 inches and in accordance with the documentation submitted in their application.* Commissioner Phillips-Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Old Business

- A. DDOT Notice of Intent (NOI) #22-221-TESD to install multimodal safety enhancements along C Street from 11th to 15th Streets. The safety enhancements are proposed following a review of field conditions and previous traffic studies and data collection conducted by the DDOT Traffic Engineering. The primary safety concerns include traffic speed, red-light and stop sign compliance, aggressive and reckless driving behavior, crash history, and pedestrian crossing. In addition to the specific measures noted within the NOI, enhanced signing, pavement marking, and traffic signal equipment will be installed. DDOT has also recently adjusted the signal timings in this corridor to improve multimodal mobility and reduce pedestrian wait times. The NOI can be found appended to this agenda. Comments may be submitted by September 16, 2022 directly to: sahar.nabae@dc.gov

Will Handsfield from DDOT summarized the NOI. Chair Gove noted the long history of work to get traffic safety improvements to the corridor, including DDOT walk-throughs, complaints, and TSIs. Commissioner Gove discussed preserving street parking by minimizing setbacks to the least length necessary for traffic safety.

Commissioner Gentile made the motion *that the TPS Committee recommend that ANC 6A send a letter to DDOT in support of NOI #22-221-TESD to install multimodal safety improvements on C Street NE between 11th and 15th Streets and request that loss of linear feet of parking for setbacks be minimized to the extent possible while ensuring safety.* Commissioner Chatterjee seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. DDOT plans for Low Impact Development (LID) to improve pedestrian safety and incorporate Green Infrastructure Retrofits at several intersections in ANC 6A. Proposed concepts include closing off West Virginia Avenue NE between 8th Street NE and K Street NE and installing a bike share station that incorporates community art and green space. Additionally, DDOT proposes to close off the northwest side of West Virginia Avenue NE to prevent southbound traffic on 9th Street NE and

eastbound traffic on L Street NE from entering the intersection and to reserve unused impervious areas for green space.

DDOT's representatives Mr. Patel and Mr. Bell presented on plans to turn the triangles at 8th Street and West Virginia Avenue and L and 9th Streets into green spaces as part of DDOT's Low Impact Development plans. These triangles were created by changes DDOT made to traffic patterns to increase safety by closing "slipstream" blocks that exacerbate speeding. DDOT will now turn the triangles into green space with trees and bioretention areas. This will provide new greenspace for the neighborhood and reduce runoff.

Commissioner Chatterjee requested that DDOT reconsider removing the crosswalk on the south side of West Virginia Avenue and 8th Street NE because pedestrians use that crosswalk.

Chair Dundon, Committee Member Shaun Lynch, Commissioner Gentile, and Commissioner Chatterjee discussed the need for maintenance of the bioretention areas since they can attract trash and weeds, and can also be very steep. Mr. Bell stated that the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) is in charge of maintenance of the bioretention areas.

Commissioner Chatterjee moved *that the TPS Committee recommend that ANC 6A write a letter to DDOT in support of the Low Impact Development proposals for the intersections of on West Virginia Avenue/8th Street/K Street and West Virginia Avenue/L St./9th Street NE, with the provisions that DDOT retain the south crosswalk on West Virginia Avenue and 8th Street NE, or make the crosswalk at 8th and K Streets NE a raised crosswalk to slow traffic coming around the pocket park and onto West Virginia Avenue NE, and add trees to both new green spaces; and a letter to DOEE requesting that the bioretention areas be regularly maintained and cleaned.* Commissioner Phillips Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Update on Florida Avenue NE traffic calming and protected bike lanes.
Commissioner Chatterjee and Committee Member Lynch discussed issues with contractor vehicles for the Florida Avenue project and the need to improve communication with the community about the construction impacts. Will Handsfield from DDOT said they should call 311. Mr. Handsfield also stated that the Florida Avenue project plans are completed so it is not possible to make changes to connect it to the bus priority project.

IV. Additional Community Comment.

A community member discussed continuing need to change the signs to 20mph on East Capitol Street.

V. Adjourn meeting