

Minutes
ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Monday, September 20, 2021 at 7:00 pm

- I. Call meeting to order at 7:02pm
- II. Introductions & Announcements
ANC Commissioners present: Chair Amber Gove, Brian Alcorn, Keya Chatterjee, Sondra Phillips-Gilbert, Mike Soderman, Robb Dooling, Laura Gentile.
TPS Committee members present: Maura Dundon (Chair), Caitlin Rogger, Hassan Christian, Jeff Fletcher, Shaun Lynch.
- III. Community Comment: Held for old business.
- IV. Old Business:
 - A. Discussion of 1300 block of North Carolina Avenue NE bike lane installation options.
The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is currently considering what type of bicycle facility to add to the 1300 block of North Carolina Avenue as part of its high priority bicycle network, and to ensure continuity between the C Street project (under construction) and the rest of the city's bicycle network. This includes consideration of different options for directions of placement of car traffic and bicycle traffic lanes, including conversion to one-way vehicle traffic, as well as consideration of car parking and traffic calming measures. Will Handsfield, DDOT Bicycle Program Specialist, will follow up on questions raised at the July 2021 TPS meeting. DDOT is seeking the recommendation of the ANC as to which of the proposed designs (A through E) the Commission would prefer. In addition, DDOT is seeking input on proposed design adjustments to the intersection at 14th Street and North Carolina Avenue NE. See presentation for details.

TPS Interim Chair Dundon began the discussion by noting the nature of TPS Committee Members' roles as volunteers not elected by the public who make recommendations to Commissioners, and Commissioners' roles as elected leaders. It was explained that no recommendations made at the meeting would be binding but would inform the ANC's decision-making. Chair Dundon proceeded to review the history of the public discussion opportunities for the bike lanes on the 1300 block of North Carolina Ave, which had come up during four previous monthly meetings of the TPS Committee to date starting January 2021. It was highlighted that the DDOT Notice of Intent stage, which would open up thirty (30) days for further public comments, had not yet begun.

Interim Chair Dundon explained the procedures for the TPS meeting, given the high level of community interest. Community comment would be limited to 2 minutes per person. Community members were also advised they could submit questions and comments online during the meeting, and via email after the meeting, with noting that many members of the public had submitted comments prior to the meeting via email. Chair Dundon appealed to participants for civility, noting the importance of preserving the capacity to engage constructively as a community.

Will Handsfield of DDOT presented the current options under consideration for facilities to slow down vehicular traffic and facilitate safe bicycle transport on the 1300 block of North Carolina Ave, which will connect to the wider C Street NE improvement project and Lincoln Park.

Mr. Handsfield explained that the background of the project included that the C Street NE project will include lanes with a high level of protection, but will stop at the 1400 block of North Carolina, creating a connectivity gap. The measures are under consideration to connect the bike network, increase pedestrian safety, and reduce vehicular speeds. Doing so would support DC's achievement of several named and long-term policy priorities, including shifting travel modes from car to 75% active and transit modes, such as cycling under MoveDC (the District's long range transportation plan); reducing carbon emissions from transportation under Sustainable DC (the District's sustainability plan); and Vision Zero (the District's commitment to eliminating fatalities and injuries due to vehicular crashes).

In addition to the need for a connected bike network, DDOT noted community concerns about speeding on the block, including a pending Traffic Safety Assessment request to DDOT from a resident, partly the result of the block's wide lanes. Part of the benefit of bike lanes is to reduce vehicular travel speeds.

The DDOT presentation highlighted responses to several concerns raised by residents prior to the meeting, including that timing of the project related to the progress of the C Street NE project as well as higher numbers of cyclists, scooters, and roller bladers who would use the facilities. Mr. Handsfield elaborated on why various alternatives presented by community members would not be feasible or suitable, stating that NACTO and FHWA guidance (used by DDOT) does not allow for sharrows on roads with the volume of traffic on the 1300 block of North Carolina Ave, and that the advisory bike lane scheme was a pilot only approved for use in five segments throughout DC (not including the 1300 block of North Carolina Avenue). Mr. Handsfield proceeded to explain the connections between bike lanes and various citywide goals.

Each alternative was explained in detail using PowerPoint slides and graphics.

- A1: Two-way traffic lanes, plus protected bike lane on the north (higher volume) side and regular bike lane on the south (lower-volume side), which removes parking.
- A2: Two-way traffic lanes, plus protected bike lane on the south (lower volume) side and regular bike lane on the north (higher-volume side), which removes parking.
- B: One-way traffic going west, plus protected bike lanes on both sides, plus parking preserved but between bike lanes and curb.
- C: One-way traffic going west, plus protected bike lanes on both sides, plus curbside parking preserved.
- D: One-way traffic going west, plus protected bike lane going eastbound and regular bike lane going westbound, plus parking preserved (curbside on one side).
- E: One-way traffic going west, plus protected bike lane going westbound and regular bike lane going eastbound, plus parking preserved (curbside on one side).

Mr. Handsfield asked the ANC to recommend which option was preferred by the ANC.

Members of the community were given the opportunity to comment:

- Keith M expressed support for protected bike lanes and shifting traffic to a one-way pattern without losing parking, with a preference for option E.
- “Stop DDOT Overreach” (“Mark”) questioned whether DDOT guidelines would allow a sharrow instead of protected bike lanes to be applied, based on data on traffic volumes. Mr. Handsfield responded that they would not, under official guidelines.
- Billy expressed support for making North Carolina Avenue one way with dedicated bike facilities in each direction without removing a parking lane, in service of safety and facilitating travel outside of cars.
- Robert Dodge spoke in support of protected two-way bike lanes, changing the block to a one-way vehicular traffic pattern while maintaining parking, noting thanks to ANC volunteers and DDOT and citing the need for safety and facilitating travel outside of cars
- Joshua Peacock expressed support for protected bike lanes on the block, particularly alternative B, citing safety and supporting people traveling outside of cars.
- Delancey Gustin stated general dissatisfaction with each of the seven proposals from DDOT, but if a choice had to be made among them, expressed preference for Option C. She asked for DDOT’s response with respect to clearing of snow and highlighted concerns about deliveries trucks.
- Andrew Turner spoke in support of option B, noting a lack of issues in his experience with using a car and living on a one-way street, and highlighting the opportunity to make it easier for children in particular to bike and walk safely.
- Michael Cushman expressed interest in sharrows as an alternative to each of DDOT’s seven proposals, citing concerns about data quality and accuracy pertaining to the current speed limit on the block as well as traffic volumes. Mr. Handsfield responded that the vehicle volumes and speeds would not present would not allow for sharrows to be installed.
- Colleen Moss highlighted concerns about both potential loss of parking and the impact of a one-way system on quality of life for drivers, stating that A1 and A2 would be the least problematic of the DDOT proposals.
- Eric Gillam, speaking for Lincoln Park United Methodist Church, expressed a preference for preserving parking and stated he would email further comments.
- Roberta expressed dissatisfaction that none of the alternative community proposals were considered safe or feasible by DDOT, and in particular did not find any loss of parking acceptable.
- Elizabeth Nelson expressed disagreement with the project going ahead before the large C Street NE redevelopment project has been completed and the effects on traffic clear.
- Mr. Handsfield noted a seeming general preference for options that preserve parking among community commenters.
- Christine Mullins suggested that the needs of cyclists seemed to be priorities in each of the seven DDOT proposals, and that community support for various suggestions had been rejected by DDOT as unsafe or infeasible, further noting concerns around local crime and disabled residents necessitating close access to personal vehicles. Mr. Handsfield noted that ADA parking could be facilitated next to bike lanes.
- Stefan Hankin observed that the community seemed to have a preference for the one-way proposals among those presented, and expressed concerns about their

effect of diverted traffic on safety including for Maury Elementary School students nearby traveling to and from school, and made suggestions for how to mitigate safety impacts, such as a stop sign at 14th and A Streets NE.

- Anders Pedersen spoke in support of option B.
- Domanique James requested that DDOT present a comprehensive construction plan, expressed dissatisfaction with the clarity of drawings presented, and raised concerns about the impacts of freight delivery diversions on residents living nearby. Mr. Handsfield responded that it was not efficient to expend extensive city resources on several detailed option drawings when only one would be chosen.
- Dina Smith objected to the one-way proposals, citing anticipated impacts on safety from traffic diversion, on drivers' access, and on property values. Mr. Handsfield noted that students' safety was a high priority and the anticipated increase on Maury-adjacent lanes was around 300 more cars per day.
- Arabella Kohlmeyer spoke in opposition to all of DDOT's seven proposals, asking for raised crosswalks and speed bumps instead and asking DDOT what would be done if project decreased safety. Mr. Handsfield expressed confidence that projects would work out as planned, citing a positive recent track record.
- John Hirshman expressed opposition to any removal of parking.
- Mr. Handsfield responded to several of the concerns raised, underscoring the expected positive effects on safety for the neighborhood and citing the experience of nearby Tennessee Avenue where similar concerns had been flagged. He also stated that the traffic models being used were more sophisticated than some of the representations raised by community members would suggest. Participants were assured that DDOT would continue considering and refining its approach until an adequate level of safety had been established.

The comment section shifted to Commissioners and TPS committee members.

- Commissioner Gove commented that, in consideration of both comments received and the need to promote safety, she would recommend options B, E, and C in that order, with Concept 1 for 14th St NE as the preferred design. Commissioner Gove observed that designs A1 and A2's removal of parking spaces would be too disruptive to the community and the absence of buffers would leave cyclists vulnerable, rejecting option D as well with a view that the protected option was not on the more important side. It was noted that the one-way proposals were only anticipated to divert 5% of traffic to alternative roads with relatively minimal inconvenience to drivers, and that slower speeds have been a long-term priority for the community. Commissioner Gove suggested that planters and space for delivery vehicles should be part of the ongoing conversation.
- Commissioner Gove stated that option B would result in the strongest safety improvements. She commented that if option B was not possible due to the need to maintain a wider pavement width, then option E would be preferred to reduce dooring risks, with option C a third choice.
- Commissioner Gove noted that failure to engage with the process and recommend an option might result in losing the opportunity to influence the process. Examples were provided to demonstrate that both the ANC and DDOT had exceeded typical standards of transparency and community engagement for this project, and that process concerns might simply represent resistance to the tradeoffs needed to ensure safety. She requested ongoing engagement from the community and DDOT as the project progressed, including to consider

augmentation with additional safety measures such as curb extensions and bulb-outs.

- Commissioner Soderman revisited the issue of parking for local churches, with Mr. Handsfield and Mr. Gillam agreeing to meet separately to continue the conversation.
- TPS committee member Rogger asked members, commissioners and community members to put safety at the very center of their considerations and discussions, noting the context of increasing traffic fatalities and injuries in DC in the last year. She highlighted option B as offering the most safety benefits with E and C as next preferred options.
- Commissioner Chatterjee highlighted the equity benefits of creating greater bike connectivity between communities East of the Anacostia and in Capitol Hill, and expressed support for DDOT's efforts to protect cyclists who would use these routes and reduce dependence on motor vehicles, particularly in neighborhoods with lower car ownership patterns.
- Commissioner Dooling expressed support for Commissioner Gove's proposal to recommend options B, E or C, noting they would make it easier for people to choose modes other than driving, and highlighting the importance of making streets safe for older and younger residents.
- TPS Chair Dundon expressed support for Commissioner Gove's recommendation, noting that a protected, continuous bike lane network from C St NE to Lincoln Park would create further safe connectivity to RFK fields with minimal disruption to the community. It was noted that a slight increase in traffic around Maury would be unlikely to significantly affect safety there.

Commissioner Gove and Commissioner Chatterjee seconded a motion that the TPS Committee recommend that ANC6a send a letter to DDOT stating that the ANC preferred rank ordered options of the DDOT bike lane designs for the 1300 block of North Carolina Avenue NE are Alternatives B, E and then C. Concept 1 for the intersection at 14th Street NE is the preferred initial design option.

The TPS Committee voted as follows:

Yes: Commissioners Gove, Dooling, Phillips-Gilbert, Chatterjee, Alcorn, and Gentile;
TPS members Dundon, Lynch, Rogger, Christian, and Barnet.

No: TPS member Fletcher

Abstain: Commissioner Soderman

- B. Discussion about the ANC 6C letter to DDOT requesting permanent bike lanes around the Capitol Building on Independence and East Capitol Avenues; discussion of temporary fencing.

Chair Dundon remarked that she had been unable to obtain a copy of the ANC 6C letter, but that she would try to do so again and add to the October 2021 agenda. Commissioner Soderman commented that he had not seen the bike lanes blocked over the previous weekend.

V. New Business

- A. Update on DDOT walkthrough of 17th Street and 19th Street from C Street NE to Potomac Avenue SE.

Commissioner Gove reported that a preliminary discussion between 6A, 6B and DDOT had revisited designs for both 17th Street and 19th Street NE, from the corner by the cemetery up to C Street NE, and 17th Street from Bladensburg Road/Mount Olivet

Avenue and down to Barney Circle. At this point in the early discussion, DDOT would want a joint special meeting with ANC 6B following an initial information-gathering walk, which Commissioner Gove welcomed given the number of crashes on the 17th Street corridor and proximity to various schools and Rosedale Recreation Center. DDOT will follow up.

Commissioner Phillips-Gilbert requested that DDOT revisit the design of the “halfabout” at 17th and E Streets, where many crashes and difficulties for emergency vehicles had been observed. Commissioner Gove noted that a special meeting for the Benning Road to C Street NE area had been promised by DDOT and would be scheduled.

- B. Traffic Safety Assessment (TSA) request for all-way stop at local-local intersection of 16th Street and Constitution Avenue NE. Requesting raised crosswalks if DDOT does not grant request for all-way stop control. Commissioner Alcorn noted that 16th Street and Constitution Avenue lacked a stop sign east to west, allowing speeding to occur, and explained that the TSA to be filed intended to rectify this.

Commissioner Alcorn made and Commissioner Gove seconded a motion that the TPS Committee support a future TSA to be filed requesting all-way stop signs at 16th Street and Constitution Avenue NE, including the consideration of raised crosswalks if the all-way stop request is denied. motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Rock ‘n Roll Marathon Route. Diane Romo Thomas will discuss planned street closures along H Street NE eastbound from 4th to 13th Street to Constitution Avenue to North Carolina Avenue to C Street to the finish line at RFK for the race taking place on November 13, 2021. Diane Romo Thomas stated that only the half marathon would be held this year in November instead of March, described the route and timing from 8:00 am to around 1:30 pm, and asked for the TPS Committee’s support to hold it. Commissioner Gove asked if the “clear streets” policy would apply, and Ms. Romo Thomas responded that it would.

Ms. Romo Thomas discussed the location of the “pass through” areas and also noted that cyclists and wheelchair users could travel the route ahead of the half marathon. Commissioner Soderman queried the benefit to the community. Ms. Romo Thomas touted the event’s history of being put on to benefit economic development and the opportunity to raise money for charities, and informed the committee of the location of the music and plans for monitoring volume.

Commissioner Gove made and Chair Dundon seconded a motion that TPS recommend that ANC 6A send a letter to DDOT supporting the 2021 Rock ‘n Roll Marathon street closures for the race taking place on November 13, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Community Comment: Covered under old business.

VII. Adjourn meeting