

MINUTES
ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting
Via Webex Video Conference
Monday, December 28, 2020

TPS Committee Members present: Marc Brumer, Andrew Burnett, Maura Dundon, Jeff Fletcher.

ANC 6A Commissioners present: Amber Gove, Mike Soderman, Phil Toomajian.

- I. Call meeting to order and nomination of temporary chair.
Meeting called to order at 7:00pm.

Committee Member Dundon made the motion: *That TPS Committee member Marc Brumer be the temporary TPS Chair in light of Chair Elizabeth Nelson's resignation, until the ANC6A meets to name a permanent TPS chair.* Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0, with all Commissioners present (Gove, Soderman, and Toomajian) voting in favor.

Committee member Dundon recognized the resignation of Chair Nelson and thanked her for her years of service to the TPS Committee and her efforts to ensure a smooth transition after her resignation.

- II. Introductions.

Chair Brumer recognized the presence of three ANC 6A Commissioners-elect: Robb Dooling, Keya Chatterjee, and Laura Gentile.

- II. Community Comment: None.

- III. Old Business: None.

- IV. New Business:

- A. Public Space Permit Application #363655 - Modernization of Goding Elementary School (920 F Street NE) including paving, landscaping, fixtures, projections.
Representatives from the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and its contractors presented details of the project and discussion.

Diana Halbstein, the DCPS Project Manager, and architects Maria Gorodetskaya and Aaron Armstrong were present to discuss the renovation of the school as it related to public space.

Ms. Gorodetskaya explained the public space plans maintain the current entrance on F street but make the southeast corner into a paved community gathering area. This area would include benches, a "traffic garden" for children to practice tricycle and bike riding, and would also provide a path for entry from a 10th Street NE gate to cross over to the F Street entrance. The current Foodprints garden would be moved, but maintained in size or slightly enlarged. An ADA compliant ramp would be added to the 9th Street NE entrance (as requested by the school to facilitate easier egress for students with disabilities in the Medical and Education Support classrooms). Ms. Gorodetskaya explained that the intent of the public space design is to create more usable outdoor space in light of the small available area, making it more useful but

maintaining its current uses. Some of the redesign of the public space is intended to give additional outdoor opportunities to the mobility impaired students. Ms. Gorodetskaya stated that the public space application did not involve any change to the footprint of the front of the school.

Ms. Halbstein explained that the existing planters are included in the plan, but enlarged in response to community comments. She explained that the “traffic garden”/tricycle path in the southeast corner is under consideration and would require moving some of the outdoor furniture in the plan presented at the TPS meeting.

Commissioners Soderman and Gove asked whether other areas could be used for biking, including the parking lot and the Sherwood Park track. Ms. Halbstein stated that they were not ideal solutions because the parking lot is small with limited access for bicycles and Sherwood is shared space with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and community members. Ms. Halbstein also clarified in response to a question by Committee Member Maura Dundon that the tricycle path in the southeast corner would be a painted path, and not involve any actual infrastructure or hardscaping.

Ms. Gorodetskaya stated that the proposed garden area is equivalent to the current garden area and that they are working to enlarge it even more.

Commissioner Amber Gove requested clarification on the timeline of the public space application. Ms. Gorodetskaya stated that the plan is to be on the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) consent agenda for the end of January 2021. Commissioner Gove asked whether they could go back to the SWS and School Improvement Team (SIT)¹ so that the school community could see and weigh in on the drawings that would be presented to DDOT. Ms. Gorodetskaya said that the SIT had seen similar drawings already.

Commissioner Phil Toomajian (also a parent at SWS and member of the SWS SIT) stated that there are community concerns about the design of the Foodprint garden and other significant matters. He questioned whether the gardens in the plan were actually the same size and benefit as the current design and whether moving the Foodprint garden would place it at risk of damage due to increased foot traffic past them. He said the tricycle path/”traffic garden” idea came from DCPS, and not from the school community.

Commissioner Mike Soderman spoke in favor of the importance of the Foodprints program.

Committee member Dundon requested clarification of the purpose of the southeast corner redesign: whether the redesign was primarily intended to create the tricycle path/”traffic garden.” Ms. Gorodetskaya explained that a purpose of the southeast corner was to have a better spot for pick up/drop off and circulation from the 10th

¹ Secretary’s Note: The School Improvement Team (SIT) is a team appointed by DCPS to provide feedback from the school and local community during a school modernization process. SIT meetings are open to the public. <https://sites.google.com/a/dc.gov/dcps-school-modernizations/about-our-organization>.

Street NE fence opening, which could be walked over to reach the F Street NE school entrance. It would also provide more usable area for outdoor use during the school day, such as the traffic garden/tricycle path. She reconfirmed that the Foodprints garden size would not change and that the design would make the Foodprints area fully accessible

Ms. Halbstein state that they had been working with the SWS Foodprints director, but had not discussed the design since the new proposal for the southeast corner traffic garden. She said she would also meet with the DCPS PE/Bike program staff to discuss whether the southeast corner was actually a feasible location for bike practice. Ms. Halbstein stated that an area to practice bike riding is very important, but she also realizes that the possible expansion of the Foodprints garden should not be sacrificed for a traffic garden that does not meet the purpose of bike practice.

Commissioner Gove asked whether there is time to return to the SIT prior to the DDOT Public Space hearing, and whether a delay in the DDOT hearing would delay construction. Ms. Halbstein replied that she was not sure and that the next SIT meeting had not been scheduled. Commissioner Soderman stated that construction should not be held up because of a delay in the public space permit, given that other work can be performed.

Commissioner Toomajian stated that the next ANC6A meeting is January 14, 2021 and asked whether the DDOT hearing can be pushed to February 2021 after the SIT meeting and other feedback allowed a chance for community consensus on the design. Ms. Halbstein stated that it is important to receive all the feedback discussed and that if it was not possible in time, the DDOT hearing for the public space permit could be pushed back.

Commissioner Toomajian made the motion: TPS recommends that ANC 6A send a letter of support for Public Space Permit Application #363655 - Modernization of Goding Elementary School - subject to the following conditions prior to its meeting on January 14, 2021:

- 1 The design team meet with the FoodPrints lead at SWS and the SWS SIT to discuss the public space plans in detail; and*
- 2. The design team strongly consider eliminating the proposed traffic circle in favor of expanding the FoodPrints garden space and/or the natural space available on the site.*

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Soderman and passed passed 7-0, with Commissioners Gove and Committee Members Brumer, Dundon, Fletcher and Burnett in favor.

- B. Traffic Safety Assessment (TSA) Request for 1300 North Carolina Avenue NE and 1300 A Street NE, including consideration of request for raised crosswalks and/or speed humps.

Community members Kenyon Weaver and Arabella Kohlmeyer were present to discuss their request to DDOT for a Traffic Safety Assessment (TSA) for their block, the 1300 block of North Carolina Avenue NE. Ms. Kohlmeyer stated that her parked car was hit badly on this block by a speeding car, and this has happened several times over their 30 years here. She has noticed that speed has increased over time. She has already

submitted the TSA request to DDOT. Mr. Weaver also stated that his car was hit by a speeding vehicle on this block, which almost caused a more serious traffic accident. Chair Brumer noted that he has also seen an increase in motor coach/bus traffic on this block.

Commissioner Gove clarified that the TSA has been placed on the TPS agenda because DDOT has informed her that the full ANC should send a letter to DDOT if there is a TSA request with a possible speed hump. Chair Brumer clarified that the letter from the ANC would endorse the TSA with a scope including consideration of speed humps, not an endorsement of the speed hump itself.

Community member Delancey Gustin stated that she lives on this block and has not experienced any of the same speeding or safety issues. She thinks there is no need for a speed hump or other traffic calming, and that a midblock crosswalk without any stop signals could be dangerous.

In response to a question from the community, Commissioner Gove stated that a speed hump would not impact parking.

Commissioner Gove made the motion: *TPS recommends ANC6A send a letter of support to DDOT to accompany the Traffic Safety Assessment Request for the 1300 block of North Carolina NE and 1300 block of A Street NE, including the possible consideration of speed humps as a traffic calming option.*

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Soderman and passed 6-0, with Commissioners Gove and Committee Members Brumer, Dundon, Fletcher and Burnett in favor. (Commissioner Toomajian was no longer present at this time)

C. Additional public space applications if received prior to the meeting: None.

VI. Community Comment:

Community member Jeffrey Zubricki (Linden Place) stated he has seen an increase in reckless driving on H Street NE. He no longer feels safe walking there. Businesses are also concerned. There have been 3 crashes into buildings on H Street NE in the past few months.

Commissioner Soderman stated that there has been an increase in speeding during COVID. MPD traffic enforcement needs to be involved in addition to traffic calming measures.

Commissioner-elect Robb Dooling stated that It is frustrating that a driver has crashed into a building on H St NE for the third month in a row. The previous crashes were on 6th & H Streets in October 2020 and on 7th & H Streets NE in November 2020. He appreciates the community's willingness to help push DDOT and they can volunteer by asking H Street businesses to sign the attached letter.

Commissioner Gove explained that ANC6A has a list of issues about H Street NE pending with DDOT. DDOT is planning to take some discrete actions soon, including leading pedestrian intervals which will give pedestrians more time to cross prior to the green light for cars. However, a full solution would require dramatic engineering changes to narrow the street, and she is not sure the city will do this. A group of H Street NE businesses are

going to sign on to a letter, which will be key to getting the city to take action. Some of the changes could include a dedicated streetcar/bus lane. This would also speed transit and possibly reduce the car traffic. Pick up/drop off zones which have been requested by H Street NE businesses may also help calm traffic. Businesses should also be encouraged to learn how their customers are arriving - they may be surprised that people are walking and may advocate for safety measures for those modes. Community members can encourage H Street NE businesses to contact the ANC 6A with concerns. Commissioner Gove suggested a joint ANC 6A and 6C meeting to discuss the entire corridor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.