ANC 6C Transportation and Public Space Committee
Kaiser Permanente Capitol Hill Medical Center
700 2nd St. NE, Room G3-G4
Wednesday, July 3, 2019
7:00 pm

REPORT

Members in Attendance:
Mark Kazmierczak, chair
Elissa McDade
Christy Kwan
Comm. Mark Eckenwiler
Kay Elsasser

1. West Virginia Ave. NE

DDOT is looking to make improvements to the space created by closing West Virginia Ave. NE between K and 8th Streets to traffic. They will present a concept that includes a surface mural and solicit feedback.

Representative: Emily Dalphy, DDOT [6C06]

Ms. Dalphy described DDOT’s recent efforts to plan improvements for the space in question. In the long term it will be turned into green space. In the short term DDOT wants to activate the space to make it more suitable for kids to play in. The objective is to make the space friendlier through interactive surface murals (i.e., painting on the ground with play elements like hopscotch). Street furniture will also be included and they are working with Urban Forestry to potentially repurpose fallen/dead street trees into benches. DDOT is still intending to include a Capital Bikeshare station whether it is temporary or permanent.

Project timeline: DDOT is working with local artists for potential renderings, to be presented to the community sometime in August. DDOT hopes to give the community some opportunity for input while still allowing the artist flexibility to be creative. The goal is to install in September before the end of the fiscal year.

Commissioner Eckenwiler stated the idea was nice but expressed concern that DDOT is not focusing on the many safety-related issues given their limited bandwidth and asked why this is a priority over other things. Ms. Dalphy responded that they are doing this as a test installation using specific funding for this type of project, therefore it is not taking away resources from other work. For safety, she said the Vision Zero action plan includes promoting safety through public space placemaking.

The committee also emphasized the importance of seating and more permanent bollards/barriers than the fle-posts that are currently present. The committee also asked about the mechanism for incorporating lessons learned and the lifespan of the project.

Evaluation: similar to what the Office of Planning does, DDOT has an intern developing a qualitative survey at this site. Data collection will occur before and after installation and will include watching how people interact with the space and intercept surveys to stop people and ask questions.

Meetings are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend.

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Life span: in NYC, the life span for this type of installation has typically been around 2 years before the designs start to get very faded. DDOt would like to do a green infrastructure project in 2 years, but otherwise would either refresh or replace the mural.

DDOT will reach out to the ANC for potential dates for a public discussion of design renderings.

No motion.

2. Junction Bistro, Bar & Bakery – 238 Massachusetts Ave. NE | Application #10736534

Application for an unenclosed sidewalk café. The restaurant, with a bar and coffee counter, will be located on the first floor along the side of the building facing 3rd Street NE. The public space permit application submitted is for 12 tables, 24 seats, umbrellas and string lights to be added to the existing raised, brick patio.

Representative: Liz Kovacevic, 3877 Design; Noe Landini, owner [6C02]

Ms. Kovacevic stated the patio hours will be 10am to 10pm, 7 days a week. The patio was created during renovation of the building which created the outdoor space about 3’-4’ above sidewalk level. The café will have 12 tables with 24 chairs, and all tables will be wheelchair accessible. They are proposing to add umbrellas, string lights, and supports for lights. The patio is accessible from the restaurant via stairs by the entrance and via a wheelchair lift within the restaurant. Alcohol will be served (the application for a liquor license has not yet been submitted). The patio is not full-service, it will be counter service inside the restaurant (i.e., customers pick up and pay for food inside and bring it out).

The committee asked the applicant to clarify that they will not have speakers outside, which the applicant agreed to. The committee also asked about storage of furniture during off hours and deliveries. The applicant stated that they haven’t selected the furniture yet, but chairs will likely be stacked and locked on the patio during off hours. Deliveries will utilize the loading dock at the building (entrance on 3rd St.), and will be later than 6am everyday.

Motion: Recommend ANC support the application (Kazmierczak, McDade).
Vote: Passed, 5 – 0.
• **Florida Ave. NE Interim Safety Improvements**

On June 20, DDOT held a public meeting to discuss interim safety improvements to the Florida Ave. NE corridor while design of the final plan continues. The committee will review the materials presented. Materials can be found at [https://ddot.dc.gov/page/florida-avenue-ne-multimodal-transportation-project](https://ddot.dc.gov/page/florida-avenue-ne-multimodal-transportation-project).

Representatives: Emily Dalphy, DDOT [6C06]

Ms. Dalphy described three Notices of Intent released July 3, 2019:

- **NOI #19-166-VZD:** Interim improvements to Florida Ave. NE from 2nd St. to 14th/H St. The design includes a two-way bike facility on the south side of Florida Ave. from 2nd St. to West Virginia Ave. From West Virginia Ave. to 14th/H St., the roadway will become 3 travel lanes with one-way bike lanes on each side of the street, protected by a 2’ buffer and alternating parking stops and K-71 flex-posts (more substantial than typical flex-posts).
- **NOI #19-167-VZD:** Conversion of 6th St. NE from K St. to Florida Ave. into one-way northbound. One-way bike lanes will be added in each direction between K St. and M St. Bike lanes will be protected by flex-posts and parking.
- **NOI #19-168-VZD:** At the intersection of West Virginia Ave., 9th St., and L St., L St. and 9th St. will be closed to through traffic. (This is in ANC 6A.)

Discussion of the Florida Ave. improvements provided the following additional details:

- Bike lane transitions: at WV Ave, cyclists going westbound will have a bike box and a transition to go across Florida behind the crosswalk then cross at the southside. In the long-term a bike signal will be included. DDOT is still evaluating the long-term bike facilities.
- Bus stops: West of WV Ave., DDOT will build temporary bus islands in the two-way cycle track. These are elevated from all sides so that bus passengers are on level ground with the sidewalk. There will be thermoplastic rumble strips to warn cyclists the bump is coming and that they should slow/stop for bus passengers. (DDOT is also doing outreach about the changes with Gallaudet University.) East of WV Ave., bikes will mix with buses. (Long-term DDOT is hoping to install bus-stop islands.)
- Schedule: Construction will start on the upper section (west of WV Ave.) soon as directed by emergency legislation—hopefully completed in early August. The lower section will start in early to mid-August and be completed by the end of September.

On 6th St., the following additional details were provided:

- On changes to traffic flow: DDOT did some traffic modeling and recognizes a lot of traffic goes south on 6th St., much of it from New York Ave. to avoid the NY-Florida intersection. With the new traffic pattern, they will turn on Florida or left onto 4th from NY Ave. DDOT will monitor the traffic flow with movement counts and time-lapse cameras. DDOT is also doing outreach with Two Rivers to manage traffic issues around pickup and dropoff times.
- Schedule: construction of 6th St. will start after Florida Ave. is completed (September/October).

DDOT will present these items next week at 6C and 6A ANC meetings.

Motion: Recommend the ANC express support for the Florida Ave. and 6th St. NOIs as written (Kazmierczak/McDade).

Vote: Passed, 5 – 0.
3. Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act (B23-0288)

The committee will review aspects of the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019 (B23-0288). The bill was introduced by Councilmember Charles Allen and others on May 7 and has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Representative: none

The committee discussed the following aspects of the bill:

Citizen safety enforcement pilot program (lines 275-324). Creates a pilot program wherein citizens are trained and authorized to issue citations for vehicles blocking bike lanes, crosswalks, bus lanes, or streetcar right of way.

- There was concern that it does not include citations for vehicles parked on or blocking a sidewalk, a common occurrence.
- Membership: the committee felt it should be more selective (i.e., not by first-come/first-served and lottery). People may sign up with no intention of participating in order to sabotage the pilot. Potentially the ward councilmember could choose among the applicants. Additionally, DPW should be given the authority to remove participants from the pilot (e.g., for abuse, malfeasance, etc.).
- Some on the committee felt there needs to be a mechanism for people to contest infractions. Although, it was pointed out that they can still go through the normal ticket contesting process.
- While some committee members thought the program could work, others felt it was a bad idea because it will pit neighbors against each other and open the possibility for participants to target individuals.
- Also, line 286 mentions only vehicles blocking bicycle lanes, and should be amended to refer to all violations encompassed by the pilot program.

DDOT report on loading/unloading activity for new construction (lines 106-121). Requires DDOT to provide a report for any construction of 10 or more dwelling units on how pick-up and drop-off by vehicles for hire and deliveries of commercial products “will not create unsafe conditions for user of the public right of way,” or else a building permit will not be issued.

- The committee expressed concern that the program provides more obstacles to building more housing, which is needed.
- The committee felt it was arbitrary why it was only for residential projects. Perhaps if it were implemented it could focus on FAR instead of number of units
- Rather than having DDOT study and issue a report for each building application, it would be more efficient and effective to study the issue broadly and issue standards that need to be followed to ensure loading/unloading do not create unsafe conditions.

10-day notice for changes to high-risk intersections. (lines 84-105). Reduces the mandated 30-day notice for changes to roadways to 10 days if the intersection is indicated as a high-risk intersection in the Multimodal Long-Range Transportation Plan.

- The committee felt that regardless of an urgent need for improvements to an intersection, designs need to be vetted by the public, including the relevant ANC. DDOT has, while acting in good faith, implemented changes without consultation that are confusing and may not be helpful or even be worse, e.g., bicycle path markings at 3rd and H St. NE.
Motion: Recommend the ANC send a letter to all councilmembers on the bill indicating support for the goals but concern that some measures are overly reactionary, and to point out the following specific concerns:

- Objection to the 10-day notice, as ANCs and the community should always be engaged in design discussions.
- The proposal for not issuing building permits without a DDOT report on loading/unloading is both onerous and overly narrow. Instead, DDOT should study and devise standards to address unsafe loading/unloading practices that should be followed District-wide. DDOT should work with the Office of Planning as appropriate to recommend amendments to zoning regulations to embody their findings.
- On the Citizen Safety Enforcement Pilot: if the District proceeds with the program, it should also include violations for blocking the sidewalk; recognize that this has the potential for people to abuse powers for personal vendettas and DPW should monitor participant performance and be able to remove people from the pilot; selection of participants should not be by lottery; the District should have flexibility in the mechanism for issuing citations (i.e., create a new app or use existing apps); and Line 286 should be revised to include all aforementioned violations.
- The District should consider tying funding decisions to achieving modsshare goals.

(Kazmierczak/Eckenwiler)

Vote: Passed, 5 – 0.

4. Electric Mobility Devices Amendment Act (B23-0359)

The committee will review the Electric Mobility Devices Amendment Act of 2019 (B23-0359). The bill was introduced by Councilmember Mary Cheh on June 25 and has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Representative: none

The committee discussed the bill and had the following concerns:

- Speed limits will be very difficult to enforce, as it is under the user’s control (GPS is not precise enough to be able to automatically limit scooter speed based on sidewalk vs. street).
- Not allowing scooters to be operated after 10 pm is completely misguided. This doesn’t happen with any other mode of transportation (including bikeshare). It further limits options for transportation at a time when options are already limited, and can impact businesses. Additionally, the requirement to remove scooters from the public way is ambiguous (does this include the “public parking,” i.e., people’s front yards?).
- Requiring a photo ID is unnecessary and serves no purpose.
- No mechanism for enforcement is provided, and therefore this bill won’t solve the problems it is trying to solve (although the committee doesn’t necessarily agree they need to be solved).
- The bill focuses on the wrong problem: people are being killed on our streets without involvement of scooters.

Motion: Recommend the ANC send a letter opposing this bill on the grounds that it addresses the wrong problem and uses the wrong approaches to do so. Additionally, request a meeting with Councilmember Allen or his staff to explain why the ANC thinks it is a disappointing effort. (Kazmierczak/Eckenwiler)

Vote: Passed, 5 – 0.
5. H St. NE Safety Updates

Committee member Christy Kwan asked that the ANC send a letter to DDOT requesting an update on safety improvements being investigated for the H St. NE corridor. Malik Habib was struck and killed a year ago (June 23) at the intersection of 3rd and H St. NE. Holistic improvements have not been made along the entire corridor. DDOT indicated they were studying the possibility of track additions (flanges) but no progress has been reported.

Discussion: in addition to a progress report on the track flanges, an update of all corridor-wide safety improvements under consideration is needed. Committee member Elissa McDade added one specific safety measure to be included that was raised before is to improve the design of the roadway catch basins on the Hopscotch bridge.

Motion: Recommend the ANC send a letter to Jeff Marootian to request an update on the track flanges and alternative safety mechanisms for the entire H St. NE corridor, including improvement to catch basins on the Hopscotch Bridge, and to call out the safety improvements at 3rd and H St. were poorly thought out. (Kazmierczak/Kwan).
Vote: Passed, 5 – 0.

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