September 23, 2019

Jeff Marootian
Director
District Department of Transportation
55 M St. SE
Washington, D.C. 20003

Re: Bus staging zone at Logan Montessori (215 G St. NE)

Dear Director Marootian:

We write to present our views on the temporary school shuttle bus staging zone in the 600 block of 3rd St. NE. As explained below, ANC 6C recognizes the need for a bus zone to accommodate buses shuttling Logan Montessori students to swing space during the period of renovation and construction at the G St. site. We likewise appreciate the importance of ensuring safe accommodation for students and parents during pickup and dropoff. However, ANC 6C believes this important need can be fully met by locating the bus zone on 2nd St., at least for SY 2019-2020, and we strongly oppose keeping it on 3rd St. owing to the substantial (and unnecessary) adverse impacts on this narrow residential street.

Background

Beginning this fall, the Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan is undergoing a major renovation and expansion planned to last for at least two years. In the meantime, students attend classes at an alternative “swing space” location, the Meyer School at 2501 11th St. NW. As a convenience to students and parents, DCPS has arranged for buses to shuttle from the Logan site in the morning and then back from Meyer to Logan at various times in the afternoon. (See the attached shuttle schedule provided to us by DCPS.)

Effective September 3, DCPS obtained public-space occupancy permits reserving the west side of 3rd St. NE adjacent to Logan (from G St. south to the alley) for bus pickup & dropoff 7am to 6:30pm. (See the attached aerial photo, which highlights this curb space in yellow.) At no point prior to the start of the school year did DCPS engage with ANC 6C about suitable locations, nor did DCPS even inform us after the fact of their decision to use 3rd St.

On September 11, 2019, at a duly noticed, regularly scheduled monthly meeting of ANC 6C, with a quorum of 6 out of 6 commissioners and the public present, the Commission voted 6-0 to adopt the position set forth in this letter.
ANC 6C’s Objections to Using 3rd St. and Strong Preference for 2nd St.

The 600 block of 3rd St. NE is extremely narrow. According to DDOT’s official records, the carriageway (curb to curb) width is 32 feet, which accommodates four lanes: a curbside parking lane on each side, plus a travel lane in each direction.

Moreover, the stretch of 3rd St. from H St. south to Massachusetts Ave. is almost entirely residential in nature. The corridor is dominated by two- and three-story historic rowhouses; apart from Logan itself and one small corner store at F St., there are no commercial or institutional buildings or uses except where 3rd intersects H St. at the north and Massachusetts to the south.

For both these reasons, 3rd St. is unsuitable as a staging zone for wider-than-normal vehicles such as buses. Additional reasons to use 2nd St. instead include

- the inconvenience to local residents who park overnight on the street. The signage in place until recently prohibited parking only after 8am; a prohibition starting at 7am instead forces residents to move their vehicles earlier or to seek overnight parking elsewhere.
- interference with the long overdue replacement of the sidewalks in the 600 block of 3rd. Sidewalks on this block have been in significant disrepair for many years, with a variety of conditions—e.g., concrete slabs pushed up by tree roots on the west side, subsidence areas and missing bricks in the sections on the east side—creating numerous pedestrian hazards. (See attached photos.) In fact, DDOT signed a contract and issued permits for that work to begin on Sept. 9; because this would have conflicted with the current bus staging use and posed substantial safety risks to students and their families, that long-awaited work has been postponed indefinitely.

ANC 6C recommends that the Logan bus staging zone be located on the other side of the school along the 2nd St. curb frontage. This alternative has several advantages over 3rd St.:

- It puts bus traffic on a commercial/institutional strip instead of forcing bus traffic into a residential neighborhood.
- Second St. is 31 feet wide and has only three lanes (versus the 32'/four lanes of 3rd). It is thus far better suited to oversize vehicles such as school buses.
- The amount of available curb space on 2nd St. is significantly greater than on 3rd; see the attached aerial photo (with 2nd St. notated in orange).
- Relocating the bus zone to 2nd St. would allow the long-awaited sidewalk repair on 3rd St. to take place promptly, as DDOT originally intended.

DCPS’s Purported Justifications for Using 3rd St. are Either Factually False or Insubstantial

DCPS representatives appeared before ANC 6C’s Transportation & Public Space Committee on September 4. At the time, DCPS claimed that the decision to use 3rd St. was based on concerns by Logan parents that 2nd St. would be less safe.
This claim was and is entirely false. A parent member (Danica Petroshius) of the small committee working with DCPS over the summer advised us of this by email shortly afterward, and then again in person at the September 11 meeting of the full ANC. DCPS now admits that its statements to ANC 6C were not true.

At the September 11 ANC meeting, DCPS instead advanced a number of other justifications for locating the staging zone on 3rd St. These included the following:

- **“Metro bus route congestion”**: In its remarks and the accompanying presentation slides, DCPS argued that using 2nd St. would create conflicts with (and congestion from) Metro bus routes. In fact, there is no Metro bus service along the 600 block of 2nd St. NE.

- **Using the alley off 3rd St. for parent vehicles**: DCPS argued that the alley running west from 3rd provides “a public access point for parent pick up [sic] to mitigate street congestion.” This alley segment is approximately 12’ wide and runs alongside a historic residential rowhouse; using this segment for parent pickup completely blocks the alley, creates additional disruptive noise, and risks even worse adverse effects on the nearby residents. By contrast, the alley off 2nd St. is roughly 20’ to 25’ wide, and thus better able to accommodate queuing by parents’ vehicles. The abutting structure serves as the office for a nonprofit organization, and not as a residence. (See the attached photos.)

- **“Safety concerns due to construction vehicles”**: DCPS expressed concern that construction vehicles accessing the Logan site from the curb cut on 2nd St. might pose a hazard to students. ANC 6C believes that these concerns can easily and efficiently be addressed by stationing a flagger at this location during pickup/dropoff hours to manage traffic safely.

In sum, DCPS’s purported justifications for favoring 3rd St. lack any merit. Most are either factually incorrect or fail to consider the obvious advantages of 2nd St. And the one potentially legitimate concern—risks from construction vehicles entering the Logan curb cut—has a straightforward, effective, and inexpensive solution.

Final Observations

Currently, there is ample room inside the Logan fence line for work vehicles to park and maneuver. Moreover, DCPS does not yet even have HPRB concept approval for the proposed school expansion, let alone an approved permit or even a full set of permit drawings. However, ANC 6C recognizes that as work on the Logan site progresses, especially beginning in mid-2020, the use of the 2nd St. curb areas may need to be revisited.

Accordingly, we voted to recommend that 2nd St. be used for bus staging for school year 2019-2020, with parking prohibited (on school days only) from 7am to 6:30pm.2 We remain

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2 After ANC 6C’s September 11 meeting, we received a formal written NOI from DDOT on this situation. DDOT has proposed locating the staging zone on 3rd St., which we emphatically oppose as stated above. DDOT has also proposed bus-only hours of 7am-9am and 3pm-6:15pm. We note that DCPS’s schedule shows that afternoon buses do not begin arriving at Logan until 4:10pm, with the last bus arriving at exactly
open to considering options (including 3rd St.) for SY2020-2021, and encourage DCPS to contact us in late spring or early summer 2020 to discuss any changed circumstances.

Finally, ANC 6C suggests that DDOT provide a crossing guard for Logan students during pickup and dropoff hours. At the request of parent representatives, we also urge DDOT to explore the possibility of allowing a temporary shelter in the public space along 2nd St. to protect waiting students from inclement weather. (In doing so, DDOT and DCPS should take into account the potential for misuse of any such facility by vagrants.)

Please direct your response, as well as any questions in the meantime, to Commissioner Mark Eckenwiler (6C04).

Thank you for giving great weight to the views of ANC 6C.

Sincerely,

Karen Wirt
Chair, ANC 6C

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6:15pm. DDOT may wish to consider whether its proposed 3pm-6:15pm window is properly tailored to DCPS’s stated needs.
CAPITOL HILL MONTESSORI
@ LOGAN (CHML)

Principal: Kim Adutwum
AP: Heather Marquez
Contact #: (202) 657.2508

Vendor: Miles Away Charter, LLC
POC/Supervisor: Vanessa Fulcher
Contact #: (443) 220-9452

Home School Designation:
215 G Street NE (3rd & G Street NE)

Swing School Designation:
Meyer ES, 2501 11th St NW (in the back parking lot)

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**MORNING SCHEDULE**

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**AFTERNOON SCHEDULE**

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<td>6:15 pm</td>
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Sidewalk on west side of 3rd St. NE (600 block)

Sidewalk on east side of 3rd St. NE (600 block)
Public alley adjacent to 3rd St. (view looking west)
Public alley adjacent to 2nd St. (view looking east)