



Citizens Engagement Group
July 26, 2016
Location: Capitol View Library

Meeting Minutes



Meeting details

Date: July 26, 2016

Time: 6:30pm

Location: Capitol View Library (5001 Central Avenue SE)

Project team in attendance:

Gabe Onyeador, Sam Zimbabwe, and George Branyan (District Department of Transportation)

Paul Moyer, Corey Pitts, Nate Foster (VHB- Consultants)

Chanceé Lundy, Veronica Davis, Fabiana Paez (Nspiregreen – SubConsultants)

Notes

- DDOT led the meeting introductions. Three people had previously attended a livability study public meeting. Attendees included:
 - Rev. Cornelius Ejiogu
 - Robin Murphy
 - Lakeshia Lloyd-Lee – ANC 7E06
 - Myron Smith – ANC 7E04
 - Rochelle Bent – ANC 7E05
 - Constance and Edward Lawrence
 - Benjamin Thomas
 - Adrian Polite
 - Ashley Emerson
 - Mary Jackson – ANC 7E04
 - David Belt – ANC 7F01
 - Elizabeth Travers – ANC 7F06
 - Jeff Johnson
 - Charles Bunton
 - Eboni-Rose Thompson – ANC 7F02
- The project team led a presentation highlighting the scope of the study, and what input the project team had received so far through meetings with DDOT, field observations, and the first community outreach meeting. The project team asked the community members at the meeting about:
 - Specific transportation issues
 - Opportunities for low-impact development
 - Access improvements
- There was discussion about opportunities for improvements, and existing planned future improvements.
- DDOT presented elements from the East Capitol Street planned improvements:
 - DDOT introduced the new East Capitol Street/Texas Avenue SE/Benning Road intersection design.
 - Options for left turns to Benning Road, Texas Avenue SE, and room for bike lanes, moving bus stops, improving pedestrian crossing distances/times.
 - DDOT introduced the realigned Central Avenue SE/East Capitol Street SE intersection, with street closure in front of the church area.
- Attendees expressed the following concerns related to the East Capitol Street improvements:

-
- Intersection East Capitol Street/Benning Road/Texas Avenue SE.
 - Turning lane concern. When going across East Capitol Street to the north side on Benning Road the road narrows making people to go straight towards the opposite lane.
 - Texas Avenue SE turning to East Capitol Street, people want to go from Texas Avenue SE to north side of Benning Road NE, blocking all traffic coming from the West side on East Capitol Street.
 - One lane goes through to Texas Avenue SE and people want to go straight, there is no sign.
 - The project team explained that new design will remove all - turns on East Capitol Street.
 - Suggestion to make two lanes to turn left from East Capitol Street to north side of Benning Road NE.
 - The project team explained that new design might cut people taking the turn because U-turn will be eliminated.
 - Suggestion to make 2 right turns from Texas Avenue SE to East Capitol Street.
 - The project team explained that this will create more issues in terms of traffic congestion.
 - Question about light on East Capitol Street.
 - The project team explained that the pedestrian crosswalk was narrowed to make it easier to cross.
 - Clarifying comment - Consider fixing the road shift on inbound Benning Road SE. You lose the lines in the intersection.
 - Texas Ave SE- Concerned about losing the double right from Texas Avenue SE to East Capitol Street.
 - People ignore the turn only lane to Texas Avenue SE.
 - Can you make a double left from Eastbound East Capitol to inbound Benning Road?
 - Can you make the light longer for pedestrians?
 - There were concerns about alignment on the southbound movement from Benning Road crossing East Capitol Street- need for pavement markings to better delineate lanes.
 - Concerns about people making rights from northbound Texas Avenue SE to try to make the left from westbound East Capitol Street to northbound Benning Road.
 - Currently small accidents with the left turn movement from eastbound East Capitol Street to Texas Avenue - this design solves the bus U-turn issue.
 - Request to make double lefts from eastbound East Capitol Street to northbound Benning Road.
 - Intersection East Capitol Street/Central Avenue
 - Concern about people speeding in front of church.
 - The project team clarified that new design will allow people to get to Central Avenue SE without going through the church.
 - Can you put speed bumps in front of the church?
 - DDOT explained that the treatment would discourage people from going that way.
 - Concerned about funerals and other events at the church
 - Intersection East Capitol Street/Southern Avenue SE.
 - There was a request for extra time on the lights - there was a bad accident.

-
- There were concerns raised about the Southern Avenue/East Capitol Street intersection - comments about signal timing (accident a few weeks ago)
 - Transit Questions
 - There was a question about what bus stops were removed.
 - Questions about removal/movement of u5/u6 bus stops from 5500 D and East Capitol Street.
 - DDOT opened a discussion to express specific concerns. Attendees expressed the following concerns:
 - A question was asked about the traffic signal at Southern Avenue/Benning Road SE, says there are synching issues with northbound Benning Road SE making the right-turn onto Southern Avenue SE.
 - Request to make changes so people that want to go right have green light at the same time when light is green for people that go straight.
 - Concern about when will improvements at Fort Davis Drive SE be happening? This needs to happen. Can DDOT do something? This is a priority.
 - The project team responded that they were unable to obtain a definitive schedule or answer from NPS about any planned repaving along Fort Davis Drive SE.
 - Concerns about sidewalks conditions around the study area.
 - It was noted there are poor sidewalk conditions around 3300 B Street SE
 - Sidewalk on 3200 block of B Street SE is really in bad conditions. The commenter has been trying to get it fixed - the construction process has been very inconvenient
 - There was a comment that the Minnesota Ave - construction at East Capitol Street has created challenges, concerns about phasing, concerns about emergency vehicles unable to get through
 - There was a request that, pursuant to the Minnesota Avenue/East Capitol Street reconstruction, DDOT should present all phases with construction process with finished result up front. People want to see the result ahead of time to help sell it to the community.
 - There were concerns about the planned So Others May Eat (SOME) building going in across from Denny's increasing the pedestrian traffic crossing Benning Road NE. Want to make it safer for pedestrians at that intersection - concerns about bus stop placement as well.
 - There is a planned homeless shelter coming in on D Street SE - 50th Street/D Street SE- need to coordinate more there - sidewalks and streetlights - lots of 311 requests. What are the traffic impacts? Will there be improvements to the sidewalks with the additional foot traffic?
 - Street lights are out 50th and D Streets SE.
 - Needs a sidewalk near 50th and D Streets SE.
 - There were concerns about speeding on Ely Place - Mr. Thomas working with Father Silas @ Our Lady Queen of Peace on this.
 - Speeding on Ely Place SE- hand delivered a petition to the Mayor. Never heard anything from the government for a solution.
 - There are concerns about accidents at Ridge Road SE and D Street SE, and there was a request for more speed enforcement generally in the study area.
 - There are also concerns about people living in RVs.
 - One RV at 800 Block of Ridge Road SE by the recreation center & another at 58th Street/Southern Ave SE.
 - Issues with visibility for vehicles.
 - It is illegal to park a mobile home on the street. In ANC 7D alone there are two mobile homes that people are occupying.

-
- One is across from the senior center on Southern Avenue SE. They move it around. They have out of state tags. It's been over 3 years.
 - Tractor trailers are leaving their trailers on Southern Avenue SE. They come back and get it a few days later.
 - The 5300 block of D Street SE only has sidewalk on one side of the street and other sidewalk is missing.
 - There was a comment about the construction along Minnesota Avenue not accommodating pedestrians safely.
 - There was a request that when there is construction make sure there is a safe way for people to walk through.
 - There were concerns about streetlight placement for pedestrians – Benning Road at G Street SE, might be broken lights, might be trees, may want to check the illumination standards. “The further south and east you go, the dimmer the lighting seems to get.” Other locations that seemed dark - St Louis, E, C, B, and D Streets SE, and Benning Road SE.
 - Street lights are not working 50th and D Street SE. It also needs sidewalks in green areas, people are walking on the streets.
 - Are there plans to include bicycle-specific amenities at the Benning/Texas/E Capitol Street intersection with the redesign?
 - The comment was made that East Capitol Street is a freeway.
 - There were concerns expressed about tickets being issued at night.
 - The comment was made that you can't navigate from RFK to the library on a bicycle, because of the lack of bicycle amenities along East Capitol Street. Wants to slow down cars
 - Other community members were vocal about not wanting bike lanes along East Capitol Street because it will create traffic issues.
 - A comment was made that there are issues with trees blocking streetlights, issues with trees buckling the sidewalks, issues with safety with lighting at bus stops, Ayers Place SE (behind the church) - issues with flooding, water maintenance
 - Ayres Place SE/50th Street SE where they are building the buildings - there is something wrong with the ground. Every time it rains the church floods. In the inter time it ices over.
 - People need to be able to park their car on East Capitol Street.
 - A request was made for a crosswalk across East Capitol from 50th - kids crossing by library
 - Is there an interim solution to cross East Capitol Street at 50th Street so kids can walk to the library?
 - There was a compliment about the installation of a sidewalk along 46th Street SE.
 - There was a concern about the pedestrian crossing at East Capitol Street/47th Street SE on the SE side - asking pedestrians to cross between parked cars - corners are staggered (parking spaces are lost to crosswalk between cars).
 - The paving issues along Fort Davis Drive SE were reiterated, there was a discussion about the lack of responsiveness from National Park Service (NPS) – may have to escalate to Representative Eleanor Holmes-Norton's office.
 - General comment - NPS - People use Fort Davis Drive SE. There is no maintenance or responsiveness from NPS. there are some foundation issues.
 - When you contact the city you don't get anywhere. You have to contact the Rep office. Is there something that DDOT can do to ease that relationship?
 - With regard to the East Capitol Street/Texas Avenue SE/Benning Road intersection, the question was made as to how the decisions about intersection changes being made? The community feels disenfranchised from the process. How can we give helpful feedback?

-
- DDOT responded that the livability studies are a good means, and that traffic calming on Sheriff Road NE and along 49th Street came out of DDOT Livability Studies.
- There were concerns about prioritizing movement bus routes within Ward 7 (intra ward bus travel). They need to be effective at serving community needs - getting to church and grocery store, library, community or recreation center, rather than just connecting to Metrorail or going into the city.
 - The project team asked the participants – How best do we structure the meeting to get the best feedback?
 - The answer was to work with ANC commissioners and survey the ANC SMD meetings to solicit input from attendees to get input - someone there from DDOT to get feedback from people in the area.
 - Need to have residents working with consultants, and ask specifically about the dates and times of issues.
 - Have ANCs be part of the data collection process.
 - Reach out to ANCs to help shape the data collection process - what areas on what days.
 - Be specific about what you need from the ANC.
 - There is a need to use common language that solicits the proper feedback, want to train the ANC Commissioners to better solicit feedback from their constituents.
 - Someone liked the approach to solicit opinions at the meeting at Plummer Elementary School - one on one with maps.
 - The project team asked the ANC commissioners in attendance to bring information from their constituents to the next project meeting.
 - Suggestion to ride around the neighborhood - observe a normal day for data collection
 - DDOT asked: by Sept 10 - what would be most helpful? What can we supply ANCs with?
 - Suggestion to provide pamphlets or information sheets
- The meeting adjourned around 9pm.