



## **ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E**

**TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS**  
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### **RESOLUTION REGARDING ROCK CREEK WEST LIVABILITY STUDY**

#### **WHEREAS:**

1. The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has often made decisions about traffic calming needs on a block by block basis.
2. Block by block decisionmaking has in turn often led to neighborhood discord, because of unanticipated or unaccounted-for effects of such decisions on other blocks and/or because residents of other blocks believed their views were not solicited or given adequate weight.
3. DDOT recently embarked upon a series of “livability studies” designed to look at neighborhood traffic calming needs in a more holistic manner.
4. One of the first such studies, the Rock Creek West II Livability Study (“Livability Study”), encompassed much of the area within ANC 3E’s jurisdiction.
5. The Livability Study represented a valuable first step toward a systematic approach to decisionmaking about traffic calming, and each of its recommendations, if implemented, likely will improve neighborhood livability.
6. Although the Livability Study involved three open house meetings with the public, additional meetings with opportunities for broader dialogue likely would have proved beneficial.
7. Additionally, further elaboration of the range of options available to solve problems at particular intersections and areas and the pros and cons of each option would have been helped the public contribute to the Livability Study.
8. Certain Livability Study recommendations can be funded via federal or other sources outside DC’s budget.
9. Funding constraints necessitate prioritization of the remaining Livability Study recommendations, and DDOT has invited ANCs and others to help it set these priorities.
10. Residents on 41<sup>st</sup> Street between Western Avenue and Davenport Street have expressed concern that that street is used as a cut through and that reliance of the street as a cut through is related to the use of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor which is the subject of many proposed changes in the study.
11. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor abuts or is near Janney Elementary School, IONA Senior Services, Friendship Terrace Retirement Community, and St. Ann’s Academy, among other institutions, each of which is associated with considerable pedestrian activity by members of potentially-vulnerable populations.
12. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor has generated numerous complaints about speeding, traffic volume, and motorist disregard for pedestrians.
13. American University intends to move its law school near the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor, which likely will generate additional traffic there.

14. A problem exists at the intersection of 42<sup>nd</sup> and Van Ness because drivers on 42<sup>nd</sup> expect that Van Ness traffic will stop – thereby creating a dangerous situation. Additionally, unless the diagonal spur of 42<sup>nd</sup> that connects Van Ness to Nebraska is removed, cut through traffic will continue to be a problem and in fact will continue to be encouraged.

15. The mix of cars, buses and pedestrians, including students arriving to Wilson High School and headed to Deal Middle School at 40<sup>th</sup>, Fort Drive and Albemarle is awkward at best and the layout of the streets does not efficiently use the space available, DDOT should be commended for attempting to address the issues and also for recognizing, as a number of stakeholders have indicated, that the problem requires more study.

16. Ward Circle is one of the most dangerous and problematic sites in the study area, DDOT again should be commended for recognizing the problems and launching a process to solve them and for recognizing that its current proposals require more study in concert with the relevant stakeholders.

17. The traffic light at Western Avenue and the Geico lot is unnecessary much of the time and impedes traffic flow on an important arterial route, which in turn increases cut through traffic on numerous local and collector routes.

18. Although the Livability Study recommends modification of the Western Avenue and Geico lot traffic signal to be automobile and pedestrian-actuated, and although federal money likely will be available to fund this project, it may be nonetheless be some time before the project can be completed.

19. The two-way stop sign at 46<sup>th</sup> and Fessenden Streets is inadequate, has long vexed the neighborhood, and has been the subject of a prior ANC 3E resolution.

20. The Livability Study commenced a process of looking at making the study area more bicycle friendly, but passed on the mandate to make a full set of recommendations in that area for another study.

21. The intersection at 45<sup>th</sup> Street, Fessenden Street, and River Road is hazardous, has likewise long vexed the neighborhood and been the subject of prior ANC 3E resolutions and numerous proposed solutions.

22. DDOT promised the community several years ago that permanent speed cameras would be installed at this intersection, but to date this has not occurred; in the interim, MPD obtained or plans to obtain speed cameras that also can capture crosswalk and turn-restriction violations, and such violations are common at the intersection.

#### **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. ANC 3E applauds DDOT for conducting the Livability Study, and supports its recommendations.

2. DDOT should conduct livability studies in the area at least every three to four years to account for changes in traffic patterns and neighborhood needs, assess the effectiveness of prior recommendations, and adjust or make new recommendations.

3. Future livability studies should feature additional public meetings, at least some of which should be in formats that allow all participants to interact with each other, e.g., “town hall” or “focus group” style meetings.

4. Future livability studies should include more comprehensive elaboration of the range of options available to solve problems at particular intersections and areas, the pros and cons of each option, and the reasons DDOT favors a particular option.

5. While ANC 3E believes all Livability Study recommendations are important, it urges DDOT to make implementation of recommendations for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridors a top priority, including installation of curb extensions and neighborhood traffic circles, and adding a leading pedestrian interval to the traffic light at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Albemarle.

6. Given the likely contribution of American University's law school to traffic in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street area should the school be sited there, DDOT should ask American University to help fund the recommended improvements to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor.

7. Additionally, and irrespective of the timing of the next livability study for the area, DDOT should closely monitor the 41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridors to determine whether further interventions are necessary.

8. The intersection at 42d and Van Ness remains unacceptably dangerous and must be addressed further in the short term.

9. Another top priority, and one that is nearly costless to implement, should be installation of a four-way stop sign at 46<sup>th</sup> and Fessenden Streets as the Livability Study recommends.

10. DDOT should fully engage in the ongoing process involving the relevant stakeholders – American University, the Department of Homeland Security, the relevant ANC's and the community – to develop and implement a long term solution for Ward Circle.

11. DDOT should similarly engage in a process to develop, in concert with the stakeholders – WMATA, American University, Wilson High School, Deal Middle School, the relevant ANC's, the adjacent business owners and the community – to develop and implement a long term solution for the 40<sup>th</sup> and Fort Drive area between Albemarle and Chesapeake.

12. DDOT should also promptly build on its efforts to develop plans to make the study area more bicycle friendly, coordinating its planning with others such as DHS and American University who also have plans to create or improve infrastructure for bicycle usage.

13. DDOT should take some step as soon as possible to ease problems caused by the traffic signal at Western Avenue and the Geico lot, pending modification of the light to be vehicle and pedestrian-actuated, such as temporarily changing it to a blinking yellow/red.

14. The previously-promised permanent speed cameras at the 45<sup>th</sup> Street / Fessenden Street / River Road intersection should be installed soon, and should also capture crosswalk and turn-restriction violations. The recommendation to install curb extensions at the intersection should be a priority as well, although one subordinate to implementation of the above-referenced recommendations for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor and other intersections.

The resolution passed by a vote of 5-0 at a properly noticed meeting held on April 12, 2011, at which a quorum was present, with Commissioners Bender, Frumin, Quinn, Serebin, and Sklover in attendance.

ANC 3E

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by Jonathan Bender  
Chairperson