

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E

TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS
WAKEFIELD CHEVY CHASE FORT GAINES
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Resolution Regarding Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lane Study

WHEREAS, much of this resolution is copied with permission from resolutions authored but not yet approved by ANC 3C and 3F;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) implemented a Vision Zero “Mayor’s Challenge” initiative for Safer People / Safer Streets across the United States;

WHEREAS, safety is the top priority of the USDOT and many of the USDOT operating administrations play a role in improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists;

WHEREAS, Vision Zero is a part of Mayor Bowser’s response to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Mayor’s Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets, which aims to improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation safety by showcasing effective local actions, empowering local leaders to take action, and promoting partnerships to advance pedestrian and bicycle safety;

WHEREAS, the Washington District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) has set an objective to reach zero fatalities and serious injuries to travelers using the city’s transportation infrastructure by the year 2024 through more effective use of data, education, enforcement, and engineering in its Vision Zero initiative;

WHEREAS, Connecticut Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue are identified as Vision Zero high crash corridors;

WHEREAS, road traffic crashes are a leading cause of death in the United States for people aged 1–54;

WHEREAS, from 2015-2019, Connecticut Avenue had 1507 crashes, 44% of which occurred during reversible lane operation;

WHEREAS, Mayor Muriel Bowser committed the District of Columbia to become carbon-neutral by 2050 at the Inaugural North American Climate Summit in 2017, by reducing emissions from transportation and making our streets safer and more accessible;

WHEREAS, DDOT in 2020 committed to building 20 additional miles of protected bike lanes (PBL) in DC by 2022 but to date aside from a 2 block privately funded PBL in Friendship Heights Ward 3 has no protected bike infra;

WHERAS, approximately 28% of United States Greenhouse Gas Emissions come from the Transportation Sector, 59% of which are from light-duty vehicles;

WHERAS, shifting away from passenger vehicle use to alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, and public transit, will reduce GHG emissions by more than 1 million MTCO₂e per year by 2050;

WHERAS, the Sustainable DC 2.0 plan targets reducing commuter trips made by car to 25% by the year 2032;

WHERAS, per the findings of the 2003 DDOT study on Connecticut Avenue, there is renewed community interest in reviewing the reversible lane system and exploring concepts for other mobility options such as bike lanes;

WHERAS, a 2011 Institute of Transportation Engineers study said that crashes are associated with reversible lane operations on Connecticut Avenue;

WHERAS, a 2011 Connecticut Avenue Pedestrian Action (CAPA) Pedestrian Safety Audit study outlined concerns for pedestrians;

WHERAS, moveDC 2014 identified Connecticut Avenue as an opportunity to achieve a vision of a world-class transportation system with exceptional travel choices for the District; and

WHERAS, a 2016 Cleveland Park Bicycle Analysis provided recommendations for bicycle improvement along the Connecticut Avenue Corridor;

WHERAS, on Tuesday, February 26, 2019, DDOT launched the Rock Creek Far West Livability Study to evaluate the transportation network in the study area from a system perspective and look for opportunities for a safer and more accessible multimodal network. DDOT will work with members of the community and key stakeholders to identify specific opportunities to improve accommodations for people walking, biking, using a wheelchair, riding the bus, and driving. At the end of the study, DDOT will provide recommendations addressing such issues as:

- Enhancing transportation safety,
- Improving pedestrian crossings and sidewalks,
- Improving the bicycle network,
- Making intersections safer,
- Improving driver signage,
- Making bus stops more accessible, and
- Incorporating milestones consistent with Vision Zero;

WHERAS, ANC-3E fully supported the launch of the Rock Creek Far West Livability Study to enhance the community quality of life through improvements to transportation safety and connections to destinations for ALL modes, including cyclists;

WHERAS, the DDOT-led Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lane Operations and Safety Study (“Safety Study”) is ongoing, with the key project goals of reducing vehicle crashes, improving

safety for all modes of transit, considering a Protected Bicycle Lane, and assessing the feasibility of removing the Reversible Lane Operation;

WHEREAS, the “guiding principles” of the Safety Study include:

- Accommodating the needs of people of all ages who live, work, and recreate within the Connecticut Avenue corridor;
- Prioritizing the needs of corridor residents and businesses;
- Providing sustainable, resilient, and equitable transportation options for all modes;
- Reducing the number of crashes and fatalities;
- Incorporating “Complete Streets” principles to reduce vehicle speeds along the corridor;
- Mitigating significant traffic impacts, to the extent feasible, when considering alternatives;
- Understanding traffic diversion impacts and mitigating them, where possible;
- Retaining some parking and loading spaces in commercial areas (including during rush hours if the Reversible Lane Operation is removed);
- Integrating pedestrian safety improvements into each alternative concept developed;
- Including protected bicycle lane options;
- Including bus transit operational improvements;
- Developing options that can be implemented within the 60-foot “curb-to-curb” cross-section of the avenue;

WHEREAS, DDOT initiated Data Collection and Analysis of Existing Conditions during Winter-Spring 2020 and Phase 1 of the Public Engagement Timeline began with the April 30, 2020 Community Advisory Committee Kickoff Meeting;

WHEREAS, DDOT conducted a number of meetings with community stakeholders, including ANC 3E on February 11, 2021 along with Ward 3 Vision and the Ward 3 Bicycle Advocates;

WHEREAS, ANC 3E commissioner Tom Quinn was a member of the Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lane Study Citizen’s Advisory Committee;

WHEREAS, the addition of protected bicycle lanes on Connecticut Avenue will provide safe infrastructure for the community beyond just bicyclists, and the addition of protected bicycle lanes will improve driver safety by separating bicyclists from drivers, and will also improve pedestrian safety by reducing the number of bicycles and scooters on sidewalks;

WHEREAS, given the number of schools along the Connecticut Avenue corridor, adding a protected bicycle facility gives older children the opportunity to bike to school;

WHEREAS, commuting habits after the pandemic have yet to be established and there is an opportunity for people to get to work via means other than a private vehicle, with reductions of peak hour traffic on Connecticut Avenue estimated to be around 45%;

WHEREAS, a protected bike lane on Connecticut Avenue will be a critical component of a larger connected bicycle network in Ward 3 and beyond;

WHEREAS, numerous research studies have shown that adding bike lanes is good for business, even when parking is removed as a result;

WHEREAS, the addition of 24-hour parking and loading and unloading zones in Connecticut Avenue business districts is an option that currently does not exist and is not possible with other Concepts put forward by DDOT;

WHEREAS, Concept C from DDOT with an option of a 24-hour parking lane and loading and unloading zones in business districts brings as close to the ideal of a Complete Street, “a policy by which streets are designed, operated, and maintained to accommodate safe and convenient access and mobility for all users of the District's transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, motorists, emergency responders, and persons of all ages and abilities” (DC Code § 50–2381);

WHEREAS, Concept C is the safest of all options considered by DDOT for users of Connecticut Avenue;

Whereas, DDOT’s analysis of “Build Concept C” (which removes the Reversible Lane Operation, includes protected bicycle lanes on both sides of the street, and preserves parking/loading in commercial areas) identifies significant potential safety benefits, including the following:

- Removing reversible lanes - Estimated 36% reduction of peak hour crashes (17% overall);
- Adding protected bicycle lanes – Expected decrease in crashes, protects cyclists mid-block;
- Adding turn lanes at selected intersections – Estimated 27% reduction of crashes at intersections with turn lanes;
- Removing parking – Estimated 20% reduction of crashes where implemented;
- Adding pedestrian refuge islands – Estimated 26% reduction of crashes at intersections with refuge islands; and

Whereas the DDOT Safety Study has also identified a series of “Potential Corridor Safety Improvements” that could be adopted across all Build Concepts, including:

- Reducing the speed limit from 30 to 25 mph to reduce fatal crashes and promote safety;
- Adding protected bicycle lanes and pedestrian refuge islands (assuming removal of the Reversible Lane Operation);
- Adding left turn lanes at selected intersections (assuming removal of the Reversible Lane Operation);
- Installing dynamic speed feedback signs (to provide drivers with visual speed warnings);
- Installing speed enforcement cameras and red light enforcement cameras;
- Adding Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons/HAWK signals;
- Adding curb extensions (which shortens the time a pedestrian is in a crosswalk);
- Enhancing signal visibility;
- Adding left-turn restrictions and left-turn calming treatments (to slow down left-turning vehicles and reduce conflicts with pedestrians);
- Improving intersection geometry at selected intersections (including removal of channelized right-turn lanes); and
- Improving corner driveway and alley intersection clearances (to create better visibility

and minimize crashes).

WHEREAS, both concepts B and C are projected to cause modest increases in traffic volumes on Reno Road, Western Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue, Nebraska Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue all of which are within or bordering on ANC 3E. DDOT projects a worsening in the Level of Service at only one intersection within ANC 3E at Western Avenue and 41st Street during the PM rush hour and modest increases in traffic volumes at several other intersections within ANC 3E particularly for east-west traffic movements but these assumptions are based on a return to pre-Covid traffic levels. According to the study even a 20 percent reduction in traffic to pre-covid levels would result in no additional delays to intersections within ANC 3E.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, ANC 3E supports Concept C presented by DDOT as part of the Connecticut Avenue NW Reversible Lane Safety and Operations Study;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ANC 3E urges parking to be prioritized for people who need it the most, including the disabled and elderly members of the community;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ANC 3E supports the implementation of safe infrastructure with all Complete Street principles throughout Ward 3, and urges DDOT to come back and study Wisconsin Avenue next;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ANC-3E strongly encourages D.C. Department of Transportation to continue to conduct studies of the composition of traffic, the volume of traffic, origins and destinations, time of day and time of week considerations, accident reports, and intersection-specific traffic flows when considering biking infrastructure changes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ANC-3E expects DDOT to be responsive to any changes in traffic patterns within ANC 3E and assign resources and make changes as required to mitigate any impacts from diverted traffic as DDOT and ANC 3E become aware of such impacts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ANC 3E authorizes the Chair and Commissioner 3E04 to represent the Commission on this matter.

ANC 3E approved this resolution at its meeting on April 8, 2021, which was properly noticed and at which a quorum was present. The resolution was approved by a vote of 5-0-0. Commissioners Jonathan Bender, Matthew Cohen, Amy Hall, Jonathan McHugh and Tom Quinn were present.

ANC 3E

By Jonathan Bender, Chairperson