Meeting Minutes

Project:	Maryland Avenue Pedestrian Safety Corridor	**Date:**	January 28, 2012
Subject:	Public Meeting #2 Meeting Minutes	**Time:**	1:00 PM
		Place:	Sherwood Recreation Center

Included within this document are meeting minutes associated with the 2nd Public Meeting of the Maryland Avenue Pedestrian Safety Corridor Project on Saturday January 28, 2012.

Purpose of Meeting:

To present the conceptual design alternatives for the Maryland Avenue Pedestrian Safety Corridor to the public and solicit public feedback

Meeting Overview:

The project team began the meeting with a 20 minute presentation and participated in an approximate 20 minute question & answer session with the public. The second portion of the meeting consisted of an open house where attendees could talk individually with DDOT representatives and the consultant team and provide their feedback through interactive boards and maps. There were approximately 50-75 residents in attendance over the course of the meeting time (1:00PM to 3:00PM).

Presentation:

- George Branyan of the District Department of Transportation introduced the project. The primary goal of the project is to improve pedestrian safety on the Maryland Avenue corridor. The project began in April 2011 with the first public meeting in June 2011. George introduced Bill Schultheiss of Toole Design Group, who is the project manager and an ANC6A resident. Bill spoke for the remainder of the presentation.
- Background: The project limits are from 2nd Street to 14th Street on Maryland Avenue, including the streets surrounding Stanton Park. The project also extends to approximately the first intersection north and south of Maryland Avenue. At the first public meeting in June, the team presented the preliminary traffic analysis.
- Schedule: In the week following the public meeting, the information presented at the meeting will be posted to the project website at www.tooledesign.com/marylandave. There may be a follow-up meeting at the discretion of ANC 6A and 6C over the next couple of months.
- Maryland Avenue Characteristics: 9,000 to 11,000 ADT, mostly during the 7-8 AM and 4-5 PM peaks. The corridor generally has 60% of green signal time for Maryland Avenue and 40% for the intersecting streets. Crash rates at study intersections are low compared to citywide arterial corridor averages. Within the corridor the intersection of 7th/D/Md had the highest crash rate with , a high percentage of crashes resulting in injury.

- We collected public feedback at the first public meeting and online via a comment form and interactive mapping tool. We've utilized this feedback in addition to the traffic analysis, historical complaints, and site visits to develop our design alternatives.
- Key issues identified during the initial phase of the project which should be resolved in the design:
    - High-speed right turns are possible at many intersections with the lettered streets.
    - Multi-leg intersections need improvement and create safety concerns.
    - Sight lines are poor in some locations.
    - Intersections 7th/D, 10th/MD are priority locations.
    - The traffic signal for E Street at 9th/MD causes a number of problems and makes it difficult to coordinate the traffic along the corridor.
    - The corridor could be more efficient, as currently there is wasted time and long signal delays.
    - Corridor top end speeding is excessive, even during rush hour.
- Introduced alternatives developed to resolve the identified issues:
    - Both alternatives require the removal of the signal for E Street at 9th and Maryland.
    - Alternative A (No Road Diet) – The center portion of the road will remain the same with the focus on fixing the intersections with curb extensions, closures, and redirections.
    - Alternative B (Road Diet) - This "road diet" drops one lane of traffic in each direction and adds bicycle lanes and left-turn lanes. At rush hour, cars may fill up the block; however, the progression along will be improved with updated signal timings and coordinated progression on the corridor.
- Bill gave voting instructions to meeting attendees. Those present were asked to use one blue dot to vote on whether they prefer Alternative A (No Road Diet) or B (Road Diet). Once they select Alternative A or B, they should go to the appropriate corridor-long map to vote on intersection-specific options. They used yellow dots to show the locations they feel are a priority for treatment. They used the green and red dots to show the options they prefer and do not prefer, respectively.
- Bill described the flexibility in this design approach with regards to timeline and budget. Intersections can be improved one by one as funding allows. The road diet could also be tested with new low-cost striping and no curb changes to the median to allow time to evaluate before a decision is made to fully reconstruct.
- The floor was then opened for questions.
    - Is there any thought of changing one ways away from Maryland Ave, at 7th and D and all other intersections?
        - This has been discussed by the team but not analyzed. We are open to suggestions. [It was suggested by residents to look at flipping D between MD and 6th Street to reduce traffic volumes and the safety hazard of crossing traffic]
    - Are there regulations that bicycle lanes can't be within a certain number of streets of another bicycle lane?
        - No, there are no such restrictions.
    - Once H Street is fully redeveloped, what is impact in terms of density and traffic?

- Traffic growth on Maryland Avenue is constrained by the signal timing at 15th/H and 6th Street at Stanton Park. It is highly unlikely additional green signal time can be reallocated from other traffic movements to increase the green for Maryland Avenue at these boundary intersections (15th/H and 6th Street). Without additional green time, it is not possible for through traffic (along Maryland Avenue) to grow beyond today's volumes so growth will be limited to some potential side street traffic increases which can be accommodated via the proposed timing [Individual residents also expressed concerns that there may be increase in north/south traffic on the numbered streets with the redevelopment on H Street.]

- Will this conflict with potential bikeshare station at D off of Maryland, next to the park?
  - The proposed design will not conflict with the proposed bike sharing location. The two parking spots lost to the bikeshare station are still lost to the curb extensions and the station area is potentially improved in the redesign
- What are the impacts to traffic? Are signals going to be added?
  - There could potentially be signals at 7th Street and 10th Street. A signal at 7th is not desirable as it would create the same problems as at the E Street signal location as an accompanying signal will also be needed at D Street.
- Does the road diet option have a turn lane at 7th and Maryland? When do people make turns there?
  - Turning volumes are very low. Our concept does not show a left-turn lane, but we could still provide a left-turn lane.
  - The road diet alternative increases the size of the median so there is potential to add a left turn lane onto 7th. The decision will be dictated in part by the final design alternative chosen.
- What is DDOT's authority? What can't we suggest?
  - Changes to the road may have to be approved by the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission due to viewsheds of the Capitol. Sometimes this can be challenging, but strong community support is very valuable in this effort. DDOT owns the road.
- Where do cars go on the road diet plan? What are the consequences?
  - The roadway currently operates under standard thresholds for a reduction from 4 to 3 lanes (with one lane being a left-turn lane) which normally can handle 15 to 20 thousand vehicles per day. Two moving lanes with left turn lanes are typically safer and function better than four through lanes with no left turn lanes. The road will operate with reasonable delay for motorists with just one lane in each direction.
  - There is some potential for motorists to decide to redirect towards other streets. For example, if D Street was flipped to operate westbound towards 6th Avenue.
- If we go with the road diet, is there any possibility of a protected bicycle lane?

        - A buffered bike lane or cycle track (also referred to as protected lanes) will not fit within the current roadway width with the addition of left-turn pockets. Speeds on the road will slow with the road diet option so bicyclists should be more comfortable riding in the provided bicycle lanes should this option be chosen.
    - Is money for these changes available and appropriated?
        - There is not money available for all of this work immediately. There is about $700K in the short term and there is a commitment to do something long term, but the project needs more local or federal funds to go further. The project can be done in stages based on budget. The road diet can be evaluated with markings and intersections can be improved incrementally.
        - Councilmember Tommy Wells said that the money already appropriated was primarily intended for the intersection of 7th Street, D Street, and Maryland Avenue.
- The presentation and question & answer ended and the open house portion of the meeting began.