

**ANC 3F COMMENTS ON THE
WISCONSIN AVENUE CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F
North Cleveland Park, Forest Hills, & Tenleytown
4401A Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Box 244
Washington, D.C. 20008-2322

1. Issue: Traffic counts north of Tenley Circle are skewed for Thursday and Friday because they were taken the week of November 7, which included the Veteran's Day holiday.

Recommendation: Extrapolate from Monday-Wednesday of that week to arrive at an estimate of what the traffic counts would normally be on Thursday and Friday.

Discussion: On Thursday, November 11, all federal and District employees did not have work, nor did many employees of private companies. Six of the seven nearby schools were closed. Vehicle counts were much lower during rush hour that day. They were also lower the following day, a Friday, as if some people decided to take a long weekend. As a result, the data for this critical section of the corridor, where much of the rush hour traffic is school-related, were skewed.

2. Issue: Significant over-reporting of existing development and under-reporting of anticipated development.

Recommendation: DDOT convene a task force including OP, affected ANCs, and residents to work out correct figures to use; DDOT issue a second draft of the Study using the figures agreed upon by the task force; and this draft be circulated for comment.

Discussion: Marilyn Simon has done extensive research into exactly what development was in existence at the time of the Study. She is correct that a number of sites that the Study counts as in operation, and thus generating traffic, were either closed or had been demolished and thus were generating no traffic at all when counts were taken. She also points out that the square footage of Whole Foods Market in ANC 3F may have been overcounted by including the parking lot as part of the retail store. To make sure the Study is accurate and to gain the community's confidence, a task force made up of all affected parties should be convened to agree on what figures should be used. The final report should not be issued until all errors and differences have been resolved.

3. Issue: The report failed to make a correction for the enrollment of Sidwell Friends School, as requested at the meeting at Guy Mason Center on January 27, 2005, and again at the meeting at Guy Mason on June 21, 2005.

Recommendation: Correct the data to reflect the increase in enrollment and increase in number of vehicles using the Wisconsin Avenue entrance.

Discussion: The enrollment authorized by the BZA is 850, not 800. The school is starting construction on its 307-space parking garage at Rodman Street. The new garage will accommodate all faculty and the approximately 124 students who have been parking on side streets behind the school, as well as drop off for 7th and 8th grade students who have until now been dropped off on 37th Street. Even though the school's traffic study for the BZA hearing

stated that there would be limited impact on Wisconsin Avenue from the new arrangement, it is important for the WACTS to be as accurate as possible.

4. Issue: Increased signal green time on Wisconsin Avenue and reduced green time for intersecting side streets, including Albemarle Street and Nebraska Avenue at Tenley Circle.

Recommendation: Any changes to signal timing must consider optimum timing for *all* streets, not just Wisconsin Avenue, and pedestrian safety!

Discussion: Increasing green time on Wisconsin Avenue at the expense of the side streets will lead to even greater gridlock on the side streets. Because of turning restrictions on Wisconsin Avenue, many people use cross streets like Albemarle Street, Nebraska Avenue, and Van Ness Street to get to and from AU Park and Spring Valley. At present, queues on Albemarle Street back up from Wisconsin to 38th Street during evening rush hour. Queues also extend north on 40th Street with cars waiting to merge into the traffic on Albemarle Street. The study missed this phenomenon because no queuing data were collected for Albemarle Street at Wisconsin Avenue or at Albemarle Street and Nebraska Avenue. During morning rush hour, traffic on southbound Nebraska Avenue waiting to get through the light at Tenley Circle backs up to the Wilson High School playing field, approximately 1/5 of a mile. Perhaps the person making traffic counts only looked at the cars around the circle and not those being held at the secondary lights at the perimeter of the circle.

Residents say the study ignores pedestrian safety while emphasizing moving cars more quickly on Wisconsin Avenue. Decreasing the green time for the cross streets would make crossing Wisconsin even more hazardous for pedestrians than it is now.

5. Issue: Poor visibility, frequent (unreported) accidents, and confusion the intersection of Albemarle Street – Nebraska Avenue - 39th Street – Grant Road.

Recommendation: Include the recommendations from Joe Lowry at the June 21 site visit in the final report.

Discussion: Joe Lowry, an engineer with Louis Berger, met with ANC 3F Commissioner Cathy Wiss and resident Doug Wonderlic on June 21 to observe the intersection of Nebraska Avenue - Albemarle Street - Grant Road - 39th Street. Among his recommendations were removing one parking space on the south side of Albemarle Street just east of 39th Street for greater visibility of west bound traffic from 39th Street; striping 39th Street with parking “L”s to discourage illegal parking close to the corner; putting warning signs for the 39th Street intersection on Albemarle Street and Nebraska Avenue; and keeping the existing turning radius from south bound Nebraska Avenue onto west bound Albemarle Street to force vehicles to slow down for pedestrians. He also agreed to find out whether a “stop here on red” sign could be posted on west bound Albemarle Street just east of 39th Street.

6. Issue: Removal of the three parking spaces on the south side of Albemarle Street between Fort Drive and Nebraska Avenue.

Recommendation: Keep the three parking spaces, but clearly mark with “L” striping where parking is permitted.

Discussion: These spaces are often used by residents for their cars. There is no other residential parking on this part of Albemarle Street or along Fort Drive north of Albemarle on or Nebraska Avenue. Striping the street to show where parking is permitted would solve the problem of cars

parking too close to Nebraska Avenue, as happened this year when the "no parking" sign disappeared. Consistent enforcement of parking restrictions would help.

7. Issue: Removal of "8" parking spaces on Van Ness Street west of Wisconsin Avenue to make a left turn lane for east bound traffic on Van Ness Street.

Recommendation: Remove 3 of the 7 metered parking spaces to create a left turn bay and reposition the remaining parking meters.

Discussion: Note: there are only 7 metered parking spaces on this block, all adjacent to the shops at 4200 Wisconsin Avenue. Devoting an additional lane to vehicles turning left at the light would certainly help relieve the heavy congestion at this intersection. On the other hand, very few on street parking spaces are available to customers of the shops at 4200 Wisconsin Avenue, either on Wisconsin Avenue or on Van Ness Street. Customers on short errands to some of the shops are unlikely to park in the underground garage of the building. Retaining some of the parking spaces while creating a left turn bay would allow some customers to continue to park while helping to relieve congestion.

8. Issue: Installation of pedestrian crossing signs along the side of Wisconsin Avenue at Veazey, Warren and Windom Streets.

Recommendation: Pedestrian-activated signals or lights embedded in the street that flash when someone wants to cross would be more effective in improving pedestrian safety.

Discussion: Signs along the side of the road are wholly inadequate for this dangerous stretch. In 2003, a Tenleytown resident was run over at the intersection of Veazey and Wisconsin. She believed that she was safe because she was walking in a striped crosswalk that had a "yield to pedestrians" pylon in the center of the street. The car on the outside lane saw her and stopped. The car on the inside lane did not. Another resident was hit at Warren and Wisconsin, also in the mid-morning. If striped cross walks and "yield to pedestrians" pylons are not enough, signs on the side of the road will not do much good and could give pedestrians a false sense of safety.

9. Issue: Increasing the turning radius for the southeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue at the Whole Foods driveway.

Recommendation: This recommendation should be rejected.

Discussion: The Whole Foods driveway crosses a very busy sidewalk. Increasing the turning radius will make vehicles turn into the driveway more quickly and thus make crossing the driveway more dangerous for pedestrians. Most pedestrians are oblivious to turning cars at this location.

Approved by a vote of 6-0-0 at a duly noticed public meeting of ANC 3F on July 25, 2005, with a quorum present (a quorum being 4).

/s/ Karen Lee Perry
Karen Lee Perry, Chair

/s/ Frank T. Winstead
Frank Winstead, Secretary