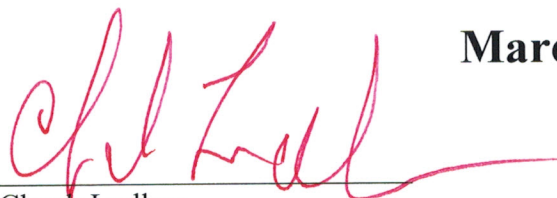


Appendix to Testimony: Springland Farm Community LLC BZA Case 17703A: Application of Sidwell Friends School

Appendix to Comments Regarding Condition # 6

March 21, 2016



Chuck Ludlam
Secretary Springland Farm Community

COMPENDUM OF EMAILS REGARDING DDOT "SAFETY" REVIEW OF TRAFFIC CALMING ON UPTON STREET

from: Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
"Westrom, Ryan (DDOT)" <ryan.westrom@dc.gov>,
to: "Van Houten, Ted (DDOT)" <theodore.vanhouten@dc.gov>,
"Ludlam, Chuck" <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
date: Mon, Feb 15, 2016 at 4:31 PM
subject: DDOT Traffic Calming Measures on Upton

Ryan and Ted:

A great deal has happened since we last communicated with you regarding the DDOT traffic islands on Upton. These developments strengthen our view that the traffic islands are not germane to the Sidwell BZA petition and that to remove them would be fundamentally inconsistent with the global agreement that the neighbors will soon reach with Sidwell to mitigate the traffic impacts of their opening the Lower School on the Home property.

In terms of being non germane, Sidwell's December CTR says, removal of the island is "not necessary to mitigate the impact of Sidwell's proposed project..."

Jami Milanovich of Wells says, "Removal of the island is not required to make the Wisconsin Avenue/MS plan work." (Email of February 7, 2016).

Phil Feola of Goulston says, "It is, and will be, Sidwell's position that it is neutral regarding the Upton Street traffic island both during and after construction of the Lower School on the Washington Home site." (Email of February 8, 2016)

In its January 26 response to the DDOT comments, Sidwell says that it is "not advocating for or against removal of the traffic calming devices and [has] explored other options for accommodating the school's traffic and mitigating its impact. Specifically, Sidwell will implement a TDM plan that will reduce traffic by 30 percent and will shift its Middle

Public Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.17703A
EXHIBIT NO.42A

School drop-off/pick-up operations to the new circle on Wisconsin Avenue. The effectiveness of these measures is documented in detail in the CTR.”

The bottom line is that Sidwell does not consider these traffic islands to be germane to its BZA petition. It considers them to be outside the scope of its petition. Not relevant. We believe that unless a party can establish that the islands *are* germane to this case, the BZA should not consider them in the course of adjudicating Sidwell’s application. Moreover, as explained below, it would be untimely and inappropriate to consider dismantling a *traffic calming* measure in the context of evaluating Sidwell’s plan to ameliorate the *traffic increases* from bringing the Sidwell Lower School to the Washington Home property. In a BZA case with the potential to be extremely controversial, it is heartening to see that the neighbors, DDOT and the ANC may well all endorse the Sidwell BZA petition. It would be unfortunate, and we believe outrageous, for any party or any group to advocate removal of the traffic islands in the context of fairly evaluating Sidwell’s proposed solutions. Any such attack could jeopardize the BZA process and certainly would make it more complicated. That’s not what we need when we have made so much progress in resolving the issues regarding the proposed expansion. Indeed, removing the traffic island turns the BZA process on its head by acting to increase traffic, the opposite of what the BZA process should do.

It would also be unfortunate to see us agree on significant remediation of the current gridlock in traffic around Hearst and Sidwell only to see this undercut – in an aggressive zero sum game – with the removal of the traffic island and the resulting introduction of substantial *additional* volumes of cut-through traffic on Upton. To be sure, nearly all of this cut-through traffic will have no connection to either Hearst or Sidwell. We neighbors have suffered from gridlock for many years from Hearst and Sidwell and now we see in Sidwell’s proposal the prospect that it will be effectively remediated. This is a fantastic result that no one thought was possible when this BZA process began. With this achievement, now is the worst possible time to introduce a whole new source of gridlock – cut-through commuter traffic mostly from Maryland. It would be grossly unfair to inflict this zero sum game on the neighbors just when they can see that that the Hearst and Sidwell traffic gridlock is about to be finally remediated.

Documenting the zero sum impact of removing the traffic island, we have examined the data that underlies Sidwell CTR. That data indicates that if the Upton traffic island is removed, in just one hour – AM peak from 8:00-9:00 – we’d see a 171% increase in traffic on Upton. For PM school peak from 3:15-4:15 we’d see a 67% increase. For PM peak from 5:00-6:00 we’d see a 162% increase. And who would benefit? These negative impacts on Upton would yield a tiny decrease in traffic on Van Ness – only a 12% decrease in volume during the AM peak hour, a 12% decrease during the PM school peak hour, and a 7% decrease during the PM commuter peak hour. The dramatic negative impact on Upton surely is not cost effective or fair in proportionate to the trivial benefit to Van Ness. Indeed it’d mean that there would be only a 40% difference in the number of cars on Upton – a residential street – as on Van Ness – a major connector street. Still worse, Upton Street is not the only loser. The left turners onto Upton would cause an average delay at the Upton / Wisconsin intersection of 15% for all of the 3,454 cars proceeding north and south at AM peak. In general, all approaches would experience some increase in delay. The approaches with the most significant increase vary by time of day. For example, during the morning peak hour, the westbound and southbound

approaches would see the largest increase in delay while the eastbound approach would see the largest increase in delay during the evening peak hour. So the mix of impacts of removing the island – decidedly negative for our residential street, trivially positive for an artery street, and a 15% average delay for nearly 3,500 cars in that AM peak hour – well, it's hard to imagine any possible public policy rationale for removing the traffic island. Remember these are the harms inflicted during these few hours. Multiple them by 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. And think about why this measure should be affixed to a BZA order focused on remediating traffic in the neighborhood around Sidwell's project. It's obvious that removing the island is wildly inconsistent with the issues raised by the Sidwell BZA petition and it's wildly inconsistent with the City's traffic calming priority. There is no comparison between Hearst / Sidwell traffic – which arise for two hours during school days – and cut-through traffic – which operates 24 hours a day 365 days a year. This difference is another way of demonstrating that the traffic island issue is non-germane to the Sidwell BZA petition and profoundly inconsistent with it.

Of course, DDOT itself proposed the traffic islands, approved them and constructed them. This decision was consistent with the purpose of traffic calming: "improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods and addressing traffic-related safety issues throughout the city." In terms of volume control measures, their "primary purpose...is to divert traffic and discourage cut-through traffic." DDOT says on its web site:

- "They [traffic calming measures] are appropriate only on local streets with documented cut-through traffic issues."
- "They should be only used at local road intersections with collector or arterial streets, since they can accommodate the diverted traffic."
- "They may be used on streets with volumes up to 3,500 ADT [Average Daily Traffic]."
- Half Closures/Semi-diverters are "good for locations with extreme traffic volume problems..." (For us, they are good at both ends of Upton not just to avoid cut-through traffic, but also to help deal with Hearst, Sidwell and the Washington Home.)
- The principal advantage of these volume control measures is that they are "very effective in reducing traffic volumes; average decrease of 40% in traffic volumes."
- The disadvantage is that they "may create circuitous routes for local residents." (In our case, our association of the 100 homes on and near Upton Street is perfectly content to take other routes as a very small price to pay for reducing the cut through traffic.)
- These volume control measures "cannot be installed on major emergency response routes and transit routes." (This issue does not apply to Upton Street.)
- These volume control measures "may limit access to the businesses on local streets." (This also does not apply to Upton Street because there are no business located there.)
- These volume control measures may mean that "enforcement may be required to keep motorists from violating the directional closure." (We have seen no evidence that traffic is circumventing the traffic island at Wisconsin. So we see that the traffic calming island at Wisconsin is completely appropriate and well justified.)

All of these standards and concepts are supportive of the traffic calming islands on Upton. The reason DDOT installed the traffic islands on Upton is that our street – unlike any other street between Western and M Street – is the site for three large and adjacent institutions that generate huge amounts of traffic – Hearst, Sidwell and the Home. After studying the resulting traffic congestion, DDOT concluded that reducing the cut-through traffic was the

appropriate way to prevent total gridlock in the community. Even with the island, of course, we still have a serious gridlock problem each morning and evening. With the addition of the Sidwell Lower School, it is a virtual certainty that the gridlock problem will worsen if the traffic islands are removed. Every car coming down Wisconsin that wants to avoid Van Ness would have an incentive to turn onto Upton. This is utterly inconsistent with the District's traffic calming program.

DDOT proposed, approved and constructed the island in a manner completely consistent with its Traffic Calming program. The District says, "Desired outcomes of the Traffic Calming Assessment process may include a reduction in traffic speed, enhanced residential comfort, and improved general safety for pedestrians and bicyclists." Among the "types of traffic calming measures are "volume control measures [that] discourage the cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods." The District says answers the question "What is Traffic Calming" by stating that it includes "physical measures are taken to make speeding more difficult and cutting-through less attractive."

In terms of the convenience of Sidwell parents, the global agreement would move the Middle School drop-offs and pickups to Wisconsin Avenue and sharply limit the number of parents of Lower School students who would need to drive into our neighborhood at least two times each day. While some Lower School parents may be inconvenienced, this will actually help Sidwell to achieve its traffic management plan goals, which were developed in consultation with our community. To remove the islands on Upton at Wisconsin and 34th/Reno would actually hurt Sidwell's ability to achieve its traffic management plan goals. With no Middle School parents and few Lower School parents driving their kids for drop-offs and pickups on Upton and 37th Streets, essentially all of the traffic entering Upton Street from Wisconsin and 34th/Reno would be cut-through traffic, not school traffic. This proves again that the traffic island issue is non-germane to the Sidwell petition.

We suspect that some others, who are advocating for removal of the island, might say that they are "only" advocating removing the island "during construction" of the Lower School. That makes no sense. Sidwell has said it does not need to remove the traffic island at Wisconsin during the construction period. More importantly, we are quite certain that if the island is removed, it'll never be rebuilt. During construction, we expect that the global agreement will include a rule that the construction traffic should avoid traveling on Van Ness Street.

We do not see any basis in the DDOT traffic calming program metrics for DDOT to reverse its decision regarding the traffic islands. Surely with regard to such a U-turn DDOT bears a heavy burden in explaining why its reasons for proposing, approving and constructing the islands were invalid then or now. For DDOT to reverse itself would be profoundly unfair to the neighbors, including newcomers after the islands were installed, who have relied on the islands to calm traffic. Surely the property values on Upton will drop if it takes on the traffic we now see on artery streets like Van Ness. We consider the DDOT traffic calming measures in our community to be a major traffic calming success and a credit to DDOT. We are very appreciative that DDOT has been so responsive to the needs of our community for traffic calming.

While we see no basis for DDOT moving to reverse itself, if it moves to do so, it should wait for at least a year after the Lower School is opened so that it and we can assess the likely impact on traffic in the neighborhood. If the traffic island at Wisconsin is removed

when the Lower School is opened, Sidwell and DDOT will have no possible way to sort out the cause and effect of what is sure to be a serious increase in gridlock on Upton. We'd have two major variables working – at cross purposes – at the same time. With that confusion, it would be substantially more difficult for Sidwell to assess the impact of its Lower School traffic remediation strategy – and jeopardize its ability to establish that it has satisfied the metric that determines whether it can expand its student body. In effect, Sidwell would be blamed (unfairly) for the cut-through traffic.

In addition, DDOT should wait until the plans for redeveloping the 3900 Wisconsin property (Fannie Mae) are finalized. This 9.71 acre property (422,876 square feet) is zoned C-2-B which allows for matter-of-right medium density, including office, residential, retail, or a mix of the three, with a maximum height of 65 feet (6 stories), a maximum lot occupancy of 80% for residential use and 100% for all other uses, and a maximum FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of 3.5 for residential use and 1.5 for other permitted uses. Obviously we could see a rather massive redevelopment of the Fannie Mae property that generates considerable additional traffic, including substantial additional cut-through traffic on Upton Street (headed west primarily in the morning and east to 34th/Reno, primarily in the evening). Repurposing the existing Fannie Mae property appears to be unlikely given that one reason why Fannie Mae is moving is the poor quality of that iconic structure. “Instead real estate developers are more likely to see this property as a lucrative site for the kind of mixed-use projects that are going up elsewhere on Wisconsin Avenue.”

<http://tenleytowndc.org/2014/08/28/fannie-mae-to-sell-wisconsin-ave-headquarters/>

DDOT might also wait until the final plans for redevelopment of the Hearst Park. They might include a public outdoor swimming pool, renovation or replacement of the existing soccer fields and tennis courts, picnic areas, bocce court, Frisbee golf course, horse show pitch, and expanded recreation center. It is clear that the park may generate substantial traffic. DDOT might find it necessary to install a traffic island at Wisconsin and Quebec or other traffic calming measures.

Needless to say, it would be quite wasteful, destructive and embarrassing for DDOT to first build the traffic island, then tear it out, and then rebuild it when we see vast amounts of cut-through traffic headed to and from 3900 Wisconsin or the park.

If DDOT were to propose to remove the Wisconsin traffic island, it should NOT propose to insert a dedicated left turn signal on Wisconsin (for southbound traffic turning east on Upton) or a dedicated left turn signal on Upton (for westbound traffic turning south on Wisconsin). This will only encourage additional cut through traffic – the opposite of traffic calming. These turn signals would also introduce additional substantial delays for Wisconsin traffic not turning onto Upton.

If DDOT were to reverse itself regarding the traffic islands, we believe a wave of alarm would ripple throughout the communities where traffic calming measures have been adopted. They'd all worry that DDOT can be fickle and might reverse itself. We'd certainly push for the Council to defend traffic calming throughout the City from any DDOT reversals.

Finally, regarding the traffic island on Upton at 34th / Reno, there can be no credible argument that removing it will facilitate the flow of traffic around the schools. The island is located one long block from the school. DDOT did not even request Sidwell to examine this island in its CTR. This is appropriate because this island is focused on speeding, not volume. Prior to DDOT's insertion of the island – in what had been a dedicated right turn

lane – traffic would speed around this corner rushing to beat the traffic coming down 34th/Reno towards Tilden. Cars would routinely run the stop sign in a game of chicken. This was dangerous to everyone – traffic on 34th/Reno, traffic on Upton and the residents of Upton. On multiple occasions, cars parked near this intersection were side-swiped. For those of us whose driveways exit on Upton immediately before 34th/Reno, it was frightening to try to enter Upton going in either direction. We faced a race course speeding by our driveway. DDOT's traffic island forces cars to stop before they turned onto 34th/Reno. This simple step has substantially slowed traffic on Upton – it's been more effective than the speed humps. Also, with the landscaping that the community provided – \$15,000 has been donated to the District from 30 neighbors – we have an elegant gateway into the Springland Farm Community. (We are now planning to landscape the traffic island at 34th/Reno and Tilden to match the one at 34th/Reno and Upton.) Removing this traffic island and returning to the raceway would jeopardize both lives and property and destroy a public amenity enjoyed by everyone who travels on Reno Road.

Thank you for considering our views. We are very pleased with the process regarding the Sidwell petition and extremely pleased that it'll reduce the current gridlock, and not add to it. We'd certainly feared a much worse result. The only way now that our fears would be realized is if we get flooded with cut-through traffic.

Attached is our brief to the BZA -- to be filed tomorrow. We expect to be named a party to the proceeding.

We are available to answer any questions you may have about our position. We look forward to joining with Sidwell, DDOT, the ANC, and the neighbors in smoothing the way for positive and timely action on the BZA petition. We don't need any distractions or controversy surrounding a proposal to remove the traffic islands. Thank you for your efforts in that direction.

Sincerely,

Chuck Ludlam

Secretary, Springland Farm Community LLC

from: Westrom, Ryan (DDOT) <ryan.westrom@dc.gov>

to: Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>,
"VanHouten, Theodore (DDOT)" <theodore.vanhouten@dc.gov>

date: Tue, Feb 16, 2016 at 9:04 AM

subject: RE: DDOT Traffic Calming Measures on Upton

Hi Chuck,

Thank you for your well-articulated and comprehensive rundown of this issues at hand for you as part of the Sidwell expansion. DDOT is considering the many variables present in this case and working towards our vision for the appropriate mitigations.

We will be again meeting with the applicant this week, and then finalizing our report.

Best,

Ryan Westrom

from: Chuck Ludlum <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>

to: "Westrom, Ryan (DDOT)" <ryan.westrom@dc.gov>

bcc: chuck.ludlam@gmail.com
date: Tue, Feb 23, 2016 at 7:14 PM
subject: Re: Sidwell Friends School - 17703A

It seems that the signage at Wisconsin and Upton would remain the same. No Left turn for south flow Wisconsin traffic onto Upton And only right Turn from Upton onto Wisconsin going north. Is that correct?
Thanks
Sent from my iPhone

from: Westrom, Ryan (DDOT) <ryan.westrom@dc.gov>
to: Chuck Ludlum <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
date: Tue, Feb 23, 2016 at 7:51 PM
subject: Re: Sidwell Friends School - 17703A

Chuck,
At this juncture, it is too early for determination at this level of detail. We will wait for the results of the safety evaluation for final intersection recommendations.
Ryan Westrom

From: Chuck Ludlum <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2016 6:13 PM
To: Westrom, Ryan (DDOT); VanHouten, Theodore (DDOT); Ludlum, Chuck
Subject: DDOT's Safety Review

Dear Ryan and Ted:

Thank you for supporting the DDOT traffic calming plan on Upton. It took us six years – with DDOT in the lead – to secure it. The DDOT plan is consistent with all of the values and priorities of the City's traffic calming program. The plan that was implemented, and has worked so well for eight years, is a model for effective traffic calming. So it is appropriate that you report that the "traffic calming islands at both Wisconsin/Upton and Reno/Upton would likely remain in place" and that the "traffic calming [on Upton] would remain."

Jami's data – quoted below (including additional data since we filed our BZA testimony) – shows that a DDOT reversal of its traffic calming on Upton would provide a minor benefit to Van Ness (a connector) that would be offset and swamped by a traffic mess on Wisconsin (an artery) and Upton (a residential street). The delays on Wisconsin would run as high as 30% for the 3,500 vehicles. (See new data from Jami below.) That is just for the AM peak and we'd see similar delays throughout the day and during the PM peak. On Upton, Jami reports that the impact on the neighborhood would be grim: 171%, 67%, and 162% increases. But more important, these increases would hit the only neighborhood in the District with two elementary schools – back to back on Upton and 37th Street. We have a unique situation that compounds the safety concerns arising from cut-through traffic. Surely if there is justification to install a raised crosswalk at Upton and 37th Street, there is justification for continuing to limit the cut-through traffic.

In terms of the impact on Wisconsin and Upton, removing the island at Wisconsin surely is not a cost effective price to pay for conferring a minor benefit on Van Ness. Jami's data proves that the current traffic calming plan is consistent with the priorities the City gives to reducing cut-through traffic and that any move to undo it would be arbitrary and capricious.

In terms of continuing the traffic calming on Upton, it's been vastly better than nothing, but this plan hasn't prevented the gridlock around Hearst and Sidwell. With the Sidwell BZA plan, however, we may finally see a net reduction in this gridlock. For DDOT to have forfeited all these gains by flooding the neighborhood with cut-through traffic would have been profoundly contradictory, a classic Catch 22. Thanks again for not proposing that. In terms of the impact of traffic calming on Upton on other neighborhoods, all of us and all of them should see a net reduction in traffic from Sidwell's TDM plan. I can't see how any of us would see an increase. The worst of the traffic – the Sidwell pickups – will be dispersed to Wisconsin Avenue! An incredible victory for all of the neighbors, near and far.

With regard to the diverter, I have submitted multiple 311 requests that DDOT install a yellow triangle with four yellow reflectors to warn vehicles of the existence of the diverter. There is no sign on the east end of the diverter, a major oversight. Each time DDOT has refused to do so. Another request for this sign is currently pending with DDOT. Surely, before you consider removing the diverter or reconfiguring it, DDOT should install a yellow sign with reflectors and give it a year to see what happens.

I have also submitted multiple 311 requests to adjust the signs and traffic walk signs so that they can be seen by drivers and pedestrians. These requests have often been ignored by DDOT.

I am intrigued to see the details of the DDOT safety data regarding this intersection. For 30 years I have been walking through this intersection multiple times a week – I am a very active member at the Sport and Health Club – and have never once seen an accident. Notably, because of the diverter, I have never seen a southbound vehicle on Wisconsin taking an illegal left turn onto Upton. Such a turn would be the most dangerous turn one could make at this intersection.

We suspect that some of these accidents near Wisconsin and Upton are caused by the Post Office traffic. Entering the Post Office from the southbound lane of Wisconsin can be dangerous – crossing three northbound lanes of traffic – and probably ought to be banned. Exiting the Post Office, there's a no left turn sign but it is ignored. Again this traffic crosses three lanes of northbound traffic to merge with three lanes of southbound traffic. Perhaps the signage banning a left turn should be reinforced.

We are concerned that any move to reconfigure the diverter with the intent of reducing safety issues at Upton / Wisconsin, DDOT would see an increase in safety incidents at Upton / 37th. Also, we have local residents at risk, not just Hearst and Sidwell students; Springland Farm homeowners on the 3700 block of Upton have 11 children and there are 23 more on the 3600 block of Upton.

The beauty of the traffic diverter, of course, is that it's self enforcing. We don't need to demand MPD enforcement to secure compliance.

Leaving us with no diverter would simply invite violation of the signage that limits cut-through traffic and, worse yet, lead to additional – perhaps much more consequential – traffic accidents, i.e. head on collisions arising from illegal left turns by southbound

Wisconsin traffic.

Needless to say, turning the Wisconsin/Upton intersection into a four way intersection would surely give rise to many more safety incidents. With the current signage and diverter, we have a fairly simple intersection with a minimum number of phases.

So please send us all the data and individual police reports regarding the 53 incidents at Upton, as well as the data regarding the 37 incidents at Van Ness, the 29 at Warren and the 18 at Porter. We need to see the specifics and assess how the data for each intersection compares qualitatively.

With regard to the process going forward, we assume we will have ample opportunity to meet with you, review the data, and discuss the options before any proposal is advanced. If DDOT concludes that a concrete diverter is a safety hazard, in lieu of leaving us with no diverter, DDOT should replace it with an equally effective diverter using reflective traffic delineator / channelizer posts.

Thanks again for supporting both the existing DDOT and new Sidwell traffic calming plans. Taken together, we hope to get our neighborhood back.

Thanks.

Chuck

Sidwell Data Regarding Traffic Impact of Removing Traffic Island at Wisconsin and Upton:

Documenting the zero sum negative impact of removing the traffic island, we have examined the data that underlies Sidwell's Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR). That data indicates that if the Upton traffic island is removed, in just one hour – AM peak from 8:00-9:00 – we'd see a 171% increase in traffic on Upton. For PM school peak from 3:15-4:15 we'd see a 67% increase. For PM peak from 5:00-6:00 we'd see a 162% increase. And who would benefit? These negative impacts on Upton would yield a tiny decrease in traffic on Van Ness – only a 12% decrease in volume during the AM peak hour, a 12% decrease during the PM school peak hour, and a 7% decrease during the PM commuter peak hour. The dramatic negative impact on Upton surely is not cost effective or fair in proportionate to the trivial benefit to Van Ness. Indeed it'd mean that there would be only a 40% difference in the number of cars on Upton – a residential street – as on Van Ness – a major connector street.

Still worse, Upton Street is not the only loser – all traffic on Wisconsin will be adversely affected. According to the Sidwell CTR, the left turners from Wisconsin onto Upton would cause an average delay at the Upton / Wisconsin intersection of 15% for all of the 3,454 cars proceeding north and south at AM peak. In general, all approaches would experience some increase in delay. The approaches with the most significant increase vary by time of day. For example, during the morning peak hour, the westbound and southbound approaches would see the largest increase in delay while the eastbound approach would see the largest increase in delay during the evening peak hour. So the mix of impacts of removing the island – decidedly negative for our residential street, trivially positive for an artery street, and a 15% average delay for nearly 3,500 cars in that AM peak hour – well, it's hard to imagine any possible public policy rationale for removing this traffic island. Remember these are the harms that would be inflicted during these few hours. Adverse traffic effects would continue 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. And think about the extreme irony if this amendment were affixed to a BZA order focused on remediating

traffic in the neighborhood around Sidwell's project. It's obvious that removing the island is wildly inconsistent with the issues raised by the Sidwell BZA petition and wildly inconsistent with the City's traffic calming priority.

If DDOT were to install four leading green lights for cars turning left, according to Jami the delay for N-S traffic on Wisconsin would be even worse – “somewhere between 15% and 30%.” When Sidwell analyzed this intersection without the traffic island, it “only assumed a left turn arrow for northbound traffic, which is there today. The remaining left turns at the intersection were assumed to be permitted, but they would be made without the aid of a green arrow.” The 15% delays it projected for this scenario would “likely be worse with four left turn phases.” “The delays would likely be worse with four left turn phases. The delay for the left turns themselves would likely decrease, but the traffic on the remaining movements would incur an increased delay. Since the through volume on Wisconsin Avenue is significantly higher than the other movements, the average delay for the intersection would almost certainly increase (i.e. a higher volume of traffic would see an increase in delay than the volume of traffic seeing a decrease in delay; therefore, the average delay for the intersection would increase).”

On Thu, Feb 25, 2016 at 10:50 PM, Westrom, Ryan (DDOT)
<ryan.westrom@dc.gov> wrote:

Hello Chuck,

Thank you for your message. And for, as always, your well-reasoned perspective on this matter. Our intention remains to carefully and fully consider this matter. With this careful consideration, we have moved closer to understanding the best solutions, but work remains.

I look forward to completing the hearing for this project.

Best, Ryan Westrom

On Fri, Feb 26, 2016 at 11:08 AM, Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
wrote:

Ryan and Ted:

Thanks for your reply. We look forward to working with you on the safety review.

My 311 request for installation of the yellow sign with reflectors -- on the diverter -- was submitted on December 9, 2015. 15-00333584. It was "closed" -- rejected -- on February 3, 2016.

I would think that installing these yellow signs with reflectors would be standard policy to mark an island/diverter. How can it not be?

Before you do anything else with the diverter, DDOT should mark it with a yellow sign with reflectors so that it's not invisible! That should end the accidents involving the diverter.

This is the easiest solution to any safety problems with the diverter. And you don't need to complete the safety study to implement it.

Do you want me to submit another 311 request?

Thanks.

Chuck

PS. You can also look up a dozen other 311 requests I've submitted about safety issues at this intersection. DDOT response typically has been to close them without solving the problem. It may well be that DDOT's inaction on 311 requests is the major safety problem at this intersection, not the diverter.

On Mon, Feb 29, 2016 at 9:48 AM, Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com> wrote:

Ryan

I look forward to seeing you at the BZA hearing tomorrow. The end to a very successful negotiation among SFS, DDOT and the Springland Farm Community.

In addition to my 311 request for the yellow sign with reflectors on the diverter that DDOT rejected -- 15-00333584 -- below is a history of my other 311 requests for DDOT to address safety issues at the Wisconsin-Upton intersection.

I believe this is an incomplete list; the City's computer system regarding 311 requests seems to be quite flawed.

You can see that I have put in a new request for installation of a yellow sign with reflectors on the diverter --16-00408960.

This new request enables you to act quickly to address safety issues on the diverter, without waiting for the results of your traffic safety review.

Thanks again for saving our traffic calming on Upton.

Chuck

In-Progress

16-00408960

Sign New Investigation

Feb 26, 2016 11:49:51 AM

4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016

In-Progress

15-00347074

Sign New Investigation

Dec 26, 2015 12:45:41 PM

4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016

Closed

15-00268607

Sign Replacement

Sep 18, 2015 11:04:34 AM

4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016

Closed

13-00268992

Sign Missing Investigation

Nov 11, 2013 5:19:00 PM

4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
In Progress

13-00258758
Sign Missing Investigation
Oct 28, 2013 1:47:00 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
ADMICLOS

13-00147966
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Jun 22, 2013 8:55:22 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00131485
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Jun 05, 2013 3:41:10 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00119754
Traffic Signal Maintenance
May 23, 2013 7:10:24 AM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00090280
Sign Missing Investigation
Apr 22, 2013 10:46:21 AM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
ADMICLOS

13-00045850
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Feb 28, 2013 7:14:52 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

12-00278092
Sign Missing Investigation
Oct 01, 2012 2:05:57 PM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

On Wed, Mar 2, 2016 at 5:29 AM, Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com> wrote:
Ryan:

Thanks for your support at the BZA yesterday. It's an amazing result for such a complicated project. We might see a net reduction in traffic in our neighborhood after years of gridlock from Hearst and the Sidwell Middle School traffic. Thanks for all you did to achieve that. In terms of the diverter, thanks for offering to get us the safety data. We're interested in seeing the 53 police traffic reports, including the personal identification information for the victim. All the details. We also need to know if accidents involving ingress and egress from the Post Office are attributed to this intersection.

Also, we need to see all the 311 requests that have focused on this intersection for the period of the accident reports. We need the initial service request -- with all the details including the personal identification information for the requester -- and the detailed reports within DDOT of what it found and did. It will not help us to see "closed" without seeing all the details of what DDOT did or didn't do and why.

We will, of course, be looking for a correlation between the accidents and DDOT action or inaction on the 311 requests. And, with the personal identification information, we may be able to identify the accident victims with a cause of action against the District.

If it would help if I filed a FOIA request for this information, I'm happy to do so. With regard to the personal identification information, I'm an experienced FOIA litigator and believe that we are entitled to this information.

When it's time for us to meet, I'll be there.

Thanks again.

Chuck

On Wed, Mar 2, 2016 at 9:34 AM, Westrom, Ryan (DDOT) <ryan.westrom@dc.gov> wrote:

Hi Chuck,

Thanks for reaching out on this. After discussing this with my colleagues this morning, we do believe the FOIA route is the most appropriate way to go. This is not intended to make the acquisition of these more difficult, but these items will come from various different sources and this will allow things to be routed in the most appropriate way. Additionally, this allows us to track all data requests that come in and document appropriately.

<http://ddot.dc.gov/page/open-government-and-foia-ddot>

I'm confident you will receive an expeditious response. Let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,

Ryan Westrom

On Wed, Mar 2, 2016 at 1:24 PM, Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com> wrote:

Karen R. Calmeise, Esq.
Hearings/FOIA Officer
Office of the General Counsel
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street, S.E. Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20003

Email: karen.calmeise@dc.gov

Phone: (202) 671-5114

Dear Karen:

DDOT has undertaken a safety review of the intersection at Wisconsin and Upton. I represent the local community – the Springland Farm Community LLC – with regard to this review.

The DDOT report regarding the Sidwell Friends School application states that DDOT has identified “five intersections within the study area that have a crash rate of 1.0 Million Entering Vehicles (MEV) or higher.” The study is attached – see page 15.

DDOT has reported that there are 53 “crashes” at the Wisconsin and Upton intersection. The DDOT report states, “The intersection with the most incidents is the Wisconsin Avenue/Upton Street intersection. Due to this incidence, DDOT will be continuing to assess operations at this intersection. The presence of a vehicular traffic diverter on the east leg of the Upton Street/Wisconsin Avenue intersection may be contributing to this intersection’s safety issues.”

This FOIA requests production of the data upon which DDOT will rely in assessing the crash data and the relevance, if any, of the diverter. Our community will be taking a deep dive into the same data. To wit, we seek production of the following documents:

1. We ask for the DDOT or other crash data available to DDOT for this intersection (Wisconsin and Upton).

2. We ask specifically for the police reports regarding the 53 crashes cited by DDOT.

In providing these police reports, we ask that you not delete the personal identification information for the crash victim.

Note: We assume that DDOT must assemble the police reports for its investigation so we should not need to file a FOIA request with the DC Police Department.

3. We ask for documents that indicate whether the crash data for this intersection includes crashes associated with cars entering or exiting the driveways for the US Post Office (Friendship Station; 4015 Wisconsin), 4000 Wisconsin, 4100 Wisconsin and 4105 Wisconsin.

4. We also ask for the same crash data, including police reports, for the other four intersections identified in the DDOT report with high crash rates: Wisconsin and Van Ness (37 crashes), Wisconsin and Warren (29 crashes), Wisconsin, Rodman and Sidwell Driveway (23 crashes) and Wisconsin and Porter (18 crashes).

Note: Again, we assume that DDOT must assemble the police reports for its investigation so we should not need to file a FOIA request with the DC Police Department.

5. We specifically ask for any DDOT documents regarding the traffic calming island, including a traffic diverter, installed by DDOT pursuant to a 2003-2008 traffic calming plan for Upton Street. 2003-to-present.

6. Regarding 311 requests, I have cited to DDOT multiple 311 requests that I have filed regarding safety issues at this intersection. See partial list below. Please note that this list – taken from the City’s 311 site – does not include my request 15-00333584 (request regarding the diverter).

With regard to each one of my requests, especially 15-00333584, I request to see the initial submission (verbatim) and reports of DDOT’s analysis of the request and report regarding

the actions it took or did not take in response to the request. It is not sufficient to tell me that the DDOT response is that the request is “closed.” I want to know what happened or didn’t happen and why.

7. In addition, I request to see the other 311 requests that have been filed with regard to this intersection – Wisconsin and Upton. By other requesters. These requests probably refer to 4005 Wisconsin Avenue (the UP Post Office), 4000 Wisconsin Avenue, 4100 Wisconsin Avenue (WUSA), and 4105 Wisconsin Avenue (Devonshire Court Apartments). I request these reports for the same time period – 3 years – as for the DDOT crash data. I ask for the same level of detail: the initial submission (verbatim) and any reports of DDOT’s analysis of the issue and the actions it took or did not take in response to the 311 request.

With regard to these 311 requests, we ask that you not delete the personal identification information for the crash victim.

To be clear, the reason why we are asking that you not delete the personal identification information for the crash victims and the 311 requesters is that the crash victims may have a cause of action against the City for its failure to implement safety changes at this intersection in response to the 311 requests. In addition we may seek to interview any victims whose car were damaged in a collision with the diverter whether the failure of DDOT to install a yellow triangle with reflectors on the diverter – the subject of my 15-00333584 request – was the proximate or a contributing cause.

We ask for an expedited production of these documents. It will not be possible for DDOT to complete its safety assessment of this intersection until DDOT and we both have access to this information. DDOT and we need to assess this data to determine whether there is a factual nexus between the crashes and the diverter.

If there is such a nexus, DDOT has said that the “traffic calming islands at both Wisconsin / Upton and Reno / Upton would likely remain in place” and that the “traffic calming [on Upton] would remain.” This means that DDOT must select the safety remediation option at Wisconsin and Upton that does not permit or encourage cut-through and speeding traffic on Upton. The worst outcome would be to remediate safety concerns at Wisconsin and Upton in a way that would increase safety issues adjacent to the two elementary schools on Upton. Given these two elementary schools, there is no neighborhood in the City that more needs and deserves traffic calming and reduction of cut-through and speeding traffic. The data we have requested should give insights into which type of remediation at Wisconsin and Upton would resolve the safety issues there without permitting or encouraging cut-through and speeding traffic. In this safety review, DDOT is not reconsidering the traffic calming plan it proposed, approved and implemented from 2003 to 2008 and any questions or issues about the impact of that plan on the traffic in our or other neighborhoods are non-germane. Given that all of this data must be assembled by DDOT for its safety review, there should be no cost to me for the production of this data.

Thank you very much.

Chuck Ludlam

4020 Reno Road NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
202-364-6021
Chuck.ludlam@gmail.com

CHUCK.LUDLAM@GMAIL.COM 311 REQUESTS
(ACCORDING TO DISTRICT'S 311 WEBSITE)

In-Progress
16-00408960
Sign New Investigation
Feb 26, 2016 11:49:51 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016
In-Progress

15-00347074
Sign New Investigation
Dec 26, 2015 12:45:41 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016
Closed

15-00268607
Sign Replacement
Sep 18, 2015 11:04:34 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC, 20016
Closed

13-00268992
Sign Missing Investigation
Nov 11, 2013 5:19:00 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
In Progress

13-00258758
Sign Missing Investigation
Oct 28, 2013 1:47:00 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
ADMICLOS

13-00147966
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Jun 22, 2013 8:55:22 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00131485
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Jun 05, 2013 3:41:10 PM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00119754
Traffic Signal Maintenance
May 23, 2013 7:10:24 AM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

13-00090280
Sign Missing Investigation
Apr 22, 2013 10:46:21 AM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
ADMICLOS

13-00045850
Traffic Signal Maintenance
Feb 28, 2013 7:14:52 AM
4005 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

12-00278092
Sign Missing Investigation
Oct 01, 2012 2:05:57 PM
4000 WISCONSIN AVENUE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20016
Closed

On Fri, Mar 4, 2016 at 5:29 AM, Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com> wrote:

Ryan:

We've filed a FOIA request for the crash, traffic data and 311 reports. Thanks. When we get the data, we'll be ready to participate in this safety review regarding the diverter.

Rounding out the fact-finding elements of this process, we believe it is essential for DDOT to commission a baseline traffic study in the 3800 block of Upton of the traffic flows going both directions at all times of the day.

In your report you have said the "traffic calming islands at both Wisconsin / Upton and Reno / Upton would likely remain in place" and that the "traffic calming [on Upton] would remain." We take this to mean that DDOT is not undertaking to relitigate the traffic calming plan it proposed, approved and implemented from 2003-2008. So, we assume that the safety review is not intended to permit or encourage cut-through traffic on Upton.

To determine whether DDOT **inadvertently** permit or facilitate additional cut-through traffic on Upton, we need a traffic study before and after DDOT's actions with regard to the diverter. Only with these two traffic studies will we know whether DDOT's actions have or have not inadvertently permitted or encouraged cut-through traffic.

We ask that DDOT commence this first study forthwith – while Sidwell and Hearst are still in session – so that there will be no delay in the completion of the safety review.

If expense is an issue, we'd be willing to reimburse DDOT for its expenses.

The reason why these studies are important is obvious. An increase in cut-through traffic threatens to create safety risks at Upton and 37th Street – "downstream" from the diverter.

Given the fact that this intersection lies adjacent to two elementary schools – a unique situation in the District – traffic calming to reduce cut-through traffic is an urgent and paramount priority.

With regard to the process going forward, we understand that DDOT must first assemble and analyze the facts to determine whether the diverter, in fact, has a nexus with the crashes. Then it must assess the appropriate remediation options that do not create safety issues “downstream” on Upton by introducing increased cut-through traffic.

We see a number of options regarding the diverter that would not adversely affect traffic calming on Upton. Installing (finally) a yellow sign with reflectors on the diverter is an easy first step. Installing “no right turn on red” signs at the diverter might help. It might help to install a green arrow – pointing south – for southbound traffic on Wisconsin. This would augment the four no left turn signs. Reconfiguring the diverter – short of removing it – is also an option. For example, DDOT could replace it with an equally effective diverter using reflective traffic delineator / channelizer posts.

The one option that would surely permit and encourage cut-through traffic would be to remove the island altogether. So that is the one option that jeopardizes safety at Upton and 37th Street near the elementary schools and relitigates the 2003-2008 plan. In addition, Jami’s data reveals the harsh and excessive traffic consequences on Wisconsin and Upton of removing the island.

With regard to the two step safety review, we assume that DDOT will follow the facts regarding the diverter without prejudgment as to whether anything needs to be done and, if action is required, to review the options for remediation without prejudgment that the diverter must be removed. Sadly your use of phrases such as “DDOT expects the applicant to work with DDOT to remove the diverter” and “in conjunction with this removal” indicates that you may have prejudged the outcome of both steps of this review and that the notice of intent public comments may be meaningless.

Similarly your reference to “dispersing school traffic across more streets reducing the load on others” seems to indicate that you are, in fact, intending to relitigate DDOT’s 2003-2008 traffic calming plan rather than assess the safety of the diverter.

Finally, we assume that DDOT will complete this two step process – and consult with us about each step – before it publishes a notice of intent. And then we expect that DDOT will reasonably consider the comments that are submitted and publish a detailed response and analysis.

Thank you very much. We look forward to working with you during this process.

Chuck

On Fri, Mar 4, 2016 at 9:38 AM, Westrom, Ryan (DDOT) <ryan.westrom@dc.gov> wrote:

Hi Chuck,

Thanks for your message. In regard to your concern about a baseline, I would note that we do have one thanks to the data collection included in the Sidwell Friends analysis. This should give us sufficient baseline information should that be a need.

At this juncture, DDOT is working on the safety evaluation, which will be one of the primary considerations as we determine what modifications may make the most sense. Once that process is complete we will be working to implement any changes deemed

appropriate.
Best,
Ryan Westrom

from: Chuck Ludlam <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
to: "Westrom, Ryan (DDOT)" <ryan.westrom@dc.gov>,
"Ludlam,Chuck" <chuck.ludlam@gmail.com>
cc: "VanHouten, Theodore (DDOT)" <theodore.vanhouten@dc.gov>
date: Wed, Mar 16, 2016 at 11:26 AM
subject: Re: Baseline and Follow Up Traffic Study and Two Step Process

Ryan:

Thanks. Yes, I have located the traffic data for 38th and Upton. See attached. This data enables us to determine whether any cut-through traffic is inadvertently introduced onto Upton.

With regard to the safety study, we are unable to participate until the data is produced to us pursuant to our FOIA request.

The data that we have requested is essential for your process as well as ours so we are not delaying anything in asking for these documents.

In terms of the process going forward, is this how it'll go?

1. Once we get the data and analyze it, we can meet to discuss what the data says?
2. We can also discuss the options that do not invite or encourage cut-through traffic and do not create a boomerang of safety issues "downstream" of the diverter?
3. Then the issue is ripe for a notice of intent and public participation?
4. With regard to your notice of intent, DDOT will present its report with an analysis of the traffic data, the 311 requests, and the options that won't introduce cut-through traffic or create a boomerang problem.
5. After public comments are presented, DDOT will publish its response to the public comments?

In terms of the BZA, the diverter issue is not ripe for inclusion in the BZA order on the Sidwell petition. Introduction of such a controversial issue into the Sidwell process can only slow that project or jeopardize it. There are many non-controversial projects to which the Condition #6 might refer. See list below.

We look forward to working with you on this study.

Thanks.

Chuck

Condition #6: Nine Non-Controversial Issues

The nine non-controversial projects that could be referenced in Condition #6 include: 1) raised crosswalks at Upton and 38th, Upton and 37th Street, 37th and Tilden, and 37th and Quebec; 2) stripe parallel line crosswalks on the eastern (Sidwell) and western (Rodman Street) leg of the Wisconsin Avenue/Rodman Street intersection with adjusted stop bars and meeting ADA compatibility; 3) detectable warnings to the eastern leg of the Wisconsin Avenue/Rodman Street intersection; 4) stripe parallel line crosswalks, add detectable warnings, and add pedestrian signal heads on the eastern and western legs of the Wisconsin Avenue/Post Office / Sidwell intersection meeting ADA compatibility; 5) a pedestrian

path/sidewalk into the school property from the Wisconsin Avenue/Post Office/Sidwell intersection and the next service drive / entrance to the south; and 6) new sidewalk where it is missing along 37th Street north of the school (from Upton Street past the alley, on the west side of the street).