

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

To: Sharon Schellin, Secretary
Zoning Commission

From: Kenneth G. Laden *Kenneth G. Laden*
Associate Director

Date: January 23, 2007

Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 06-27

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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING

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The District of Columbia, Department of Transportation (DDOT) previously provided testimony to the Office of Zoning for Zoning Case Number 06-27, on November 15, 2006 and December 4, 2006. We recently learned that the Zoning Commission requested additional comments from DDOT in response to testimony provided by Mr. Joe Mehra on behalf of the Foggy Bottom Association. Our response is provided below.

I. Existing Conditions

Mr. Mehra expressed concern that the two traffic reports prepared by Wells and Associates on behalf of the applicant, dated May 24, 2006 and October 2006 reflected slight variations in peak traffic hours. We believe that Wells and Associates would be in a better position to explain why the two reports identified varying peak hours. However, we found that both sets of peak hours examined by Wells and Associates generally reflect peak travel in the GWU campus area.

II. Background Conditions

Mr. Mehra repeated concerns he raised in his testimony provided in his comments related to the GWU Campus Plan (Z.C. 06-11 and 06-12), where he cited the difference in future increases in background travel (0.5 percent in the Wells Associates traffic study vs. 1.0 percent annual growth rates in the DDOT West End Traffic Study). DDOT believes the applicant has performed its transportation study with a sufficient background traffic growth rate of .05 percent per year. DDOT initiated the Lower West End Transportation Study with a more conservative background traffic growth rate estimate of 1 percent per year but the study covered an area (study area is bounded by 29th Street in the west, 23rd Street in the east, and extends from K Street to M Street) just north of the GW Foggy Bottom Campus. However, both growth rates are reasonable for the specified areas in the Foggy Bottom/Lower West End neighborhoods. In the

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foreseeable future (next five years) the difference in the increase in traffic, as calculated by these two estimates, is relatively slight.

III. Variance in Trip Rates

As stated in our January 4, 2007 testimony related to Z.C Case 06-11 and 06-12, regarding these same concerns involving GWU Existing Trip Generation Rates, DDOT cannot trace how the applicant determined vehicle trips in the August submission. We find by tracing the calculation steps used standard methodology that the vehicle trip generation should have been lower in the August submission. The October memo removes non-respondents from mode split percentages increasing the auto share subtotal. DDOT believes the October memo corrects the erroneous calculation by the applicant.

IV. Level of Service

We acknowledge that some intersections in the Foggy Bottom/GWU Campus area are at Level of Service E and F. This is an unfortunate situation based on the density of land uses in the area and the limited capacity of the existing roadways. DDOT has on-going programs to improve traffic signal control to include traffic detection and traffic responsive signals over the next 5-6 years to address traffic growth from this and other development projects. The mitigation plan lays out the best effort of the applicant and the Department to reduce travel demand generated by the proposed site development, and thereby minimize the potential negative impact on existing and future Levels of Service.