

May 8, 2014
Testimony for Case 13-14

Chairman Hood, Commissioners Cohen, May, Miller and Turnbull, good evening.

My name is Betsy McDaniel and I have been a homeowner on First Street in Bloomingdale for five years. You may not think the tale of a broken ankle would be relevant to this hearing, but let me share my experience and how it shapes my testimony about the medical buildings proposed for McMillan Park Reservoir Historic District, and the related transportation issues.

When I sustained a compound fracture of my ankle, I was fortunate to have prompt response from DCFEMS and a quick ride to the emergency room at Washington Hospital Center. Frequent trips for physical therapy were facilitated by my husband taking me in his car, and supplemented by taxi rides. I could not walk or manage the bus, and I doubt many other sick or injured residents avail themselves of bikes and sidewalks to access medical facilities. *(In one trip, we were almost hit by my doctor who uses First Street to commute from Capitol Hill to the Hospital Center.)* When I was able to use mass transit to go to physical therapy, I switched to the Eastern Market office because it was easier to go across town than to get to the Rehab Center by bus.

Spending a lot of time at home, I noticed an increase in traffic from my house during days that long-term neighbors confirmed. The addition of thousands of vehicle trips per day to high rise medical buildings with 1900 parking places concerns me deeply. If medical facilities need to be built near the WHC, they should be built on the expansive parking lots there. They could then manage access to the one site and centralize shuttle service. This alternative could also mitigate the huge volume of stormwater runoff that damages Bloomingdale homes.

It doesn't take a lot of imagination, or an expensive traffic study, to tell you that North Capitol is congested. But a traffic study should have included all of North Capitol and First Street and not just a few blocks surrounding the site. First Street is a major route for commuters, connecting north DC and Maryland to the Third Street tunnel, Capitol Hill and Virginia. Whenever there is an exceptional situation, which is almost every day, North Capitol gridlock moves to First Street and the small, connecting side streets.

The following are examples of gridlock-inducing events which create gridlock on North Capitol and First Street, NW, all of which I have experienced, and have either been unable to leave my house, or had difficulty returning to my house.

Fridays,, especially congested in late spring and summer
Getaway days for holidays, all year round
Inauguration
Cherry blossoms
Howard University events, such as move in, homecoming, graduation,
Large conventions downtown
Motorcades, especially Presidential
Car accidents
Stabbing on North Capitol
Fire on North Capitol
Shooting on North Capitol
Carjacking on Rhode Island Avenue
Snow
Heavy rain (streets in the area flood)

(It is actually quite entertaining to see giant tour buses attempt to go down my narrow side street, where it is difficult for two cars to pass. The hazard for cars, cyclists and pedestrians is not so amusing.)

If the applicant is not able to guarantee a grocery store at McMillan, can we really count on them to advocate for better transit options? We can't wait for the increased gridlock created by this development to ask for enhanced transit options - we need them now, or very soon, or what is the point of planning? Why create a problem and hope for future remediation?

On the day of the Navy Yard shooting, ambulances and police cars raced by my house. I don't know if North Capitol was congested, but one day, if it hasn't happened already, someone may not make it to the WHC in time because both North Capitol and First Street are too congested for an ambulance to get to one of the area's major medical centers. Please don't let this happen. Please don't allow this oversized, automobile-based development in a transit deficient, congested area of the District.

Thank you for your consideration.

Betsy McDaniel



**Examples of transportation problems in and around
McMillan Park Reservoir Historic District**

Problematic areas in Bloomingdale.

First Street - often bumper to bumper traffic, often for hours, speeding, running of stop signs and traffic lights, oversized trucks

Channing street - northbound traffic on North Capitol turning left on Channing to avoid traffic and inability to turn left on Michigan Avenue (I have no idea why those residents are not here screaming, and haven't done so earlier!)

Almost all side streets are used to switch back and forth between North Capitol and First Street to avoid traffic

North/south alleys are used to bypass traffic on First

All of these conditions exacerbate driver frustration, resulting in reckless and aggressive driving, which endangers all in the area, be it cyclists, pedestrians or other cars

On McMillan site

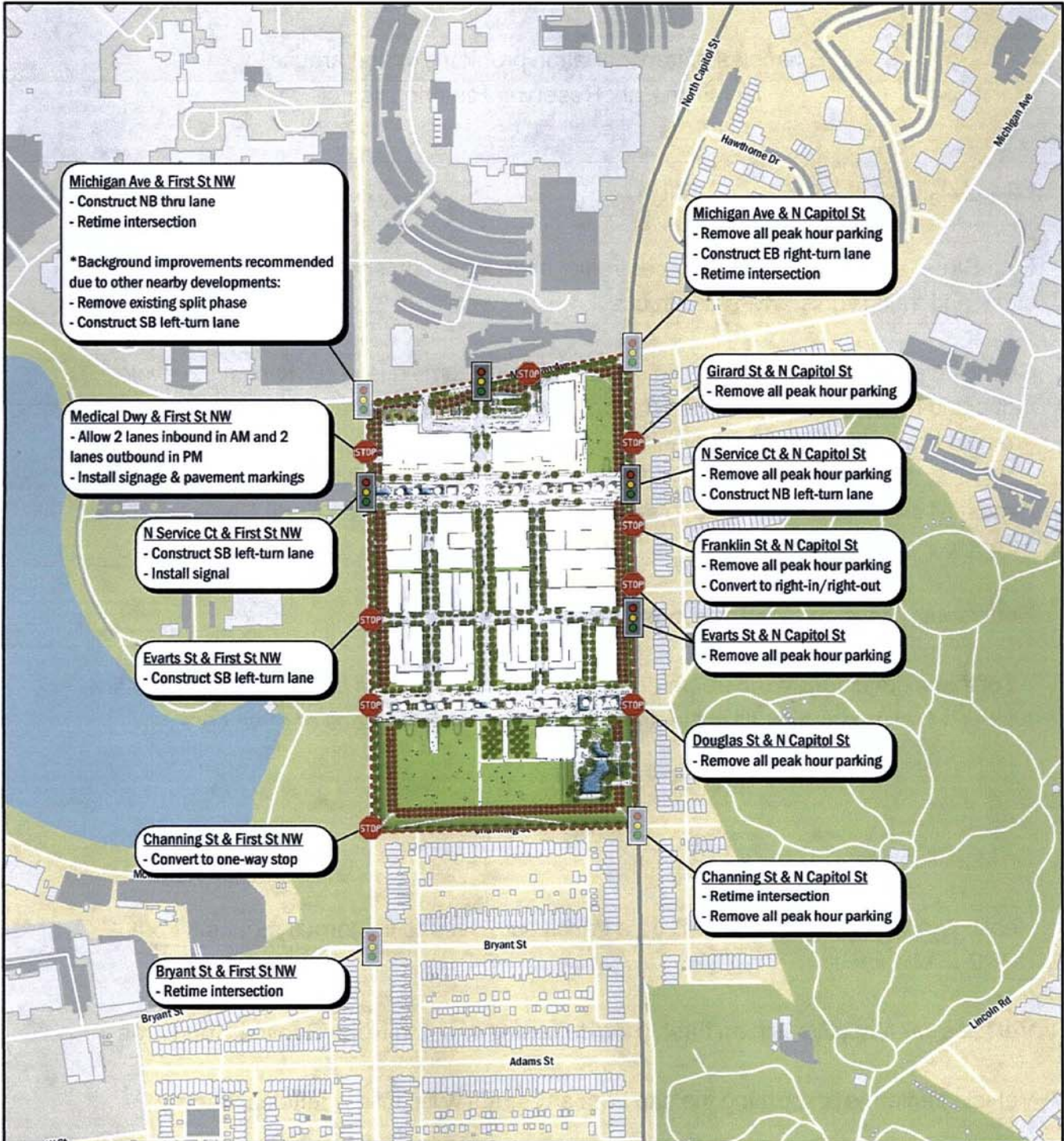
Healing gardens/green space will be a transit hub, despite numerous requests from HPRB to change it

Vehicles will turn left/south on First when departing from the North Service Court area

Vehicles entering and exiting the site from any street will cause additional backup

Major bus routes travel on already congested streets

Green and Red Metro lines are not convenient



Summary of Recommended Improvements

- Development Site
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Future Signalized Intersection
- Stop-Controlled Intersection

XX - Recommended Phase 1 Site Improvement



1" = 500 ft