

Memorandum

Government of the District of Columbia

TO: Edward L. Curry
Executive Director
Zoning Secretariat

Department,
Agency, Office: Public Works
Policy & Planning

FROM: Wallace J. Cohen *WJC*
Acting Administrator

Date: February 8, 1988

SUBJECT: Zoning Case Case 86-26

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 86-26
Exhibit 384

In response to your memorandum of January 27, 1988 to John E. Touchstone requesting review of Exhibit 1 in the subject Zoning Case the following information is provided:

The traffic report prepared by Everett Carter for the Cleveland Park and Woodley Park Neighborhoods questioned a number of assumptions and techniques used in the OP Connecticut Avenue Study. Time does not permit a page by page critique of the Carter study. We therefore will address only his principal criticisms of the DPW analysis. They are:

- a) Future Land Use Scenarios
- b) Trip Generation Rates
- c) Intersection Capacity Analysis Techniques

The future land use scenario proposed in the Carter Study by the Cleveland Park Historical Society and the Woodley Park Community Association will generate more trips than the land use projections offered by the Office of Planning. The Office of Planning staff stated at the public hearing regarding this study that their projections are likely to be in excess of expected future developments, not understated. They see no justification for the higher development scenarios proposed in the Carter study.

In the Carter report it says "trip generation rates ... used in this analysis ... are substantially lower than I have encountered in any other study." DPW does not always use standard trip generation rates as listed in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Handbook. We have found that oftentimes these rates are more applicable to suburban developments and overpredict trips in the city. We also use trip rates developed by the Council of Governments from surveys conducted at office buildings and retail establishments in the District of Columbia. For example, the PM peak hour office generation rates were derived from the survey of the Foundry Building in Georgetown. The retail generation rates were derived from the Georgetown Park Trip Generation study by COG. Other trip generation rates for movie theaters, schools and hotels, however were based on ITE rates. We

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believe that using locally derived trip rates where applicable is superior to using national averages in every instance in our analyses of development related traffic.

The Carter report claims that the intersection analysis package used by DPW (EZ-POSIT) substantially understates the congestion levels on Connecticut Avenue. He suggests that the Highway Capacity Manual should have been used. Using that technique he found that existing levels of service at all intersections studied were far worse than those determined by DPW.

We did not use computer output only to determine the existing levels of service on Connecticut Avenue. The output of the EZ-POSIT program was compared with level of service speed delay surveys done by COG in an unrelated study and with our own field surveys. A strong correlation was found between all three methods. If there were discrepancies between the methods, we would have reevaluated the EZ-POSIT output. That was not indicated. The poor levels of service noted in the Carter report are not evident from actual observations.

The future levels of service in the Carter report are also far worse than those in the DPW study. That is to be expected as his base levels were poor. Adding more traffic to intersections with poor levels of service will result in predictions of level of service F. The DPW projections were built upon verified base line data, our field reviews. Without a verified base, no projection can be considered accurate. We therefore cannot accept the level of service projections in the Carter report.

The report notes that we did not perform a detailed traffic analysis, did not consider Metro impacts, did not address weekend or evenings and did not detail TSM measures. We clearly stated in our report that these issues were not addressed and why. This was not a detailed study, but we feel it gave a good indication that Connecticut Avenue is performing at an acceptable level now and that we can maintain those levels in the future with TSM techniques. The actual TSM measures used would depend upon the type and severity of the problem and the measures acceptable to the community. It is impossible to detail TSM measures now for a problem that may occur 10 years from now.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this report. Our review does not indicate that any major changes are necessary to our Connecticut Avenue study techniques or conclusions.