



Greater Brookland Business Association, Inc.

3616 Twelfth Street, N.E. • Washington, DC 20017 • 202-832- 8229

January 30, 2009

Ms. Gabriela Vega
Transportation Planner
District Department of Transportation
2000 14th Street, NW
7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Ms. Vega:

I enjoyed speaking with you recently regarding the DC Department of Transportation's improvements currently under construction along the 12th street corridor in the Brookland neighborhood of Northeast, DC. As stated during our telephone discussion, over the past few months, many Brookland merchants and some residents have brought to my attention their displeasures with the current streetscape changes. Specifically, the new curb extensions, also referred to as bulb outs, created at many of the intersections along 12th Street have caused a series of problems including: a serious loss of essential curbside parking, safety hazards for commercial service vehicles, line of site issues caused by double parked vehicles and other traffic and site obstructions. The problems with the curb extensions have been compounded by obstructions created by the sidewalk expansions causing commercial vehicles to back onto the curbs and into the tree boxes when parking to serve adjacent businesses. In essence, loading and unloading has been compromised by the changes in the public space surfaces. Shifting of the transit stops away from existing locations, along with the conversion of former parking spaces previously designated for use by residential sticker holders to loading areas only, has also added to reduced parking.

Visual obstructions and turning radius difficulties for large vehicles have been created by the construction of the curb extensions. These extensions have also served to trap water and snow along their interior corners.

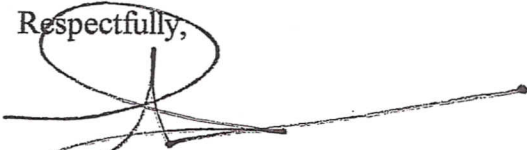
Additionally, the planned islands for the areas along 12th Street between Michigan Avenue and Perry Street would further exacerbate the problems created by the curb extensions and proposed islands obstructing traffic flow along 12th Street and eliminating South directional traffic flow access to businesses along the east side of 12th Street within the two block area stated above. Sidewalk finishes, although esthetically interesting, pose another problem. During inclement weather, the textured surfaces cause shoveling difficulty in removing ice and snow from the new exposed aggregate concrete sidewalk surfaces.

Another serious issue impacting areas of the newly installed concrete sidewalks is the installation of new gas service and new gas mains requiring the removal and replacement of many sections of the newly installed sidewalks. These new changes in the public space add unreasonable and unjustifiable expenses to the project. Further, the new work is negatively impacting the recently completed installations by obstructing parking, impeding traffic flow and potentially increasing our taxes for work that should have been appropriately coordinated with all relevant participants associated with the Brookland streetscape improvements prior to the initiation of any of the construction work.

Why was the work not coordinated with all relevant agencies, businesses, owners and contractors? If our tax money is to be spent wisely, local community involvement by professionals who have been trained and have achieved extensive experiences in the areas addressed above should be made an integral part of the planning and design process. Future work must be coordinated so that duplication of efforts and unnecessary expenditures can be minimized and possibly eliminated. The practices sited above are occurring in other areas of the neighborhood and the city. And, this work is being performed at a time when our nation is experiencing a major financial crisis and our city is experiencing a deficient.

I trust that DC Department of Transportation officials, as well as others, will be willing to consult with business representatives along the 12th Street corridor, to address measures to reduce the negative impacts caused by current and proposed improvements. Please let me know when an appropriate meeting date can be scheduled. A response at your earliest convenience is appreciated. Thank You.

Respectfully,



Edward M. Johnson, AIA, ASLA
President

cc: The Honorable Mayor Adrian Fenty
The Honorable Councilmember Harry Thomas Jr.
12th Street Business Owners
Residents