

CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY



September 30, 2013

DC Councilmember Mary M. Cheh
Chair, Committee on Transportation and the Environment
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Suite 108
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Preserving Pocket Parks

Dear Councilmember Cheh,

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society is dedicated to preserving and enhancing residential life on Capitol Hill. We are writing to seek your help in protecting pocket parks, those oases of green that grace traffic triangles, islands and other public spaces around the city. These Federal Reservations have historic significance as an integral and landmarked feature of the L'Enfant Plan, and as contributing properties in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

An erosion of public space is occurring across Capitol Hill. DDoT's recent issuance of landscaping permits for a portion of Reservation 266, without an opportunity for public input, is the most recent example of this problem. As our population increases, it is ever more essential to maintain our complete inventory of public space as well as free public access to these spaces. It is equally important that this be done in a manner that protects everyone's interests, including those citizens who do the hard work of maintaining and beautifying our pocket parks.

In order to keep these parks open and beautiful in a manner that guarantees transparency, we respectfully request that:

- OPM provide an inventory of traffic triangles, islands and other public spaces conducive to pocket parks.
- DDoT require HPO approval of soft-scaping as well as hard-scaping in these spaces.

Preserving Pocket Parks
September 25, 2013

- DDoT require ANC approval of all public space applications for landscaping of pocket parks, whether administered by DDoT or Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Department of Parks and Recreation has a well regarded volunteer "park adoption" program (<http://dpr.dc.gov/page/park-partners>, covered in 19 DCMR 1105) that provides a process for public input, transparency and fairness and reduces the opportunity for conflict. We urge DDoT to adopt a similar model, or that the parcels be consolidated under DPR control.

We believe these measures will enhance the quality of life for the District's residents and for all who enjoy our City streets. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Janet Quigley

Janet Quigley
President, CHRS

Cc:

Councilmember Tommy Wells

Councilmember Jim Graham

Councilmember David Grosso

Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie

Mr. Terry Bellamy, Director, District Department of Transportation