

CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY



December 20, 2014

Dan Emerine
DC Office of Planning
1100 4th Street, SW
Suite 650E
Washington, D.C. 20024

By mail and email to: dan.emerine@dc.gov

Subject: Southeast Boulevard Neighborhood Planning Study

Dear Mr. Emerine:

As requested at the public meeting concerning this study held on December 11, 2014, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) submits comments concerning the subject study before the deadline of December 31, 2014.

DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) has failed to show that this project is needed (with the exception of the pedestrian and bicycle connections). However, if the project goes forward, its benefits should be maximized and its adverse effects on residents near the project (particularly on the 1300-1500 blocks of L Street, SE) should be minimized. L Street residents currently enjoy a long view toward the Anacostia River, and a quiet street with long, unbroken rows of tall, mature street trees on the side of the street where the houses are. It is rare to see full blocks with trees like this. It is vital to preserve this streetscape, including those trees.

Councilmember Wells and ANC 6B have done the community a great service by involving the Office of Planning (OP), which has improved the concepts for this project. There are now three concepts under consideration, A, B, and C. OP and DDOT stressed that these are very preliminary concepts, and that additional studies need to be done, including legal, engineering, and economic feasibility.

At this stage, our comments are necessarily based on the assumption that Concept A, B, or C would go forward as presented on December 11, 2014.

Concept A would create a wall of relatively tall buildings directly across L Street, blocking the view, which would be claustrophobic for L Street residents. Concept A is the least desirable of

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three concepts. Concept B, with low-rise rowhouses across L Street, or Concept C, with fewer buildings and further away, are preferable. If future housing is constructed on land owned by DC government, we urge that this area be zoned R-4, and that 30% of housing units be affordable.

All three concepts call for pedestrian and bicycle connections at 13th, 14th, and 15th Streets, extending the L'Enfant grid to M Street, SE. At the December 11th meeting, OP and DDOT representatives assured everyone that these connections by design, are for pedestrian and bicycle use only, and cannot not be used by motor vehicles. We urge that DDOT install traffic lights where the pedestrian and bicycle connections intersect with streets.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



Lisa Dale Jones
President

cc:

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