



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

3265 S Street, NW • Washington, DC 20007

(202) 724-7098 • anc2e@dc.gov

June 19, 2020

Mr. Jeff Marootian
Director
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street SE, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003
jeff.marootian@dc.gov

RE: Sidewalk Widening During the Social Distancing Period

Dear Director Marootian,

On June 1, 2020 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by eight commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (8-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

ANC 2E has serious concerns about public health issues on our sidewalks related to COVID-19.

The sidewalks in our community are lovely – cobble stoned, moderately sized, and create a sense of intimacy and connection in our community. However, given the Mayor’s recommendation to continue social distancing practices, we have concerns that they are not wide enough for our businesses to reopen and operate while simultaneously providing space for walking. As we continue to move forward through the pandemic response, we recognize that the sidewalks and curb lanes provide multiple functions along M Street NW and Wisconsin Avenue NW, including but not limited to:

- Space for pedestrians to walk
- Curbside loading and unloading
- Bus loading and unloading
- Places for restaurants to set up tables and chairs for service
- Looking forward, potentially places for retailers to sell their products

We request that the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) joins cities from around the country in maximizing our business’ ability to reopen and operate successfully by strategically expanding the sidewalk on M Street NW and Wisconsin Avenue NW up

COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1 Joe Gibbons, District 2 Rick Murphy, District 3
Anna Landre, District 4 Lisa Palmer, District 5 Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6
Elizabeth Miller, District 7 Matias Burdman, District 8

to at least the 1500 block of Wisconsin Avenue NW. While doing so, we strongly reiterate the importance of managing for the various uses noted above, and we request close consultation on the location of such modifications, including the build out of parklets, streateries, and other uses. Any changes to the sidewalk must not impede our business' ability to succeed – rather, it should amplify such ability. ANC 2E affirmatively states its request to be a partner in the development, monitoring, implementation, and continued study of this pilot program to ensure it is meeting the community's needs throughout its life. Given no one knows the indirect impacts of this pilot, we urge DDOT to work closely with the ANC on the time period for which this pilot remains in effect. Ultimately, the goal is for our temporary street design to support both public health and economic policy goals, while disrupting the residential community in a sensitive manner.

Furthermore, ANC 2E notes that with no Metrorail access to our neighborhood, visitors and employees have limited means of coming and going from our community. In accordance with social distancing guidelines, we request that DDOT, alongside the sidewalk widening work, address the following:

- Increase the number of locations available for bike and scooter parking but do so without impeding vehicular traffic at corners
- Work with private parking lots to determine and implement a means for lowering the price to park inside private parking facilities, as we have limited capacity for managing an increase associated with the loss of parking in the commercial district within the residential community
- Incentivize and assist private entities to add bike and scooter parking on private property
- Create additional safe roadway infrastructure for bikes and scooters as we expect and encourage a significant uptick in the usage of these means of transportation
- Prohibit scooter and bike use on the sidewalks and widened sidewalks and enforce all restrictions on scooter use
- Provide ANC 2E with a point of contact at DDOT who can assist in enforcing penalties against the misuse of scooters and bikes within the designated widened sidewalks
- Ensure that curb cuts serving those with disabilities and different mobility needs are conserved
- Address all unnecessary impediments blocking the sidewalks, including the removal of unused newspaper boxes and the refurbishing of tree boxes to ensure safe movement of pedestrians
- Work with retailers to develop and implement a system for sidewalk queuing
- Adjust signal timing to ensure safety and efficiency for all users of our roadways

Finally, we know that creating these expanded sidewalks comes with a significant cost. We ask that the DC Council and the Mayor ensures that dollars are included in the budget to support such economy boosters we note herein both within ANC 2E and across

the city. This is the time to respond to an unprecedented situation with creativity and we are eager to partner with city planners to move our community, and our city, forward. A pilot such as this is only an emergency measure. The ramifications of the pilot on Georgetown will be significant and thus this resolution is not intended to create a permanent solution.

Commissioners Lisa Palmer (2E05@anc.dc.gov) and Rick Murphy (2E03@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard G. Murphy, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rick Murphy
Chair, ANC 2E