



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

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March 13, 2023

Mr. Everett Lott
Director
District Department of Transportation
250 M Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
Everett.Lott@dc.gov

Mr. Randy Clarke
General Manager and CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
300 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20024
rclarke@wmata.com

RE: Saving the Foundry Branch Trolley Trestle

Dear Director Lott and Mr. Clarke,

On February 27, 2023 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 supports Councilmember Matt Frumin's FY 2024 budget ask to include \$3 million to purchase and stabilize the Foundry Branch Trolley Trestle.

The 1896 Foundry Branch Trolley Trestle is a vital part of history, carrying trolleys from the Georgetown Car Barn to Glen Echo. As the only trestle remaining in the district, ANC 2E supports the efforts of the DC Preservation League (DCPL) to preserve the trestle and remove ownership from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which is actively seeking to raze this trestle.

ANC 2E strongly urges WMATA to sell for \$1 the trestle to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), who will accept and undergo land negotiations for a potential swap with neighboring parcels.

History

Built in 1896 for the Washington and Great Falls Electric Railway Company, the bridge was part of the streetcar line that connected Georgetown in the District of Columbia with Glen Echo, Maryland. Streetcar service continued through the first half of the twentieth century and eventually ended in 1960. That same year, DC Transit took over ownership

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Elizabeth Miller, District 7 John DiPierri, District 8

of the bridge, but since the streetcar line was no longer in service, its condition languished in subsequent years.

The elevated railway bridge has been owned by WMATA since 1997 and located, in part, within the boundary of the National Park Service's (NPS) designated Glover Archbold Park (U.S. Reservation 450). In 2007, the trestle was included as a contributing resource in the Glover Archbold Park National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) designation.

According to NPS in its June 2022 Determination of Effect, "The Foundry Branch Trestle Bridge is the last remaining streetcar bridge in the District of Columbia. The NPS has previously voiced its support for stabilizing and preserving the trestle and continues to maintain this position. While the NPS is opposed to the demolition of the trestle, the structure is owned by WMATA, so we have no authority over its ultimate disposition. While we support the retention and preservation of the trestle, a viable solution has not yet been presented for this to happen. For this reason, we are moving forward with Section 106 (NHPA) review of the demolition."

[December 2019 Adaptive Reuse Feasibility](#) (\$2,751,000 estimated cost)

"The dimensions of the bridge are 252 feet long by 19 feet wide. The primary framing consists of a pair of underslung steel trusses spanning 100 feet (Figure 3) and a series of steel braced frame approach trestles and concrete abutments on the far east and west sides. The approach trestles are supported on rectangular concrete footings. The top of the bridge has zero grade from end to end. The approach trestles and truss span consist of a combination of I-shapes, channels, angles, WT's, and rods, with riveted connections."

Local Importance

The Glover-Archbold Trail section beneath the trestle has been closed since 2016 and the bridge right of way has been closed since 2003. Residents and students alike indicate that the trail was popular and a strong connection with Foxhall and the Capital Crescent Trail.

Georgetown University and Foxhall communities benefit the most from the proposed transfer and restoration of the trestle, as potential restoration could ensure a pedestrian and multiuse connection between Georgetown and Foxhall.

Next Steps

Undergoing a cost-benefit analysis, ANC 2E expresses support for the preservation, estimated at \$350,000, and further restoration, estimated between \$2 million and \$4 million.

Thus, ANC 2E urges DDOT to purchase the trestle from WMATA and to undergo a land-swap process for neighboring parcels. The ANC supports Councilmember Frumin's budget proposal for funds to be disbursed to DDOT to restore the trestle.

Commissioners Joe Massaua (2E04@anc.dc.gov) and Elizabeth Miller (2E07@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small mark above the second "l".

Elizabeth Miller
Chair, ANC 2E