



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

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May 28, 2019

Mr. Kevin Brandt  
Superintendent, Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park  
National Park Service  
1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
[kevin\\_brandt@nps.gov](mailto:kevin_brandt@nps.gov)

### RE: Proposed Georgetown Canal Plan

Dear Superintendent Brandt,

On April 29, 2019 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by six commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (6-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

ANC 2E is pleased to see the continuing work on the Georgetown Canal Plan. The ANC believes that the canal, approaching its 200th birthday, is one of the most unique and special parts of Georgetown's historic community – in addition to its high aesthetic value for the community, it also provides an important peek into so many facets of historic Washington, DC, serving as a crucial artery during the time of our Founding Fathers, through the Civil War and Industrial Revolution.

ANC 2E is supportive of many elements of the plan, particularly those which ensure that users with disabilities and all forms of mobility needs are able to enjoy this historic treasure and experience the neighborhood's history while in Georgetown. The ANC notes that currently, those who are unable to traverse stairs, including residents and visitors alike, and are wheelchair-users and/or pushing strollers are unable to enjoy the towpath in many locations. The ANC affirmatively requests that high priority is given to rectifying this accessibility issue in a sensitive manner and applauds the work already proposed in this regard.

ANC 2E notes that the portion of the canal which is under consideration as part of the Georgetown Canal Plan is quite small and has a unique viewshed, including restaurants, bars, a bowling alley, retail, and residential apartment buildings and townhomes — some of which are historic, others of which have been built within the last twenty years.

#### 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

Furthermore, the ANC notes that the canal itself has undergone significant restoration over the last years which has altered its historic fabric, including new locks, bridges, etc.

Overall, ANC 2E believes that many of the proposed designs will significantly enhance the visual, atmospheric, and audible elements of this historic feature. However, the ANC offers the following critical feedback regarding the proposed Georgetown Canal Plan:

- ANC 2E believes that insufficient consideration has been given to the effects of the proposed plan on the residential experience. As such, the ANC recommends an additional project goal which states the following:
  - Provide improvements to the canal which respect and enhance the residential experience for the Georgetown community, particularly those who abut the canal itself, and, furthermore, does no harm to the residential experience.
- ANC 2E is concerned that some of the development concepts for Fish Market Square do not adhere to the ANC's recommended additional goal. While the ANC is supportive of improving the environment in this area generally, the ANC reminds the planners that this square is immediately beneath many residents' homes who have thus far enjoyed the open sky and fresh air provided in this park — and would like to continue to do so.
- Also related to this new goal, ANC 2E remains concerned about the mule yard, noting that the stated location of where mules will rest is in residents' backyards. Residents share concerns about smells and overall cleanliness related to mule storage by their homes; the ANC encourages consideration of a more appropriate location for the mule yard.
- ANC 2E continues to seek programmed improvements at the aqueduct, noting that this is an urgent need related to public safety. The ANC encourages planners to continue to consider how this area can be safely activated yet not encourage unsafe use after dark.

Overall, ANC 2E is highly supportive of the work being done to ensure the sustainability of this national treasure located in the ANC's individual and collective backyard.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Rick Murphy  
Chair, ANC 2E