



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
Division of Transportation

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June 3, 2008

Mr. Bruce Cameron, President
Aurora Highlands Civic Association
716 21 Street South
Arlington, VA 22202-2735

Dear Mr. Cameron,

This is in response to the emails that you forwarded from residents living in Aurora Highlands Civic Association regarding a magnitude of issues. I have compiled the following response from various staff in various bureaus. Staff has made every attempt to answer the questions and concerns.

I would like to advise you that in 2000, the developers of Potomac Yard and Pentagon Row were obligated by the County Board to donate money toward the mitigation of neighborhood traffic issues in accordance with the Neighborhood Traffic Calming guidelines. This money is to be split between Arlington Ridge and Aurora Highland neighborhoods. Currently, the balance is approximately \$260,000. This money could be used toward some of the concerns you have identified such as a gateway on South Joyce Street or traffic circles, providing the streets qualify for traffic calming assistance and missing sidewalks. I encourage you to work with staff and to review your Neighborhood Infrastructure Plan (NIP) and, develop a consensus on the neighborhoods priorities. Staff is available to meet with you and your community to address your priorities

18th Street South:

Traffic Calming: 18th Street South from South Fern Street to South Lynn Street does not qualify for traffic calming measures since the 85th percentile speeds were measured at 27 mph which does not meet the minimum threshold of 30 mph in accordance with the Neighborhood Traffic Calming program.

Stop Signs: South Joyce Street and 18th Street South: The intersection of South Joyce Street and 18th Street South does not meet the Arlington County warrants for additional stop signs. Staff has notified the police department of your concerns and requested that stop sign enforcement for S. Joyce Street and 18th Street South. Staff will be adjusting the existing the northbound stop sign to improve visibility and will be installing reflective strips in the sign channels in both directions, as well, as in all stop sign and connecting streets along South Joyce Street.

Crosswalk: 600 block of 18th Street South a mid block crosswalk. I have spoken to Tim McIntosh in the NC program who stated that this segment of missing link of sidewalk is eligible for missing link funding. Staff would prefer to install the missing sidewalk and have pedestrians cross at a safer location at South Grant Street instead of between parked vehicles mid-block where drivers are not anticipating a pedestrian. Please follow up with Mr. McIntosh if you would like to follow through with this request.

South Joyce Street:

Traffic calming: Your email stated that there was a concern about an increase in traffic volumes and speeds along South Joyce Street. Our data indicates that on South Joyce Street from 23rd Street South to 16th Street South that there has not been any significant increase in traffic in the past years. However, a gateway treatment could be installed on South Joyce Street north of 16th Street South where the street narrows. South Joyce Street from 16th Street to S. Joyce Street, in front of River House qualifies for traffic calming assistance.

S. Hayes Street and 18th Street South:

Your request for nubs and textured crosswalks for this intersection could be explored through the NC program. The laddered crosswalk currently in place at this intersection provides higher reflectivity and better visibility than a textured crosswalk would offer. A traffic circle would not work at this location due to the alignment of South Hayes Street with the driveway to the library and apartments.

26th Street South:

Traffic Calming: 26th Street South from South Eads Street to South Joyce Street. Staff collected traffic and speed data along with stretch of roadway. Currently 26th Street South does not qualify for traffic calming assistance. The data indicated an 85th percentile speed of 28 mph which does not meet the minimum threshold of 30 mph in accordance with the Neighborhood Traffic Calming program. Staff has ordered reflective strips be installed in the stop sign channels at South Grant Street and 26th Street South.

22nd Street South:

Pavement marking: The request for a stop bar and centerline on 22nd Street South east of South Fern Street has been forwarded to Traffic Engineering and Operation Bureau for evaluation.

Traffic Calming: 600 block of 22nd Street South (west of South Fern Street). Staff has traffic volumes before the traffic signal was installed at South Fern Street and 23rd Street South. Staff will use these data and will be collecting "after data" to evaluate the impacts of the traffic signal. Staff will conduct an analysis and send you a report.

23rd Street South and Jefferson Davis Highway: When determining where to install left-turn signals, we use engineering judgment. We carefully consider all aspects of the change before making a determination because of possible negative impacts. Adding left-turn signals usually requires reducing the duration of the green lights for other movements, as well as for pedestrians, at the intersection. Consequently, when the intersection approaches its capacity, a reduced green time would create longer queues of waiting vehicles and increased delay. When left-turning vehicles routinely experience longer delays than other traffic movements, a left-turn arrow should be considered. Therefore, if adding a left-turn arrow would create excessive delays for other movements, a left-turn arrow should not be installed.

At the intersection of Route 1 and 23rd Street, we performed a detailed left-turn phasing study that included analysis of turning movement counts, signal timing, sight distance and accident history at this location. The study results do not warrant an exclusive left-turn phase on eastbound/westbound 23rd Street at the present time. Currently, the traffic signal cycle at Route 1 and 23rd Street is

already split four ways, as it is one of the most congested intersections in the County. Adding left-turn signals on 23rd Street would cause longer delays for traffic from other directions and for pedestrians trying to cross at this intersection.

When reviewing the need for a protected left-turn phase, we review the intersection for safe operation. At this location, we did not note any conditions that would warrant a protected left-turn phase for safety reasons. For example, a further review of the traffic accident history indicates that in the last five years, there were 0.20 accidents per year involving left turns from eastbound 23rd Street. This reveals that while the left-turn movement from 23rd Street may be delayed due to the opposing traffic, it is not dangerous. It is our assessment that addition of new left-turn phases will contribute to longer delays on the other approaches leading to an increase in overall number of accidents at the intersection.

Eastbound 23rd Street at its intersection with Route 1 is currently designated with a left-turn lane, a through lane and a right-turn lane. A current turning movement count at this intersection indicates significant traffic for all three movements during different time-periods on a regular weekday. Therefore, at the present time we recommend maintaining the existing eastbound lane configuration at this intersection. However, we will ensure that all three lanes on the eastbound approach are marked with appropriate arrows to eliminate the conflict you have mentioned in your mail.

Although we cannot make changes in signal phasing at the present time, I anticipate that the changes in markings will improve safety conditions at Route 1 and S. 23rd Street.

Thank you for sharing your ideas for improving the Aurora Highlands neighborhood. It has been a pleasure to respond to your concerns.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Diggs
Transportation Planner III

Cc: Jeff Sikes, Coordinator, NTC Program
Dave Hundelt, Bureau Chief, Water, Sewer and Streets
Tim McIntosh, NCAC Program
Patricia Bush, Traffic Engineering and Operations Bureau
Lt. Grady Jolley, Arlington County Police Department
Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee