

## ANC6A

Slow Down!  
Traffic Calming for Major Roads?

BY TANYA SNYDER

Residents have complained about fast traffic on Maryland Avenue. But can the problem be solved? DDOT's Damon Harvey was cautious in his reply.

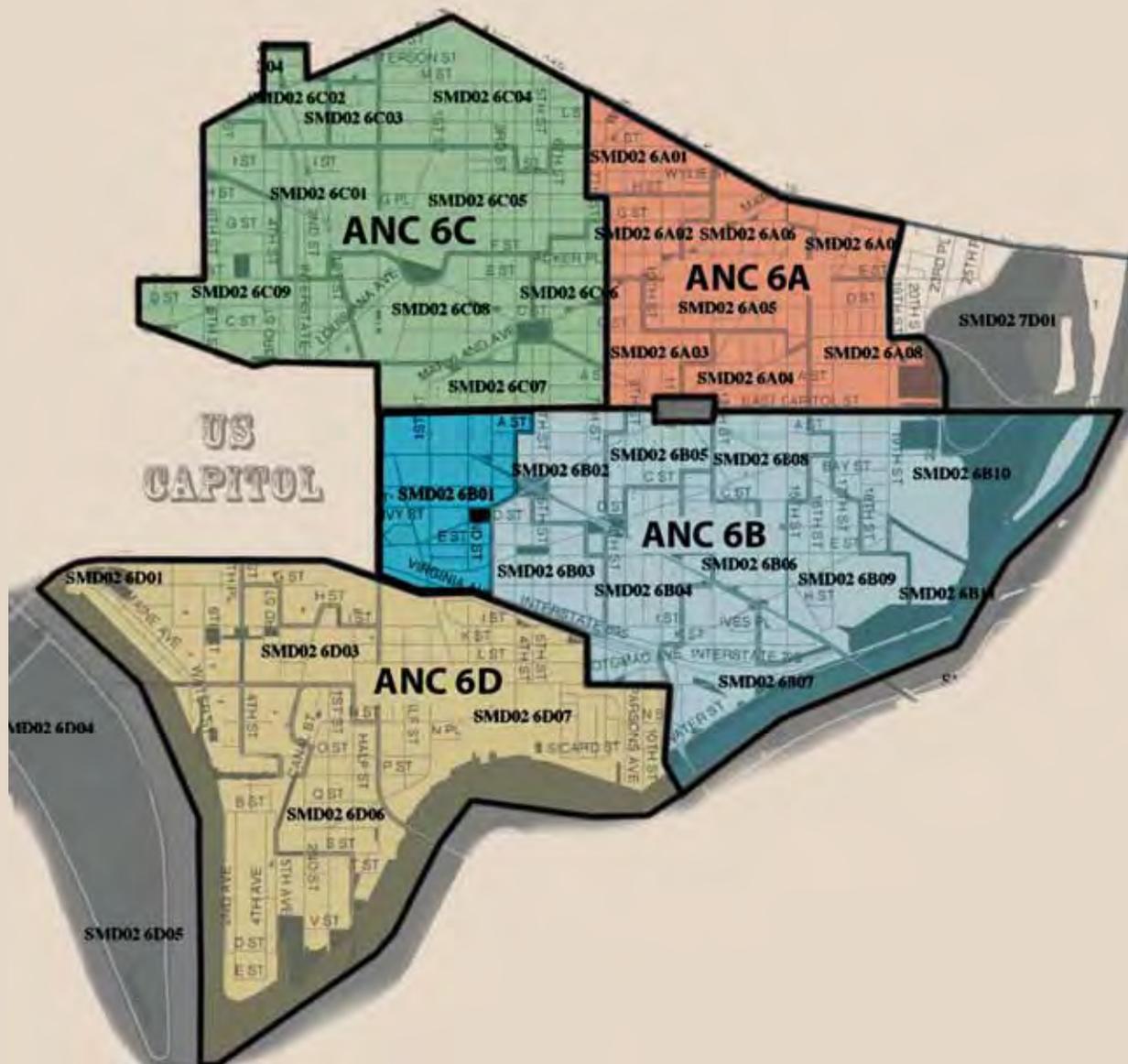
ANC commissioners hammered Harvey on the Department of Transportation's lack of responsiveness to their queries. Commissioners have complained about roadways from Maryland Avenue to Rosedale Street to Emerald Street to 13th Street. Some of them have complained, followed up on their complaints, documented their complaints, and complained about their complaints for years – without ever getting a satisfactory response. Commissioner David Holmes even told Harvey that “DDOT is the most dysfunctional of all the city agencies,” adding (for what it's worth), “I'm sure it's not your fault.”

Harvey promised to follow up on their questions but couldn't make any promises about making the actual changes the ANC wanted to see.

Case in point: Maryland Avenue. According to Chair Joe Fengler, “We have a perennial problem on Maryland Avenue.” He points to the 700 block, where children cross to go to the Northeast Library. “The expanse of Maryland Avenue is so large, and people start to cross the street when they see it's clear,” he said, adding that by the time they get to the other side, they may find themselves running to avoid cars.

Fengler wants to see raised pedestrian crosswalks and speed humps, two of the 20-odd “tools in the toolbox” that DDOT has to slow traffic down on roadways.

“On Maryland Avenue, people are speeding aggressively to get into the city,” Fengler said, “and there's a huge blind spot. There's one specific blind spot where cars can't even see other cars. And I know the city knows this because there are signs everywhere,



but signs aren't enough. Everywhere you look there are signs, beware pedestrian, beware pedestrian.”

That may be true. But Harvey warned that there might not be much the city can do about it.

Maryland Avenue, like all DC streets with state names, is classified as a “collector road.” There are four classifications of roads in DC: principal arterials, minor arterials, collector roads, like Maryland Avenue, connect major arterial roads. Collector road and arterial roads in the District are federal aid routes. And 83 percent of the funding for those roads comes from the federal government. With conditions.

One of those conditions appears to conflict with traffic calming. Damon Harvey said similar requests on Rhode Island Avenue would have

resulted in a cutoff of federal funds, if enacted. He suggested that in its requests to and conversations with DDOT, the ANC should request a transportation study, not a traffic calming study.

It makes sense. Commissioner Mary Beatty went against the stream by admitting she's “not sure [she's] in favor of a route as large as Maryland Avenue having any kind of [traffic] calming, such as speed bumps.” She said she felt there were other options for increasing pedestrian safety and visibility without slowing cars down.

Harvey – after hearing a half hour of speeches about the need for such measures – responded with, “I can almost guarantee you that it's not going to be traffic calming that we do on Maryland Avenue.”

Though Maryland Avenue is not an official evacuation route of Wash-

ington, DC, some in the audience were concerned that traffic calming measures could present a safety hazard in an emergency in which people need to get out of the city.

Since federal-aid routes require a different process for residents to request action, the ANC can't simply file a petition. They do, however, plan to ask ANC 6C to join them in a joint resolution requesting a transportation study. Harvey promised action on other outstanding ANC requests as well.

Parking might also get tweaked. Residents are asking for more residential parking restrictions. In order to zone an area for residential parking, it needs to meet two criteria: 70 percent of on-street parking spaces must be full when the study is conducted, and 10 percent of the 70 percent filled spaces must be occupied by

cars with out-of-state plates. Fengler bristled at that, asserting that “people from all over the city come to H Street.” He asked if it counts if they’re from different wards but still in DC. (It doesn’t.)

Still, Harvey was open to “playing with the times” – changing four-hour parking to two-hour parking, or extending the hours in which parking is restricted to residents with an appropriate zone sticker.

Commissioner Nick Alberti didn’t want to see them go overboard with it – “If you do it Monday through Sunday, you can’t have a birthday party.”

Residents who want to explore transportation and traffic options in their area can reach Harvey at Damon.Harvey@dc.gov or 202-671-0493.

### Closing R.L. Christian Library

The DC Board of Library Trustees decided to close R.L. Christian Library, 13th and H streets NE, on Jan. 1. The library is a casualty of the board’s decision to close the library system’s five kiosk locations.

Roslyn Christian, vice-chair of Friends of R.L. Christian Library, said that the library “hasn’t had the opportunity to succeed.” She said her group had made a series of recommendations to help increase the library’s usage and its curb appeal, but to no avail. DCPL even failed to use a \$510,000 grant that was given to the library by the National Capital Revitalization Corporation.

The closure comes despite skyrocketing usage of the library, which increased by nearly 150 percent between the end of 2007 and the end of 2008. Still, DCPL Chief Librarian Ginnie Cooper claims the kiosks get only about 25 percent of the patronage level of the least busy regular libraries.

Christian and Commissioner Bill Schultheiss criticized the board for not providing sufficient public notice or space for public comment. The ANC received a notice of the vote only 12 days in advance – not the 30 days required.

Christian also noted that there was no transition plan for the patrons who use the library. The board said they could go to the Rosedale Library, which is not yet built, or the Northeast Library on Maryland Avenue. She said the Northeast Library is too far and would require young people to cross a turf line, which creates a public safety issue.

The ANC voted unanimously to send a letter to the DCPL board of trustees, the mayor and the Office of the Attorney General. They will also send a letter to the inspector general asking for an audit of the practices of the DCPL board of trustees.

*ANC 6A meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., at Miner Elementary School. Visit [www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org) for more information. The list-serv for ANC 6A is [anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com). ★*

## ANC6B

### Commercial and Residential Plans Approved Old KFC Site, Former Comstock Apartments Considered

BY VIRGINIA AVNIEL SPATZ

At ANC 6B’s December meeting, a commercial zoning matter precipitated the widest-ranging discussion, involving community agreements and comprehensive planning for the Hill area. The commission also voted to support a multi-unit residential development and several private home renovations as well as a number of liquor licenses. Several liquor license renewals were opposed, as was one private home addition.

### Community Understanding and New Commercial Building

Chip Glasgow, attorney with Holland + Knight, appeared before the ANC to present Douglas Development’s plans for 1442 Penn-

## ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 6A

Chair, Joseph Fengler, 423-8868



Serving the Kingman Park, Linden, Near Northeast, North Lincoln Park, Rosedale, and Stanton Park communities



ANC 6A meets the second Thursday (January 8), 7 pm, at Miner Elementary School, 601 15th Street, NE.

[www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org)

### Alcohol Beverage Licensing Committee

Tuesday, January 8  
Sherwood Recreation Center  
Corner of 10th & G Streets, NE  
Chair, Mary Beatty, 546-4196

### Economic Development & Zoning Committee

3rd Wednesday, January 21  
Sherwood Recreation Center  
Corner of 10th & G Streets, NE  
Chair, Drew Ronneberg, 431-4305

### Public Safety Committee

No meetings are currently scheduled  
Sherwood Recreation Center  
Corner of 10th & G Streets, NE

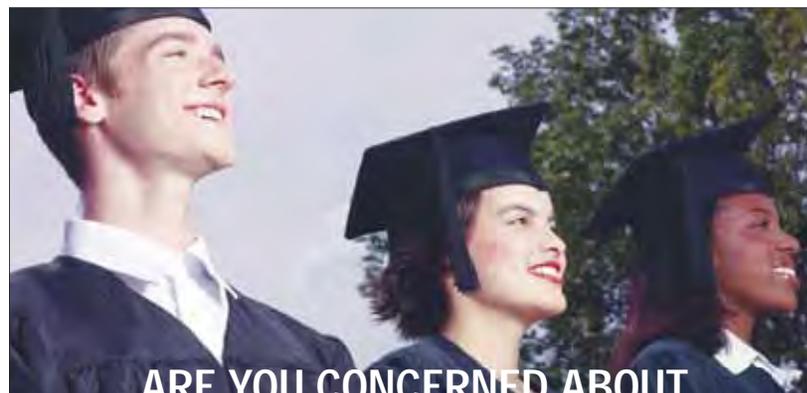
### Community Outreach Committee

3rd Monday January 19, 7:30 pm  
Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith Annex  
1235 C Street, NE  
Chair, Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512

### Transportation & Public Space Committee

Monday, January 26, 7 pm.  
Capitol Hill Towers, 900 G Street, NE  
Chair, Omar Mahmud, 546-1520

Attend a meeting!  
Volunteer for a committee!  
It’s your ANC!



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