

# Brookland Transportation and Streetscape Study

Meeting Minutes & Notes  
October 8 & 9, 2004  
Koubek Auditorium (CUA) & Community Walk  
620 Michigan Avenue NE  
Washington DC 20064

## ■ Community Walk

**Location:** Koubek Auditorium (The Catholic University of America)  
620 Michigan Avenue NE  
Washington DC 20064

## ■ Attendees

Sharlene Reed	DDOT
William Carlson	Volkert
Hermilio Iriarte	Volkert
Martha Kemp	Volkert
Carl Kemp	Baker
Kiran Mathema	Baker
Henry Asri	Baker
Ephraim Fermin	Baker
Prashant Salvi	Baker
Howard L. Kirk	
Richard Houghton	
Jeffrey Wilson	
Jo Moore	
Sue Barnes	
Buffic Brownstein	
Clare Giesen	
Al Truesdaly	
Meredith C.	
Paul Brooks	
Philip Blair	
Mary P. Rowan	
Cesar Vargas	
Iris Miller	
LeRoy Hall	
Tom Rooney	

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## ■ Meeting Agenda

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. <b>Introductions</b>   | Sharlene |
| 2. <b>The Project Scope of Work</b>   | Bill     |
| 3. <b>Why a Community Walk?</b>   | Kiran    |
| 4. <b>Community Walk Distribution and Organization</b>  | Sharlene |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start at Koubek Auditorium</li> <li>▪ Walk/Shuttle to 12<sup>th</sup>/Monroe Streets</li> <li>▪ Transportation:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants have a ride along the 3 transportation corridors (Michigan Ave from North Capitol Street – Eastern Avenue, Monroe Street from Michigan Avenue – South Dakota Avenue, 12<sup>th</sup> Street from Michigan Avenue – Rhode Island Avenue); Shuttle is provided</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Streetscape:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants are divided into 2 groups:                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Group 1: Walk start from 12<sup>th</sup>/Monroe Streets to 12<sup>th</sup> Street/Michigan Avenue</li> <li>b. Group 2: Walk start from 12<sup>th</sup>/Monroe Streets to 12<sup>th</sup> Street/Rhode Island Avenue</li> </ul> </li> <li>Note: At the end of the walk, participants can either walk or take shuttle back to 12<sup>th</sup>/Monroe Streets.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |          |
| 5. <b>Fill in Questionnaires/Comment Forms</b>  |          |

## ■ Comments

Ws. No.	Item	Action by	Date
1.	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharlene went over the 7 Meeting Ground Rules.</li> <li>• Community Walk is the beginning of the process; the study/report is the end. Then the planners get to move the study forward and move into the design phase; Urban Forestry Administration &amp; Traffic Operations folks, etc move it into the design process.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
2.	Scope of Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharlene went over the Scope of Work.</li> <li>• Sharlene answered a question to say that DDOT has determined the 10 intersections from community feedback over the years and DDOT data.</li> <li>• Sharlene: sidestreets are not the focus for this study</li> <li>• Sharlene mentioned about separate studies such as Brentwood Road and Rhode Island Avenue Study that involved with traffic calming, trees, and other transportation and streetscape elements.</li> <li>• Leroy Hall of Ward 5 spoke of Rhode Island Ave / Brentwood – McDonald's left turn. Sharlene told him that they can discuss that later and it's not part of the Brookland Study but should be part of another study for a 10/21 meeting.</li> </ul>		

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## 3. Transportation

- Bill talked about the Transportation aspects of the Scope of Work
- Bill answered a general question regarding the difference between a traffic study and a transportation study, traffic-detailed to the intersections; transportation-comprehensive of all the corridor together.
- The 10/11 intersections; he noted that the intersection at 7<sup>th</sup> & Michigan is more about that area rather than that specific intersection.
- The COG model was described by Bill for projecting traffic to 2025
- One attendee talked about Level of Service and ADT
- Someone commented about the future development near Brookland area such as McMillan Reservoir, new parking lots for condos, and new 1500 spaces for hospital that impact the transportation study.
- One idea raised was to use speed bumps to discourage shortcutters
- Sharlene: WMATA increased transit use anticipated.
- South Dakota needs speed camera near Vista / Bladensburg Rd / Riggs Rd
- North Capitol and Michigan cloverleaf – poor signage and lighting, hence the intersection isn't used properly by all turning traffic / approaches.
- Howard Kirk (29 years resident of neighborhood) 2600 block of Myrtle Ave near South Dakota mentioned that traffic was back up to Bladensburg Road
- ANC Margaret Thompson – Traffic Calming Study
- Mary Pat Wollman – garden club – traffic on tiny street; Michigan Ave & 10<sup>th</sup> Street; 2 metros in area; very walkable community.
- This study involved with walking and biking trail concerns; such as Metropolitan Branch Trail; Jim Sebastian – DDOT is the biking coordinator.
- 

## 4. Streetscape

- Kiran spoke of the streetscape elements of the project.
- Kiran reminded that the Community Walk would be the beginning of the process.
- Someone mentioned about too many signage in the 12<sup>th</sup> St
- DDOT takes the lead in spurring economic development, streetlights.
- Becky Brownstein – trees – Urban Forestry Administration? PEPCO wire conflicts with trees throughout city and Brookland community; also Barnaby Woods Neighborhood; coordinate approaches and methods.
- Clare Giesen mentioned about gardens and flowers from 1946, Bloomingdales building
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Ws. No.	Item	Action by	Date
5.	Overall Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Iris Miller (Catholic University Landscape professor) spoke of the study to the group... ANC and garden club and community came to CUA which in turn came to Iris; a Neighborhood Improvement Partnership was formed; met monthly to plan community enhancement; Lavinia Wohlfarth &amp; Iris got DDOT to commit to Study with Community. Paul Brooks a neighborhood resident in the President's office has also been an instrumental person in pushing things along.</li><li></li></ul>		

These minutes constitute our understanding of the above meeting. Please inform the author of any discrepancies or omissions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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## THE FOLLOWING NOTES WERE TAKEN BY THE BAKER TEAM:

(They are copied from the authors' rough drafts – Part 1 through 4- without any editing.)

### **Part 1:**

#### ROUGH DRAFT OF MINUTES (PRE-COMMUNITY WALK- PRESENTATION 10/09/04):

Sharlene started the meeting.

Sharlene went over the 7 Meeting Ground Rules  
She then went over the Scope of Work

Bill answered a general question regarding the difference between a traffic study and a transportation study.....traffic-detailed to the intersections; transportation-comprehensive of all the corridor together.

Bill started talking of the Transportation aspects of the Scope of Work. The 10/11 intersections; he noted that the intersection at 7<sup>th</sup> & Michigan is more about that area rather than that specific intersection.

Sharlene answered a question to say that DDOT has determined the 10 intersections from community feedback over the years and DDOT data.

The COG model was described by Bill for projecting traffic to 2025 (2030???)

Kiran then spoke of the streetscape elements of the project.  
Trees, low impact development,...  
DDOT takes the lead in spurring economic development, street lights.  
FY09 12<sup>th</sup> Street total reconstruction.

Sharlene:  
Truxtun (sp??) Circle  
Brentwood Road – separate study  
Rhode Island Ave – calm down street with more trees, etc.

Sharlene: other traffic calming studies in the area

Sharlene: sidestreets are not the focus for this study

Sharlene: Street curb and gutters Roads, Resurfacing Projects &  
Painting Condition Index (PCI)

Leroy Hall of Ward 5 spoke of Rhode Island Ave / Brentwood – McDonald's left turn....Sharlene told him that they can discuss that later and its not part of the Brookland Study but should be part of another study for a 10/21 meeting.

Clare Beese – Truxtun Circle? Clarify? North Capitol and Florida Ave then southerly, gardens and flowers from 1946, Bloomingdales building

Brookland Resident garden club spoke about history of Truxtun Circle and old books.

Gentleman from back of hall – CDEF – existing condition report – Level of Service and ADT; Sharlene replied....

Sharlene: 10 intersections – in house data of DDOT – North Capitol and Michigan

somebody commented: Michigan Ave development: Grumwest??(sp?) & McMillan Reservoir, 2600 space parking lot for condos, hospital center to have 1500 spaces for parking lot, shuttles to metro.

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Sharlene Reed spoke to this in that DDOT/OP/developer are responsible for accounting for developments at that time.... North Capitol and Michigan cloverleaf – poor signage and lighting, hence the intersection isn't used properly by all turning traffic / approaches.

Sharlene: WMATA increased transit use anticipated.

Howard Kirk (29 years resident of neighborhood) 2600 block of Myrtle Ave near South Dakota....back up to Bladensburg Road  
ANC Margaret Thompson – Traffic Calming Study

South Dakota needs speed camera near Vista / Bladensburg Rd / Riggs Rd

Becky Brownstein – trees – Urban Forestry Administration? PEPCO  
tree/wire conflicts throughout city and Brookland community; also Barnaby Woods Neighborhood; coordinate approaches and methods.

Mary Pat Wollman – garden club – traffic on tiny street; Michigan Ave & 10<sup>th</sup> Street; 2 metros in area; very walkable community.

somebody commented??does this study have walking and biking trail concerns; Metropolitan Branch Trail at several (3) bridges; Jim Sebastian – DDOT biking coordinator mentioned by Sharlene.

Kiran – reminds the community that we're at the beginning of the process.

Newton and 1200 block

too much signage

try to solve smaller problems with bigger solutions

Taylor Street: 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge over Railroad tracks; trash trucks should be using Michigan and South Dakota; it is outside the study....

discourage short cutters: speed bumps

Washington D.C. is a commuter city – needs a commuter tax.

we're at the beginning of the process; the study/report is the end. Then the planners get to move the study forward and move into the design phase; Urban Forestry Administration & Traffic Operations folks, etc...move it into the design process.

Iris Miller (Catholic University Landscape professor) spoke of the study to the group...

ANC and garden club and community came to CUA which in turn came to Iris; a Neighborhood Improvement Partnership was formed; met monthly to plan community enhancement; Lavinia Wohlfarth & Iris got DDOT to commit to Study with Community.

Paul Brooks a neighborhood resident in the President's office has also been an instrumental person in pushing things along.

Sharlene ended with a thank you....

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## Part 2:

### BROOKLAND COMMUNITY WALK

October 9, 2004

1. The group left Koubek Auditorium at around 11:40 am and the Community Walk began.
2. Some respondents commented that the Monroe Street bridge going to 12<sup>th</sup> Street does not provide adequate visibility to moving vehicles heading down from the bridge crest. The group noted a pedestrian crossing at the foot of the bridge and they wished there was a way to slow down vehicle traffic.
3. The group pointed out a Farmer's Market within the Brookland Metro that occurs twice a week.
4. The Brooks Mansion beside the Brookland Metro stop is one of the key neighborhood (and historic) landmarks. The other landmarks are the hardware store at the corner of Monroe and 12<sup>th</sup> Street, and the Ellis Island restaurant near the Michigan Avenue end of 12<sup>th</sup> Street.
5. The group commented on the location of the electric/light poles, in the middle of the sidewalk. This severely constricts sidewalk space, and is both a safety and pedestrian hazard. (Fig 1)
6. The group commented that female ginkgo trees are not preferred. The unpicked and scattered fruit, foul-smelling meat, mildly toxic outer skin, and the potential for the fruit juices to inflict paint damage on cars are arguments to reduce the female ginkgo plantings.
7. The alternative to handle the ginkgo tree problem will be to pick the fruits, or annual spraying to prevent the female ginkgo trees from bearing fruit. This will then become a maintenance issue.
8. The group commented that many tree branches get entangled with the overhead power lines, and this has resulted in several power outages. Recent attempts to address the problem have resulted in unsightly tree branch pruning, or worse, tree cutting. The group suggests an alternative to the power line situation, namely by placing the power lines underground. (Fig 2)
9. There were mixed reactions to the "plants in barrels". On one hand, this is laudable because the community is aware of the need for planting and ornamentation to improve sidewalk aesthetics. The other point of view is that the barrels are not particularly attractive. (Fig. 3)
10. The group also commented that the iron grillwork to protect the trees or define the tree planting area is not particularly attractive nor functional or durable.
11. Members of the group pointed out a red canopy for a restaurant, which is not particularly attractive. The canopy itself is a potential safety hazard since it is from pipe tubing, and not particularly visible. It also breaks the sidewalk rhythm, being the only canopy that extends out through most of its sidewalk. The group suggests the need for some sort of façade program or guidelines on the matter.
12. The group (as well as concerned pedestrians) suggest the need for 4-way stop signs at the following intersections:
  - Newton and 12<sup>th</sup>
  - 13<sup>th</sup> and Kearney (not directly in Study Area)
  - 14<sup>th</sup> and Kearney (not directly in Study Area)

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13. Insufficient parking areas are a common complaint of merchants and business owners in the area. The meat shop manager suggested that the back of CVS pharmacy is one option for parking, however, the group raised concerns that it may not be entirely feasible due to concerns on pedestrian and user/car owner safety, maintenance, and ownership issues.
14. The intergenerational center, at the southern end of 12<sup>th</sup> Street, and opposite Ellis Island restaurant, looks abandoned.
15. The Gateway Garden at the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Michigan Avenue is a Garden Club initiative and serves as a quasi-gateway to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Here is the official end of the Community Walk.
16. The group also looked at the location of the Farmer's Market in the Brookland Metro station, and additional insights on access, sidewalk and trail locations, and pedestrian drop-off areas were discussed with the Team.



Fig. 1 Light pole in the middle of the sidewalk, Monroe Street

Fig. 2 Trees get in the way of power lines



Fig. 3 “Plants in barrels” and the red canopy

## **Part 3:**

Brookland Community Walk (October 8, 2004) Notes

Start – End

1. Colonel Brooks restaurant is the rendezvous place for CUA students.
2. Monroe St Bridge is utilized more by CUA students rather than community.
3. There is visibility issues regarding to bridge itself, i.e. drivers approaching the top of the bridge cannot see what behind it; pedestrian crossing is too close to the end of the slope of the bridge. If the car cannot stop, it will create danger for pedestrians crossing it.
4. Monroe St between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets are wider eventhough it was designed as one lane in each direction, due to trolley line in the middle of the street long time ago. (Opportunity: put green median/area in the middle between the two opposite lanes). (see photo)
5. Monroe St between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets has narrow sidewalk. Another problem is there is a light post in the middle of the sidewalk (see photo)
6. Monroe St between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets is mainly used for public transportation coming from Maryland and make a loop in the terminal and back to Maryland.
7. On the NW corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe Streets, there is a garden in a private property done by Garden Club.

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8. First tree box design is not well done. The side fence can be easily hit by an opening car door (see photo). The revised design is shown on photo (...)
9. 12<sup>th</sup> and Newton Streets is a busy intersection. Needs a 4-way stop sign instead of 2-way intersection
10. Electricity lines run on both sides of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Need to bury them if the cost permits.
11. CVS façade is different due its theater function in the past.
12. Too many female ginkgo trees on the west side of 12<sup>th</sup> Street. When their fruit are not picked, they produce foul odor. Then if the fruit fall on the cars, it can stick on the paint and damage it. It needs big maintenance to prevent it
13. Barrel plants is good to soften the impervious area of the sidewalk but sometimes misused by people as trash receptacle.
14. People park their cars beyond the legal limits
15. Triangle garden at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Michigan Avenue can function as a gateway to the Brookland Community
16. Farmer's Market is more successful during weekday than Saturday due to people passing that area after work hours.

## **Part 4:**

### Notes from Community walk conducted on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2004 (1 pm To 3 pm)

#### 1. Special neighborhood attractions

- Colonel Brook's Tavern is a significant attraction for the Students of Catholic University
- Kelly's Ellis Island restaurant (at 12<sup>th</sup> and Quincy) is a major citywide attraction
- The farmer's market below the Michigan Avenue Bridge behind Brookland-CUA metro is very successful.

#### 2. Intersections / special paths

- 12<sup>th</sup> and Newton -  
Is a dangerous intersection.  
The CVS at the NE corner used to be the Newton Theater  
A way finding sign (DCBID signs) should be placed at the intersection
- 12<sup>th</sup> and Quincy -  
The seniors' day care center at the SE corner of Quincy and 12<sup>th</sup> Street used to be a Safeway.  
Currently there is a large open space abutting Quincy and 12<sup>th</sup> Street.
- A measure drawing of 3500 block along 12<sup>th</sup> Street has been conducted and copies of the drawings can be made available to the Study Team
- Special attention should be paid to the pedestrian route connecting Brookland-CUA Metro with 12<sup>th</sup> Street NE (this path goes across the Metro Bus Stops, parking lot and Newton street)
- The "Gateway Garden" at the intersection of Michigan Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street should be given special attention as it marks the entry to the Brookland Area
- Monroe Street between 12<sup>th</sup> Street NE and 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE has very wide lanes in each directions – there is an opportunity to narrow the lanes and create wide sidewalks and a median.

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## 3. Landscape Elements

- The use of “Barrels” for tree planting should be avoided – trash is often disposed in them. Tree boxes are preferred for trees as they prevent pedestrians from compacting the soil
- Trees are cut, often insensitively, to accommodate PEPCO’s overhead wires; a preferred solution to this is to bury the overhead wires (cost however is prohibitive)
- The grass tree planting lawn along 12<sup>th</sup> Street is a unique condition for a mixed-use street. The parking meters placed on the lawns cause people getting off from their cars to step on the lawn, leading to poor appearance and damage to the lawn.
- Planting of female Gingko’s should be avoided as their fruit cause a foul odor
- [www.mdflora.org](http://www.mdflora.org) is a good resource for species of plants native to the area

## 4. Other

Handicap ramps are not properly designed

## We Welcome Your Comments

Will you take a few minutes to share your ideas and suggestions?

Please leave the completed form with a Project Team member or mail/fax to:

**Sharlene Reed**

Ward 5 Transportation Planner  
District Department of Transportation  
2000 14th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Tel: (202) 671-2407  
Fax: (202) 671-0617  
Email: [Sharlene.Reed@dc.gov](mailto:Sharlene.Reed@dc.gov)

PLEASE REMOVE THE WORD TRANSPORTATION FROM THIS  
STREETSCAPE STUDY. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH  
TRANSPORTATION.

1. THE SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED STUDY IS FAR TOO  
NARROW.
2. IT DOES NOT LIST MAJOR MATERIALS -  
EXAMPLE: WHICH ROADS ARE NATIONAL AND WHICH ARE  
LOCAL, WHICH ARE FUNDED AND WHICH ARE  
NOT FUNDED? WHERE IN THE DDOT ARE THEY FUNDED?
3. FUTURE TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS ON THE  
STUDY AREA FROM PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS  
ARE IGNORED. THIS MAKES TRUE PLANNING  
IMPOSSIBLE.
4. ANY AMELIORATION OF TIS PROBLEMS CANNOT  
BE SOLVED WITHOUT A FULL TRANSPORTATION  
STUDY OF WARD 5 AND BEYOND.  
THAT IS WHERE THIS STREETScape BEGINS!

If you would like to be on our mailing list:

Name: Angela Rooney  
Address: 3425 14th St NE Derwood  
Phone: 202 626 4592  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## We Welcome Your Comments

Will you take a few minutes to share your ideas and suggestions?

Please leave the completed form with a Project Team member or mail/fax to:

**Sharlene Reed**

Ward 5 Transportation Planner  
District Department of Transportation  
2000 14th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Tel: (202) 671-2407  
Fax: (202) 671-0617  
Email: [Sharlene.Reed@dc.gov](mailto:Sharlene.Reed@dc.gov)

The results of the N.T.P. Report determined most concerns of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street business, for example Verizon and a local Union (Highways's construction) which recently moved their offices. These concerns were stated in letter sent to me.

Thank you for <sup>your</sup> action!

**If you would like to be on our mailing list:**

Name: Sue Barnes - Mini Commission Ward 5  
Address: 3000 7th St. N.E. #217  
NAS H., D.C. 20017-1403  
Phone: 202 832 6840  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_