



Government of the District of Columbia Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5C

Arboretum | Brentwood | Fort Lincoln | Gateway | Langdon | Woodridge

Resolution on Mitigating Development Concerns Surrounding Rhode Island Ave NE and 20th St NE

Sponsor: Commissioner Kapur (5C07)

Whereas:

- the Rhode Island Avenue corridor on the boundary of Single-Member Districts 5C07 and 5B06 is dense with amenities that are lacking from a large surrounding area, including Woodridge Library, Langdon Park, two DCPS elementaries, many daycares, a grocer, a coffeeshop, an ice cream shop, a brewpub, restaurants, convenience stores, and high-frequency bus service straight to the Rhode Island Ave-Brentwood Metrorail station
- many residential construction projects have recently been constructed or are in process here, the vast majority matter-of-right, allowing current and future neighbors a low-upkeep living option within walking distance of these amenities, including:
 - the following projects totaling 459 homes and 11,800 SF of retail in the blocks surrounding the intersection of 20th St NE and Rhode Island Ave NE:
 - **2001 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 50 homes, 4,500 SF of retail currently seeking zoning relief under BZA 21067
 - **2027 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 43 homes, 4,600 SF of retail recently constructed
 - **3011 20th St NE;** nine homes
 - **1904 Irving St NE;** 12 homes recently constructed
 - **1818 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 10 homes under construction
 - **1800 Hamlin St NE;** 70 homes and a new church space for New Macedonia Baptist Church recently entitled
 - **2015 Jackson St NE;** 10 homes recently entitled
 - **3200 22nd St NE;** 10 homes under construction
 - **2026 Jackson St NE;** 35 homes and 2700 SF retail recently entitled

- **1731 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 59 homes proposed
- **1736 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 61 homes recently constructed
- **1700 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 46 short-term family shelter homes recently constructed
- **1715 Hamlin St NE;** 18 homes recently constructed
- **1717 Hamlin St NE;** 26 homes under construction
- the following projects totaling at least 160 homes and no retail along Rhode Island Ave to the east to Eastern Ave NE:
 - **2357 Rhode Island Ave NE;** a 45-bed emergency shelter recently constructed
 - **2364 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 40 homes currently permitted
 - **2385 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 20 homes under construction
 - **2900 Rhode Island Ave NE;** recent Map Amendment implies near-term proposal
 - **2911 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 100 homes proposed
- the following projects totaling 271 homes and no retail to the west to Montana Ave NE
 - **2909 17th St NE;** six homes recently constructed
 - **1617 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 16 homes recently constructed
 - **1515 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 20 homes recently constructed
 - **1545 Girard St NE;** 25 homes recently constructed
 - **1544 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 59 homes under construction
 - **1522 Rhode Island Ave NE;** 28 homes under construction
 - **1507 Rhode Island Ave NE;** nine homes recently constructed
 - **1400 Montana Ave NE;** 108 homes recently constructed
- a notional 1,760 homes and 181,000 SF of retail and other commercial uses as part of **Mid-City's Brookland Manor redevelopment**, currently under and extended First-Stage PUD approval in total and extended Second-Stage PUD approval for 331 homes on Block 7
- while many amenities are available on foot and other active transportation, or by high-frequency bus and transit, some number of residents and visitors of these homes

will drive personal vehicles and park on the street, increasing the utilization of on-street parking within our neighborhood, as will any increase in utilization of existing retail, which is among the top concerns expressed by residents in related discussions, including:

- the top concern is that increased parking utilization will impact existing residents who primarily park cars on the street by their homes to continue doing so as easily, including for those with physical impairment making this critical
- increased utilization can pose a traffic safety risk if not properly managed by appropriate updates to the surrounding roadways, something DDOT only makes available through limited and quantitatively prioritized Traffic Safety Investigations (TSIs) in 800 places DC-wide each quarter
- underutilization of provisioned on-street parking can also pose a traffic safety risk if not properly managed, due to the excess crosswidth made available to drivers, as was a factor in the fatal February 3, 2023 crash that killed 22-year-old Andy Jose Cariño
 - the upgraded crosswalk installed in front of the Langdon Park Community Center in response to this crash employs physical daylighting via curb extension using plastic flexposts to provide the narrowing of continuously utilized parking while also encouraging parking in places that don't harm driver/pedestrian visibility
 - a pending installation will add similar curb extensions to the intersection of 20th St NE and Hamlin St NE
 - less proactive than curb extensions, intersections should generally feature marked crosswalks and no parking signage indicating the appropriate distance from an intersection one can park, to prevent crowding of the intersection that harms pedestrian access, but also interferes with the turn radius for emergency and other vehicles
- historically, DDOT has been reluctant to convert blocks in this area to Residential Parking Permit (RPP) due to underutilization, and the following nearby blocks continue to be unzoned for RPP despite increasing utilization:
 - 2000 block of SFdS recently converted
 - 3000 block of 20th St NE (both sides)
 - 1800-1900 block of Hamlin St NE (both sides)
 - 2000 block of Hamlin St NE (both sides)
- a number of residents have expressed a desire to build off-street parking to improve their homes, but are prevented due to DDOT's poor alley inventorying and maintenance of existing "paper alleys," an issue that would be initially addressed by B25-129, Paper

Alleys Planning Amendment Act of 2023¹ and could aid in improving the condition of various alleys around the subject area, including:

- 3000 block of 20th St NE, west side
- 3000 block of 20th St NE, east side, both north and south of St Francis de Sales PI NE
- 2000 block of St Francis de Sales PI NE, south side
- 2600 block of Myrtle Ave NE, south side
- DDOT is attempting to resolve missing sidewalks in our neighborhoods as part of the Sidewalk Gap Program, though there are many such gaps in the vicinity either missing from the map, considered sufficient despite noncompliance, or are on the map and not scheduled for imminent construction², including:
 - 2000 block of Hamlin St NE, south side
 - 1600 block of Franklin St NE, north side
 - 1800 block of Franklin St NE, north side
 - 2200 block of Franklin St NE, north side
 - 3000 block of Thayer St NE, east side
- a number of intersections in the vicinity of 20th St NE and Rhode Island Ave NE feature only unmarked (neither painted nor fully ramped) crosswalks over the higher-volume roadway, and increasing parking utilization leads to many being inappropriate blocked by illicitly parked vehicles; the only mechanism for getting these marked is the TSI process:
 - None at 20th/SFdS (TSI SR 24-00191961)
 - None at Mills/Hamlin St (TSI SR 23-00089794, 22-00441698)
 - None at Mills/Hamlin PI (TSI SR 22-00448004, 23-00029658)
 - None at King PI NE/Hamlin St NE (recently evaluated, but dismissed as infeasible citing *“the presence of curb cuts, manholes, fire hydrants etc.”*)
- the TSI prioritization process has selected the same intersection, at 20th St NE, Evarts St NE, and Queens Chapel Rd NE, for investigation in three sequential quarters, calling into question the efficacy of the prioritization mechanism, and whether Single-Member District 5C07 and Commission Area 5C are receiving the properly due number of new quarterly investigations:
 - in FY24 Q1, SR 23-00334558 attributed to 20th/Evarts/Queens Chapel

¹ <https://lms.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B25-0129>

² <https://sidewalkgap.ddot.dc.gov/>

- in FY24 Q2, SRs 23-00580063 and 24-00106605³ attributed to 20th/Evarts/Queens Chapel
- in FY24 Q3, SR 24-00106637 attributed to 20th/Evarts/Queens Chapel
- DDOT released Notice of Intent (NOI) NOI-24-85-TESD⁴ for a new HAWK signal on Rhode Island Ave NE at Thayer St NE, in response to a request for a new traffic signal in response to, in part, a significant number of new homes being constructed nearby
- DDOT has 17th St NE and Girard St NE (in a six-way junction with Rhode Island Ave NE) under active FY24 Q1 prioritized investigation, in response to both:
 - TSI SR 22-00487051, opened October 9, 2022 with the opening comment *“There needs to be a change to the pedestrian light being used since none of the cars adhere to it. They should put the pedestrian light that starts off yellow and then turns solid red. Especially because Rhode Island is a long and busy street to cross. Otherwise the current light being use is useless. No cars ever yield and it can be impossible to cross at all times of the day.”*
 - TSI SR 23-00529308, opened October 6, 2023 with the opening comment "It is difficult to cross Rhode Island Ave the corner of 17th Street NE and Rhode Island Ave NE. Cars ignore the pedestrian signal light and many times cars are speeding down the street to get across the intersection."; this SR was opened by a new resident of one of the aforementioned newly constructed buildings, making it an important reflection of the issues faced by these new residents needing to cross Rhode Island Ave for bus access towards Metrorail and downtown
- OP’s policies on the public space areas known as “public parking,” such as the raised landscaping in front of 2001 Rhode Island Ave NE, shouldn’t be significantly modified in grade, even if it would be to build a continuation of existing wide sidewalks
- there are consistency issues with the way the Office of Planning and the Zoning Administrator apply Subtitle C § 702.1(c)(9) of the Zoning Regulations to Rhode Island Ave NE properties:
 - the provisions stipulate that properties on blocks not subject to RPP permitting qualify for a halving of the minimum parking requirement if within one-quarter mile of “Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Routes” including “Rhode Island Avenue (Route G8)”
 - at the eastern stretch of Rhode Island Ave NE along the 5B06/5C07 boundary, the G8 route runs not along Rhode Island Ave, but along Monroe St NE just farther than one-quarter mile away from many Rhode Island Ave properties west of 20th St, as well as those only on the south side of Rhode Island Ave NE east of 20th St NE

³ SR 24-00106605 was initially associated with FY24 Q3 but later reassociated with FY24 Q2

⁴ <https://ddotwiki.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/NI/pages/2461728792/NOI-24-85-TESD>

- these regulations refer to WMATA artifacts no longer in use to target aspirational frequencies that apply to WMATA's current Metrobus Frequent Service document, which include the T18 bus route along Rhode Island Ave, and would likely cover the aggregate service for the applicable segment of RIA within DC provided by the 83, 86, T14, and T18 bus lines
- many new developments are built with lighting fixture choices that exacerbate light pollution in the neighborhood, which impacts human health, disrupts wildlife, wastes money and energy, contributes to climate change, and blocks our view of the stars
- DC has a Green Construction Code⁵, which aligns with recommendations from DarkSky International⁶, but they only apply to buildings electing to adopt that code, while others neglect to make any deliberate decisions on their lighting selection
- many new developments remain delinquent on their public space permitting obligations, such as curb cuts onto the sidewalk left open in front of 2027 Rhode Island Ave NE and 1617 Rhode Island Ave NE

Therefore, be it resolved that ANC 5C:

- **urges the Council to expediently consider and pass, and the Mayor and Council fully fund, B25-129, the *Paper Alleys Planning Amendment Act of 2023*** to begin the process of properly managing and maintaining the various paper alleys District-wide.
- **urges DDOT's relevant components**, Curbside Management Division, Traffic Safety Branch, Development Review Program, Public Space Inspection and Oversight Division, and Public Space Committee to act as follows:
 - process any RPP petition and RDPP applications from ANC 5C in this vicinity, with due consideration for the parking utilization increases all of the above projects are beginning to produce
 - properly inventory and maintain St Francis de Sales PI NE and King PI NE, inconsistently inventoried public roadways with addressed homes fronting them
 - prioritize and expediently consider all listed TSI SRs above for proper marking and signage of intersections lacking proper parking signage and crosswalk marking and ramps
 - expediently install the HAWK signal noticed in NOI-24-85-TESD with maximal safety and considerations for future full signal upgrade made in design and construction, to include an advanced stop line, median/turn hardening to prevent illicit left turns, maximally safe pedestrian refuge islands with signal activation buttons, and sizing any poles and electrical infrastructure for a full signal

⁵ https://os.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcra/event_content/attachments/gc_GreenCode.pdf

⁶ <https://darksky.org/>

- evaluate a full signal and HAWK for the intersection of Rhode Island Ave NE and 17th St NE, currently under active investigation TSI SRs 22-00487051 and 23-00529308, as well as properly align marked crosswalks with Rhode Island Ave NE to reduce the unmarked size of this intersection and ease the pedestrian burden of walking along Rhode Island Ave here as many do
- prioritize nearby sidewalk gaps for completion through DDOT's Sidewalk Gap program to properly anticipate increased foot traffic induced by the aforementioned development projects
- investigate and pursue enforcement against the owners of 2027 Rhode Island Ave NE and 1617 Rhode Island Ave NE if they do not adequately complete the sidewalk work in front of their recently constructed buildings
- actively consider encouraging/compelling future developers in the vicinity of the above locations to deliver traffic safety improvements from their budget as part of their public space permitting
- **urges the Office of Planning, Department of Buildings, and the Zoning Administrator** (as appropriate) to consider:
 - consider allowing developments to alter the grade of "public parking" public space when doing so would better align the public space with that of the surrounding neighborhood
 - work to clarify the text or interpretation of Subtitle C § 702.1(c)(9) which is currently interpreted to ascribe parking requirements of a high-frequency Rhode Island Ave bus line to the G8, but not the T18, T14, 83, and/or 86 which all run conterminally between Eastern Ave NE and the RIA-Brentwood Metrorail station
- **urges all of the above public space and land use agencies and the Public Space Committee deliberative body to consider adjudicating matters of light fixture size, orientation, intensity, and other contributors to light pollution**, as selectively mandated by the DC Green Construction Code and recommended by Darksy International, when appropriate in review processes and in future code revisions
- **authorizes ANC 5C Commissioner VJ Kapur (5C07) to speak on behalf of the Commission** in advocating for the aforementioned

Certification: Adopted on **4/17/2024** by a vote of **5-0-0**, with four commissioners required for quorum, at a regularly scheduled and duly noticed public meeting with a quorum present.



 Jacqueline Manning
 Chair, ANC 5C