

*Chevy Chase Park Homeowners Association
Manor Road, Chevy Chase Maryland*

July 1, 2010

Mr. Lawrence Cole
M-NCPPC Building
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Cole,

I am a homeowner in the neighborhood of Chevy Chase Park and I am submitting this letter on behalf of the Chevy Chase Park Homeowners Association.

Chevy Chase Park is a neighborhood bounded by Connecticut Avenue, Jones Bridge Road, and Manor Road, where the entrance to the neighborhood is located. For the past year, I and my neighbors have attended many meetings relating to the BRAC conversion and intersection projects, and worked with coalition, community and other neighborhood representatives. We also of course are closely following plans for significant development of the Chevy Chase Lake area in anticipation of construction of the Purple line. We understand from our discussions with a number of community representatives that it is important for us to register our primary points with you by July 1st and prior to the upcoming July 22nd mandatory referral presentations regarding the BRAC intersection projects. Many of us have written letters to our representatives regarding these issues. However, we appreciate the opportunity to summarize here our primary concerns as you and other government officials consider the BRAC intersection projects and other numerous long-term community planning issues under consideration.

Chevy Chase Park is a neighborhood of 49 homes in a development constructed approximately 10 years ago. The neighborhood was carefully zoned and developed solely for residential use after years of consideration. We were told as home purchasers at the time of development that County, State and federal authorities required the developer to observe strict environmental constraints relating to the preservation of the scores of very mature trees and undergrowth areas that are scattered throughout the neighborhood and along the Jones Bridge Road border. The properties in the neighborhood are relatively expensive and well-maintained. The homeowners understand, however, that the area around the neighborhood is under increasing traffic and congestion pressures, and effective solutions must be pursued to accommodate increased vehicular, transit, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Our homeowners generally endorse the letter that the Coalition of Military Medical Center Neighbors is submitting at this time for your consideration with regard to these issues. However, we thought it important to send our own letter as well. We agree with the Coalition that sensible, holistic solutions need to be examined as several significant changes to the community are being considered at once. We are concerned that some proposals under consideration appear to be isolated, quick fixes, designed by state engineers or planners who are under pressure to do something to address increased congestion – rather than carefully considered holistic solutions that consider long term growth.

We believe the BRAC intersection project to widen Jones Bridge Road east of Connecticut Avenue, and any consideration of widening Connecticut Avenue north of Manor Road, are among such projects. While State and federal officials remain under significant pressure to find solutions to the additional vehicular traffic that will attend the transfer of operations from Walter Reed hospital to the Bethesda Naval Medical Center next year, widening Connecticut Avenue and Jones Bridge Road is not a solution.

As we understand the proposal to be presented at the July 22nd mandatory referral meeting, it will:

- 1) relieve little, if any, traffic congestion;
- 2) make the Connecticut Avenue/Jones Bridge intersection more dangerous than it currently is -- already one of the most dangerous in the County -- for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- 3) increase the already dangerous crossing for elementary school students and parents/guardians attempting to cross Jones Bridge Road from the neighborhood north of North Chevy Chase Elementary School;
- 4) destroy many of the most mature trees and undergrowth areas in Chevy Chase Park, unnecessarily and with little real gain in relief of traffic congestion;
- 5) likely reduce substantially property values abutting Jones Bridge Road, again, with almost no benefit to commuters or the community at large;
- 6) create potentially serious drainage problems in an area already challenged by high water volumes during significant rain events;
- 7) present substantial construction problems given the severe slope of the bank that must be built up ten to twenty feet to the level of Jones Bridge Road merely to gain one or one and one half additional lanes; and

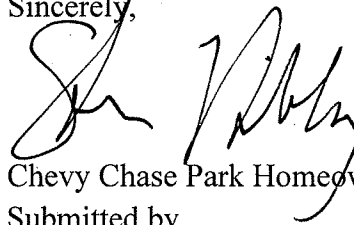
8) conflict with the County Planners' vision of a tree-lined, integrated use, pedestrian strolling community.

We are also concerned that the proposal will create, rather than reduce, traffic and pedestrian problems once additional traffic patterns are considered and implemented as part of broader community development plans, including the development of Chevy Chase Lake. For example, at present, drivers can clearly see that they have limited opportunity to merge as they travel east on Jones Bridge Road past Connecticut Avenue. However, if one or more lanes are added to Jones Bridge east of Connecticut Avenue, drivers will be encouraged to attempt to squeeze through the intersection. This will cause greater gridlock across the intersection because of the presently irresolvable choke point in front of the Elementary School. Encouraging an increasing number of drivers to attempt to move through the intersection as the light is changing will likely not relieve congestion on Connecticut Avenue, but rather amplify it, with attending danger,

The current intersection construction plans surrounding our neighborhood have not been driven by careful consideration of long-term community growth and enhancement, but rather by single-objective need. State Highway Department representatives recognized this themselves following a series of community and coalition meetings during which it became apparent that widening Connecticut Avenue would cause problems, not create solutions. Cost-benefit analyses could not be sustained. Many of the changes to Connecticut Avenue were then dropped from the current plans. The important need to address the area's serious traffic challenges is understandable; the proposed short-term solution is not.

We respectfully request that you and your colleagues work to consider a more measured approach that looks towards the long-term future of this high growth area. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Chevy Chase Park Homeowners Association

Submitted by

Stu Nibley (on behalf of the Association)

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