Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

[DRAFT] RESOLUTION #4B-20-0901

Requesting Installation of Speed Humps and Additional Traffic Calming on Whittier Street, NW, between Blair Road, NW, and Piney Branch Road, NW
Adopted September 28, 2020

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B takes note of the following:

- Mayor Bowser's Vision Zero Initiative seeks to reach zero traffic fatalities by 2024. The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has committed to making our city's streets safer, including by addressing Vision Zero traffic-related safety issues throughout the city.

- In furtherance of these goals, DDOT has implemented a Traffic Safety Assessment process where a resident, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, or other community member or organization can submit a questionnaire detailing traffic safety concerns within the public right-of-way. DDOT's Transportation Operations and Safety Division will then evaluate the extent of the safety issue and determine if any action is needed and develop and implement recommendations, if appropriate. DDOT has stated that the traffic safety assessment process normally takes 120 days from when a Traffic Safety Assessment questionnaire is submitted until DDOT provides recommendations. The timeline for installation of the improvements may vary.

- On October 24, 2019, Marc Meisnere (residing at 604 Whittier Street, NW) submitted a Traffic Safety Assessment questionnaire to DDOT for Whittier Street, NW, between 5th Street, NW, and Piney Branch Road, NW. Marc Meisnere noted in the questionnaire there are no speed control measures on this stretch of Whittier Street, NW, creating an extended stretch of residential road without speed calming, and calling attention to the particularly problematic intersection of Whittier Street, NW, and 6th Street, NW, which lacks four-way stop signs. Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, submitted a letter in support, noting the affected area is residential with significant pedestrian and bicycle traffic, including children and seniors, who are more vulnerable to traffic injuries and fatalities, as well as that Takoma Education Campus, the Takoma Metro, day cares, the Takoma Aquatic Center, the Takoma playground, and several additional schools are located in close proximity, and many

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residents walk or bike to these facilities. DDOT acknowledged the questionnaire on October 30th, 2019, and assigned the request service number 19-00955033.

- On June 9, 2020, Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, submitted a service request specifically for four-way stop signs at the intersection of Whittier Street, NW, and 6th Street, NW. As detailed above, Marc Meisnere noted this problematic intersection in his October 24, 2019, Traffic Safety Assessment questionnaire. DDOT acknowledged the service request on June 9, 2020, and assigned the request service number 20-00200557.

- On July 20, 2020, Aida Cavalic (residing at 6629 Piney Branch Road, NW) submitted a Traffic Safety questionnaire to DDOT for the intersection of Whittier Street, NW, 8th Street, NW, and Piney Branch Road, NW. The questionnaire noted the high frequency of cars speeding off of Piney Branch Road, NW, onto Whittier Street, NW, and 8th Street, NW, which creates significant confusion and danger for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, submitted a letter in support, again noting the significant pedestrian and bicycle traffic along Whittier Street, NW, and the proximity to schools and other community hubs. DDOT acknowledged the questionnaire on July 20th, 2020, and assigned the request service number 20-00250650.

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has received numerous complaints regarding speeding and reckless driving along Whittier Street, NW, including following DDOT's repaving of Whittier Street, NW, from 6th Street, NW, to 8th Street, NW, in August 2020. Neighbors have noted Whittier Street, NW, experiences heavy commuter traffic and is often used as a thoroughfare for cars traveling from Blair Road, NW, to Piney Branch Road, NW.

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has received numerous requests from neighbors along Whittier Street, NW, for assistance in encouraging DDOT to install speed humps and other traffic calming measures along Whittier Street, NW, from Blair Road, NW to Piney Branch Road, NW. Multiple neighbors expressed frustration at previous attempts to petition for speed humps that were met with silence and/or inaction. Neighbors have noted the importance of traffic calming in the areas around the Takoma Aquatic Center and Takoma playground due to the high number of children, seniors, and others who frequent those public areas, many of whom walk or ride bicycles.

- While the Commission understands from conversations with DDOT that data collection is on hold during the public health emergency, the original request from Marc Meisnere (not including any requests prior to Commissioner Palmer's term as Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner)

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was submitted nearly a year ago, and well before the public health emergency. Yet the request is still open, indicating that DDOT has not begun data collection. The Commission urges DDOT to find and implement additional data collection mechanisms, as reckless driving has only increased during the public health emergency due to reduced traffic.

- In addition, while the Commission has worked with the Traffic Safety Assessment process, Commissioners only learned for the first time in a July 21, 2020, meeting with DDOT that requests for speed humps must be submitted separately via a Commission Resolution. The Commission had previously relied on the Traffic Safety Assessment questionnaire instructions, which note that "[t]he intent of the [Traffic Safety Assessment] process is … to identify traffic safety concerns … and focus on the definition of the safety concern(s) rather than on a proposed solution or mitigation measure," leaving the proper solution to the experts at DDOT. The Commission urges DDOT to better communicate with Commissions the options available for seeking traffic calming and ensuring implementation of traffic calming measures, whether by 311 request, Traffic Safety Assessment, Commission resolution, or other mechanism.

RESOLVED:

➢ That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the District Department of Transportation to timely collect data and complete its review of the three outstanding requests related to traffic safety issues along Whittier Street, NW.

➢ That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recognizes the broad community support for speed humps along Whittier Street, NW, and calls on the District Department of Transportation to promptly install speed humps along this street from Blair Road, NW, to Piney Branch Road, NW.

➢ That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the District Department of Transportation to install four-way stop signs at the intersection of Whittier Street, NW, and 6th Street, NW.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Commission designates Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, and Commissioner Geoff Bromaghim, ANC 4B07, to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

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FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, in the event the designated representative Commissioner cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, consistent with DC Code § 1-309, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

ADOPTED by voice vote at a regular public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of __ of nine members was present) on September 28, 2020, by a vote of __ yes, __ no, __ abstentions.

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