



ATTACHMENT 2

Charles Street Reconstruction
Project Stakeholders July 6, 2004
Letter to Mayor Martin O'Malley
(2 Pages)



CHARLES STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
c/o The Charles Village Civic Association
2470 Maryland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218

July 6, 2004

Mayor Martin O'Malley
City Hall, Room
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Mayor O'Malley

We are writing to bring to your attention our concerns over the design process for North Charles Street between 25th Street and University Parkway.

In the fall of 2002, we participated in a collaborative design process that you initiated to develop a consensus for the reconstruction of Charles Street. We all worked hard and believed that we had achieved agreement in such a manner as to make Charles Street the preeminent street in the City linking as it does wonderful neighborhoods and institutions.

Following our January 7th 2003 meeting in your office with Laurie Schwartz and Dominick Murray we had every expectation that the City agreed with our desire for a concept that placed a priority on a safe, attractive pedestrian-oriented design. Your own initiative to restore Charles Street to a two-way urban thoroughfare underscored the importance of a new paradigm for traffic planning that could restore the balance between communities and commuters.

Unfortunately, from the presentation at the City's most recent (June 24th) public meeting, we must take exception to the direction proposed in the latest plan and can only conclude that the design is still being driven to primarily accommodate traffic volumes and not toward a traffic-calmed street that also needs to safely address the many thousands of pedestrian crossings each day.

Since the design process was restarted in April of this year, many of our concerns and suggestions have been met with resistance from the Department of Transportation. We, collectively, can only interpret this as a philosophical difference over the ultimate nature of the street and a lack of understanding as to the critical role the new Charles Street can and should play in community development.

Many design details that Transportation is prepared to incorporate for this section of Charles Street are counter to the needs of the adjacent communities, institutions and pedestrians: excessive lane widths that will promote speeding traffic, continued reliance on swift moving, high capacity intersection designs at 29th Street and Art Museum Drive that are critical

pedestrian gateways, and the refusal to consider innovative traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks.

The stakeholders are not blind to the traffic functions that Charles Street needs to address. We all want Charles Street to be successful and an asset for the entire City in a way that reinforces our own individual and collective goals. However, it has become clear that the City needs to return to a more collaborative effort with the stakeholders and other City agencies if the potential for Charles Street is to be realized.

It was this collaboration that provided the impetus for the January 7th, 2003 agreement with your office and with your renewed participation, we are certain that we can be successful again without delaying the project.

Sincerely,

Doreen Bolger
Director
The Baltimore Museum of Art

Marcia Holden
President
Friends of Wyman Park Dell

Beth Bullamore
President
Charles Village Civic Association

James T. McGill
Senior Vice-President
Johns Hopkins University

Louise Toomey
President
Greenway Community Association

Sandra Sparks
President
NCV PUD Design Review

cc: Alfred H. Foxx
Dominick Murray
Otis Rolley
David Wallace