

GREENWAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.
3405 Greenway #101
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

December 18, 2002

Mr. David W. Wallace
Rummel, Klepper and Kahl
81 Mosher Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21217

Dear David:

The December 12 Stakeholders Meeting was very well organized and handled a complex subject very efficiently. We think you did a masterful job keeping the program on schedule and still allowing everyone to express his or her views. Thanks for a job well done.

Since the meeting we have solicited the views and opinions of our members and neighbors. This letter sums up our thinking on the proposed Charles Street Reconstruction Project.

1. The median strip. Our residents feel that it makes sense and is important as a pedestrian refuge. This should also serve as a separation for two southbound lanes and two northbound lanes. We also feel strongly that there should not be a third northbound lane, regardless of the traffic volume coming out of the city.

At the present time traffic exiting from Greenway is prohibited from turning left and continuing south on Charles Street. Many drivers ignore this prohibition even with signs indicating that all traffic must turn to the right, or north. A median strip on Charles Street that continues, without a gap, across Greenway/34th Street would block drivers from heading south on Charles. This is important for the safety of pedestrians and for our residents so that Greenway does not become a convenient throughway for fast moving southbound cars.

2. Intersection of 34th and Charles Streets. Because of the high volume of pedestrian traffic crossing Charles Street and the emerging vehicle traffic from Greenway we think that close attention should be given to any proposed changes. The north bound service drive between 33rd and 34th Streets should not enter into this intersection as is now the case. Instead, a new configuration should have the service drive curve out to the northbound traffic lane just south of 34th Street. This would keep vehicles, as they do now, from coming through 34th Street and illegally maneuvering around the pedestrian island to continue in the service drive north of 34th Street.

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3. The east side service drive from 29th to University Parkway. All residents feel very strongly that the east service drive should be retained and widened. It is a buffer from moving traffic and has been a long time unique feature for the many residents who walk up and down Charles Street. It is part of the original Olmsted design of Charles Street and should be retained, considering the aesthetics of Charles Street and the practicality of it being a buffer. It also provides critically needed parking spaces for the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) programs operative in Charles Village and in the Greenway Community. This is a very important factor in this area where parking spaces are always in short supply. Widening this drive would give needed space for vehicles to move safely past parked cars. This would eliminate side-swiping incidents.
4. Converting 34th Street into a pedestrian mall. This would help with student safety and eliminate vehicular congestion in this space between the Hopkins dormitories. But it would prevent southbound Greenway traffic from turning east to St. Paul Street and continuing south, the present practice. This would mean that Greenway drivers could only proceed north on Charles Street and would deny a route for drivers intending to get to St. Paul Street.

Closing this one block that now has parking on both sides would exacerbate the parking congestion already present on Greenway and in the 3400 and 3500 blocks of Charles Street. Many of the dormitory residents and their visitors have cars. Where would these cars be parked? Would the proposed new Hopkins garage accommodate these cars? If Hopkins charges for parking in its new garage we doubt that many students and their visitors will be willing to pay and park there. Our residents have mixed opinions on this suggestion. More study is needed on this subject.
5. Intersection of Art Museum Drive and Charles. We think that the BMA plan for this intersection is practical, easy to implement, and will address the crying need for pedestrian safety. It would also facilitate northbound left turning vehicles (see #10 below). We urge that this be incorporated in the final plan.
6. Eliminating the present sweep at 29th Street. In the interest of safety we agree that the high-speed sweep should be tightened up, thus forcing motorists to slow down to make a sharper turn.
7. Raised portion of roadways at intersections. Our community is emphatically in favor of having the intersection roadways raised to emphasize these sections for motorists, as suggested by Al Barry. We also feel that having a different texture on the road surface at intersections will cause drivers to slow down, thus increasing pedestrian safety. At the very least, the roadways leading up to intersections should have strips such as are now installed on Calvert Street between 33rd and 34th Streets.

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8. The crossover near the Hopkins tennis courts. There is now a "crossover" near the tennis courts that allows drivers headed north to get into the present southbound service drive. This is used primarily by drivers exiting from Greenway, intending to go south, but being forced to go north until they reach the "crossover." If there will be a median on Charles Street this will necessitate a left turn lane at this point and possibly a traffic light. If the west service drive is eliminated Greenway Community residents and other drivers who need to go south after being force to go north from Greenway should be entitled to make a U-turn into a southbound lane.

9. West service drive. If elimination of the west service drive is necessary to gain more space for a wider sidewalk and a bike path, and provided that Johns Hopkins University and the Baltimore Museum of Art prefer this, our community would have no objection (but see #8 above).

10. Controlling left turning vehicles. Northbound vehicles should be allowed to turn left into Art Museum Drive and at University Parkway. This would require left turn lanes that of necessity would be carved out of the grass median strip. We approve of this as long as there are traffic signals controlling such turns.

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The Charles Street redesign project is a major undertaking with many ramifications. We are glad to see so much attention given to the planning process and are happy that the City has seen fit to consult the residents who will be affected by the new Charles Street. We think that this beautiful boulevard can be restored to its original beauty with the cooperation of all parties involved.

Sincerely yours,
Louise Toomey
Louise Toomey, President

- CC: Laurie Schwartz, Deputy Mayor
- Alfred Foxx, Director, Office of Transportation
- Frank Murphy, Chief of Traffic Engineering
- Kristen Smith, Community Planner