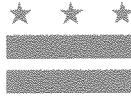



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

Memorandum

TO: Jamison L. Weinbaum, Director
DC Office of Zoning

FROM: Karina Ricks 
District Department of Transportation

DATE: May 5, 2011

SUBJECT: Z.C. Case # 10-32 (Georgetown University Campus Plan 2011-2020)

APPLICATION

Application of President and Directors of Georgetown College ("Georgetown University"), pursuant to 11 DCMR §§ 3104.1 and 210, for special exception review and approval of the Georgetown University Campus Plan 2011-2020.

The Georgetown University campus is located in the R-3 and C-1 Zone Districts and is bounded by Glover Archbold Parkway to the west; National Park Service property along the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, Canal Road N.W., and Prospect Street N.W. to the south; 35th Street N.W. to N Street N.W., N Street N.W. to 36th Street N.W., and 36th Street N.W. to P Street N.W. to the east; and Reservoir Road N.W. to the north (Square 1222, Lots 62, 801 and 802; Square 1223, Lots 62, part of 65, part of 66, and part of 67, 86, 807-810, 812, 815, 826-827, 831, 834, 843, 846-847, 852-853, 855, and 857-858; Square 1226, Lots 94-101, 105-107, 803-804, 806, and 811-815; Square 1248, Lots 150-157, 160-162, 800-802, 804, 806, 829-831, and 834-835; and Square 1321, Lots 811, 815-816, 821, and 823-827).

The Applicant is seeking approval for its 2011 - 2020 Campus Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Unfortunately the transportation study submitted by the Applicant is inadequate for DDOT to make an informed recommendation. Therefore, at this time, the District Department of Transportation cannot recommend approval of the 2011-2020 Georgetown University Campus Plan. The following information must be provided to DDOT for review so that the agency may provide a full and appropriate technical recommendation to the Zoning Commission:

- A complete transportation analysis per Chapter 45 of the DDOT Design and Engineering Manual, "Requirements for Traffic Impact Studies for Development Projects" including the 10-year and 20-year planning horizons (capturing all anticipated development in the nearby network);
- Analysis comparing the traffic projections of the 2000-2010 Georgetown University Campus Plan to existing conditions today (to assess accuracy of methodology in current report);
- A complete corridor analysis for Canal Road in order to fully assess the impacts of the proposed peak hour left turn on this critical regional corridor;
- Submission of all Synchro files (traffic analysis software inputs) for assessment;
- Additional analysis and information on the 38th Street/Gate 1 and Reservoir Road Intersection/Realignment
- A more thorough and aggressive Transportation Management Plan (TMP)
- Additional mitigations for spill-over parking impacts in the neighboring community, especially in regards to on-campus housing;

DDOT commends Georgetown University on the traffic management plan that was submitted for review some time ago, however we are disappointed in both the quality of the traffic impact assessment and the relative lateness of report submission, particularly as a major signal operation change on a regionally significant corridor where regional mobility and air quality may be affected is a lynchpin in the viability of the proposed campus plan operations.

DDOT ANALYSIS OF TRANSPORTATION REPORT

MISSING DATA/ ANALYSIS

Although DDOT finds the report to be insufficient to offer a complete analysis, we provide below our findings from the report as submitted:

- Reservoir Road/38th Street : Under the future traffic condition, the AM peak WB left-turn volume will be 225 veh/hr at the noted intersection. An exclusive left-turn lane is required to adequately serve this vehicle trip demand.
- Figure 13 ('GUTS Routes') (Trip Distribution for new medical trips) needs to be reviewed. It appears 68% of the new medical trips appear from the southern side of the campus (through Canal Road, M Street and Whitehurst Freway) in the AM peak. In reality, most of the Hospital trips are served by the intersections along Reservoir Road (the north side of the Campus boundary).
- The transportation report claims most of the network deficiencies in the future conditions can be mitigated by signal timing optimization. Such effort should have been coordinated with DDOT as such traffic signal optimization may not adhere to DDOT signal timing policies.
- Synchro files for future conditions were provided for AM peak only. No PM peak analysis was provided. Also, AM peak did not model the entire study area, e.g., Reservoir Road was not modeled. Traffic volumes in AM peak future model did not match with the future volumes shown in the transportation report. Canal Road traffic volumes, in the future Synchro file, are significantly higher. LOS/Delay spreadsheet results do not match with the results shown in the Synchro files.
- A safety analysis for all site access locations on both the north side and the south side must be done. This analysis should contain information on pedestrian traffic as well as bicycle and vehicular traffic.
- The Transportation Study should also address deliveries to the Campus and Hospital during normal business hours and associated impacts on the transportation system. The Applicant should address whether it has any plans to consolidate or coordinate deliveries.

TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT

DDOT commends Georgetown University for its Transportation Management Plan. The University is doing more than other DC-based Universities. However, DDOT believes the University can be more aggressive in reducing vehicular traffic in the neighborhood

and encouraging students, staff and faculty to take alternative modes of transportation. DDOT would like to see the following enhancements included in the TMP:

- DDOT requests the University provide DDOT with annual performance reports for the TMP including but not limited to an annual employee or student (traditional, non-traditional, and continuing education students) commute survey to be provided to DDOT, OP, the ANC and be made available to the public.
- Regional Guaranteed Ride Home is eligible to any employee taking any alternative transportation option, not just carpooling. This free option needs to be marketed to all employees to increase biking, walking and transit as well as carpooling.
- The marketing of all special events (concerts, lectures, sporting events, etc.) being held on campus should include transportation information to attendees and encourage them to use alternative transportation. The University should explore transit subsidies to be included in any event ticket sales.
- Incorporate information on transportation options into new employee orientation and new hire information packets on an ongoing basis. The University and Hospital should hold semi-annual transportation fairs to increase awareness of available transportation options.
- The University and Hospital should set a goal to increase the percentage of employees using transit to at least the regional transit mode split.
- The University should purchase Capital Bikeshare stations and have them placed on campus and/or within the neighborhood.
- The University should become Corporate Members of Capital Bikeshare to provide memberships to employees at discounted rates.
- The University should explore incorporating Capital Bikeshare membership fees into student fees at discounted rates.

PROPOSED LOOP ROAD

DDOT supports the proposed loop road in that it provides the long desired north - south access through the University Campus. It will serve a significant pedestrian population as well as allow the GUTS buses to maneuver around the campus and reduce the current impacts on the narrow neighborhood streets. However, there is no information in the Study as to what, if any, conversations the applicant has had with the National Park Service (NPS) since the ROW for the loop road runs immediately adjacent to NPS property, and what an alternative design will be if the proposed loop road is precluded.

LEFT HAND TURNS TO EASTBOUND CANAL ROAD

DDOT agrees that allowing left hand turns to Eastbound Canal Road, from the Campus South entrance/exit, would alleviate campus congestion and allow for greater use of

the southern entrance of the campus. This, however, is a major change on an already highly congested regional corridor and the applicant has failed to provide sufficient corridor analysis for DDOT to understand the potential impacts up and down stream from this signal modification. For DDOT to make an informed recommendation, properly modeled Synchro files with the study report need to be submitted. The transportation study report and two different versions of Synchro files seem to differ from each other. The applicant must properly explain the future year conditions, both build year (2020) and DDOT forecast year (2030), describe how volumes were derived, and adjust the model accordingly. As this is a regionally significant corridor, the applicant must look at impacts on the whole of the corridor within the District, not just in the immediate area of the university.

38th STREET/GATE 1 and RESERVOIR ROAD INTERSECTION

The University's 2000 traffic and parking report to the Zoning Commission stated that, "The University is currently examining the realignment of Entrance 1 so that it will align directly with 38th Street in the future. The primary purpose of this realignment is to improve safety for motorists and pedestrians."

In the 2011 Georgetown Transportation Report, the University notes, "The existing intersection at Gate 1/38th Street and Reservoir Road is not aligned and is difficult to maneuver through." DDOT welcomes the University to provide a designed realignment of the intersection, however analysis must be provided that demonstrates both safety improvements as well as no increase in neighborhood cut-through traffic as a result. The University will need to provide all of the resources to design and implement the redesign of the intersection, with DDOT's approval.

Additionally, under the future traffic condition scenario, the AM peak westbound left-turn volume will be 225 vehicles/hour at the intersection of Reservoir Road/38th Street. An exclusive left-turn lane is required to adequately serve this demand.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

Analysis by the DC Office of Planning has confirmed that a significant number of Georgetown University students live in the surrounding neighborhoods. As residents, these students also park in the neighborhood, however, because students tend to have more driving-age residents at the unit than a typical DC household, there also tends to be more vehicles and thus higher than normal parking pressures as a result. Neither DDOT, the University, nor the community have been able to devise an effective curbside management strategy that would reduce the student parking impacts while not inadvertently negatively impacting the permanent residential population. Therefore, DDOT supports the Office of Planning's (OP) position that accommodations

should be made for more students to live on campus and be prohibited from bringing vehicles to school.

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY TRANSIT SHUTTLE & LATE NIGHT SHUTTLE

The University offers a late night shuttle for students to utilize if students have been in the neighborhood at local bars or restaurants. DDOT supports the continuation of the late night shuttle, however recommends the route be kept along M Street and not via the neighborhood streets where it presently travels. This is a quality of life measure the University could address by re-routing the late night buses and still accommodating the needs of students to return to Campus.

DDOT fully supports use of the GUTS shuttle to access the Campus from the satellite parking lots in Rosslyn. While driving to the University may be an inevitable measure for some of the faculty and students, the Rosslyn satellite parking could alleviate some impacts of spillover parking. The GUTS shuttle is the perfect solution.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

DDOT, and the city, strongly support enhancement of our institutions of higher learning. Georgetown University is a tremendous asset in the District and generally an amenity to the local community. There are a number of laudable gestures in the proposed 2011-2020 Georgetown University Campus plan, especially as regards their commitment to transportation management and the promotion on non-single occupancy vehicle travel. And while DDOT believes there are some reasonable strategies proposed by the plan, at this time it is impossible to determine whether or not these are viable in either the local or regional network given the level of analysis provided. For this reason, DDOT cannot recommend support at this time.

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