

JUNE 2008 EXTRAS

Pedestrians, Cyclists Need Help at 12th & Maine Av SW

DDOT is considering making highly desirable pedestrian/bicycle modifications to Maine Avenue between the 14 Street Off Ramp/Maine Ave. Southbound, and the area of Maine Ave/12 the Street in front of the Fish Boats. Currently this stretch is an obstacle path for peds and bikes and wheelchairs- narrow, cluttered and dangerous, while the Avenue itself is a speeding ramp. It will be a shame to redo the entire waterfront as planned, and leave this stretch a mess (it is not part of the committed area of the new plan). There is a diverse but unorganized constituency for this area - bike commuters, joggers - civilian and military- , pedestrians, dog walkers, and a lot of out-of-neighborhood./town visitors to the Fish Boats.

We need to let Tommy Wells and DDot know that we support the improvements.

I will be leafleting along this stretch to encourage neighbors and bike commuters to support these improvements. Comments can be made to jim.sebastain@dc.gov (Bicycle Program Manager) and to Councilmember Wells' office.

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DC Agencies on the Move

By Carole G. Early

What we have here is a case of the “Domino Effect”. The DC Metropolitan Police Dept. Consolidated Forensic Lab is building a new 6 story building at the site of the present First District Headquarters at E & 4th SW. So, that means that the 1st District Headquarters has to move someplace. With Anthony Bowen Elementary School slated to close and with DC owning that property, the DC Police will move into Bowen.

One problem is— What will happen to Boys & Girls Club #4, which is housed at Bowen?

The Bowen building is about 72,000 sq. ft. When the police move in, after an addition and renovations, it will house a Violent Crime Division, a Tactical Division, a lock-down area and a space for the Boys & Girls Club. The allotted area will be about 3500 sq. ft. and Club #4 presently has about 10,000 sq. ft.

The SW DC Recreation Center at First & N SW is heavily used and does not have the room to add office space for the Boys & Girls Club. While the club is welcome to use the playground facilities, inner space is at a premium. Southwest is losing 1 out of 2 youth programs.

If MPD is still looking for more suitable space, the move into Bowen may only be temporary.

Sharing Comments on SW Traffic/Parking

By Richard Felsenthal

I have meant to send an email on this subject for some time. The no left turn sign coming from I-395 at 9th and G Sts. is a real burden for the local residents. I have to drive down to Maine Ave. make two left turns and pass through three extra traffic lights to reach my home at 718 6th St. SW. We received absolutely no notice or opportunity to comment on the sign. Like so much else with the parking/traffic restrictions, it was simply foisted upon us and appears to be part of an effort to make the city and the baseball team look like they are assiduously attending to local needs. Much like the ostentatious ticketing/towing that occurs during stadium events only—to my knowledge, not a single parking enforcement employee has been in our neighborhood or given a ticket weekday evenings or any time on the weekend—except during stadium events. We get additional restrictions but no real benefit (and no non-baseball-promoting enforcement).

Also, there are three cul-de-sacs within two blocks of my house—4th Pl., 6th Pl. and H St. SW, where the old parking signs have not been changed to reflect the new restrictions that are supposed to be in effect in our neighborhood. The whole change process has been poorly handled as the picture below of the original signage DDOT put on the 700 block of 4th St. SW manifests. All of this added to the indignities of the loss of local, walk-able retail for years (which the developers' spokesperson once characterized as a part of the urban lifestyle--I'm betting she lives in the suburbs) and the impediments to the two local metro stations (closed entrances and holes in the ground). Southwest is truly the abused step-child of DC.

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Southwest on Foot Apr. 25

By Carole Early

Cultural Tourism DC 's WalkingTown, DC had tours all over our city on Saturday, April 25th. Several were in Southwest. I went on one which began at the Metro at Waterfront Mall construction site. There were about 40-45 people on the tour. It was co-led by Nina Albert, program manager for Southwest. She is in the Deputy Mayor's Office for Planning and Economic Development. And the informal co-leader was longtime resident, Barbara Ehrlich

We then walked to the intersection of 6th & M Streets. Along the way Barbara spoke about the construction at Marina View Towers . All was quiet at the Arena Stage Construction so we could talk about the plans. We crossed M St. & went north to Ft. McNair passing St. Augustine 's (on M Street). Along the way, we discussed Tiber Island, Riverside ,River Park, Channel Sq. & Harbour Sq., including Wheat Row (the oldest town houses in DC).

We made our way over to the Washington Channel where we heard from our co-leaders & Elinor R. Bacon, community liaison between PN Hoffman, Struever Brothers, Eccles and Rouse. who are going to be redoing the waterfront.

Evaluation of “Computers-for-Kids”

By Thelma Jones, Computer-for-Kids Coordinator

The SW Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) recently met to evaluate its second Computer-for-Kids training program held at King-Greenleaf Recreation Center. The consensus was to stay focused on the goal of helping to reduce the digital divide for youth ages 10-12 in Southwest and Near Southeast.

YATF Co-Chairs Beryl C. Rice and Rick Bardach praised the Computer-for-Kids volunteers and commended them for their commitment and dedication. “What impressed me the most was the commitment of the three teachers (Gerald Brown, LaShawn R. Williams and Craig Ferguson) who plan to rethink the content and structure of the class based on their experiences during the first year,” said Rice.

She also praised Perry Klein, SWNA Chair of the Southwest Technology Task Force, who, along with Washington Cable, provides financial and technical support, including collecting and storing donated computers, repairing, and then donating them to families in the community who do not have a computer in their homes.

To date, YATF Computer-for-Kids has graduated 24 students during two training sessions. The next session will start in October. Registration is ongoing at the King-Greenleaf Recreation Center and James Creek Resident Council.

For more information on the program, please contact Thelma Jones at (202) 488-3746 or tjones15@verizon.net.

PSA 104-Wells Walk-around Apr. 19

By Beth Payne

Instead of the traditional PSA meeting on the third, Thursday, April 17, 2008, 7 pm, Michael Krause and Ward 6, Councilmember Tommy Wells led a group of neighborhood residents on a walk through the neighborhood, Saturday, April 19, 2008, 2 pm. Sgt Chumbris reported that there was a mugging at the top of the Waterfront Metro at about midnight approximately 4 weeks ago. The police apprehended a juvenile suspected of perpetrating this robbery and since then there have been no further attacks at the Metro.

Mr. Krause provided the following security advice for Metro riders: have your Metro pass out before entering the Metro in order to avoid fumbling with a wallet, or showing a potential pickpocket where your wallet is. Avoid taking the elevator since there are no cameras in the elevator and no way to get out in an emergency. If possible, call someone and tell him/her that you’re leaving the Metro. Have your cell phone out and ready to dial 911 as you depart the Metro. Metro cameras stop just below the escalator so the Metro police cannot monitor people on the escalator. If you see anything suspicious, use the speaker phone to call 911 and announce that you are calling the police.

A local resident reported being robbed at gun point in the parking area at the 3rd Street extension into the Carrollsburg Square Condominium parking lot area. This is the third armed robbery in that area in the past few months.

Residents reported that once juveniles are let out of school at 3:30 p.m., they often play with the escalators and hit the emergency stop. Therefore, always use the handrails when riding the escalator to ensure that you are not injured if there is a sudden stop. These juveniles are also often seen at the promenade between Wesley Place and 6th Street, and in the shortcut from Wesley Place to M Street. They have been known to fight among themselves, harass

people walking by, and throw rocks. Report any incidents immediately to the police

New Parking Plan Discussed by SWNA

Problems caused by the new Ballpark Traffic Plan were discussed at the monthly public meeting of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly.

Community feedback on how the plan is working so far, Rick Rybeck and Kathleen Penney of the DC Department of Transportation responded to the following questions:

Can the parking restriction time end earlier?

Can parking restriction on M street be for one side only?

Request if cars are to be towed, the buses should also be towed.

Add a time restriction on the entrance to G from North I395.

The department of transportation will be holding a community meeting at the end of May regarding parking and traffic.