



ANACOSTIA WATERSHED COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Anacostia River and its tributaries

November 1, 2018

Ms. Tara Morrison
Superintendent
National Capital Parks - East
tara_morrison@nps.gov

-and -

Mr. Sam Zimbabwe, Chief Project Delivery Officer
District Department of Transportation
2000 14th St, NW, 7th floor
Washington, DC 20009
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RE: NCPC 7936 Anacostia Riverwalk Trail Pedestrian Bridge: Kenilworth Park to Arboretum

Dear Ms. Morrison and Mr. Zimbabwe

Thank you for meeting with us again August 14th in regards to this matter. While we appreciate the work done by DDoT to develop alternative proposals, but are alarmed that boater safety was not a consideration in the selection matrix for bridge design which was presented by the engineers at this meeting. Many natural hazards exist on the river. Some are transient, and others last until someone removes them. It is very disconcerting to know that plans are underway to install a structure which will create a permanent hazard to boaters in a heavily utilized body of water. It is not reasonable to expect the boating community to select among configurations, all of which are unsafe. Inadequate funding does not justify the current design direction.

If constructed, this will be the 12th bridge on a 7 mile stretch of river. And there is already discussion of a 13th bridge which would directly connect Kingman Island to the east bank. Every bridge presents hazards to boaters - their safety and enjoyment of the river need to be accommodated in planning efforts.

In order to continue to make progress toward the restoration of the Anacostia, all development along the river bank must be planned in consideration of the ecology and function of the river. The natural features of the river must be the backbone of planning efforts. Accommodations for swimming, wading, boating and fishing can have positive results if located as the river ecology dictates creating no adverse impact to the aquatic environment or experience. All projects should include work which will improve the river environment and not compromise it.

It is our hope that connections between the east and west banks of the Anacostia will be strengthened and located to provide access to as many destinations as possible. Benning Road is the gateway to locations on both sides of the river. The many parks, natural areas, and amenities, including Capitol Heights and Minnesota Ave Metros, are easily

accessed from Benning. On the West Bank, Benning Road provides access to Langston Golf Course, Living Classrooms/Kingman and Heritage Islands, the Main entrance to Arboretum, and many of the neighborhoods around Galaudet, as well as the University itself. All need strong connections to the River and trail system.

The boating community was excluded from the review and planning process for this project. Their voices must be heard and their safety and enjoyment of the river must be considered. Given these serious safety concerns and important considerations, we request that, unless a clear span bridge can be utilized for a new river crossing, the “no build” option be exercised. This will allow the opportunity to revisit the planning process which lead to this point.

Please contact us as soon as possible to let us know how you are proceeding since our last meeting.

Very Sincerely,



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