

City of Alexandria, Virginia~~17~~
~~10-23-01~~

MEMORANDUM

9
11-17-01

DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO CHANGE TO NOTABENE DRIVE AND OLD DOMINION BOULEVARD NORTH OF WEST GLEBE ROAD

ISSUE: City Council consideration of making a portion of Old Dominion Boulevard north of West Glebe Road, and Notabene Drive one way streets and changing the existing parallel parking to diagonal parking on the west side of Old Dominion and on the east side of Notabene.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

1. Receive this report and schedule it for public hearing on November 17, 2001.
2. At the conclusion of the public hearing, adopt the following staff recommendations:
 - a. Make Old Dominion Boulevard one way south between the Lenox Townhome driveway entrance and Four Mile Run Drive;
 - b. Make Notabene Drive one way north between Old Dominion Boulevard and Four Mile Run Drive; and
 - c. Change the existing parallel parking on the west side of Old Dominion Boulevard and the east side of Notabene Drive to diagonal parking.

BACKGROUND: For a number of years, residents living in the Arlandria West area, due to a parking shortage in this area, have been forced to park in the area south of Glebe Road on Tennessee Avenue, Kentucky Avenue, Old Dominion Boulevard and Norris Place. It has also been reported and noted by staff that, because they could not find parking in Arlandria West, families with small children often times must cross Glebe Road which raises safety concerns. For the last year and a half, staff has been working with the managers of apartment complexes in Arlandria, the Lenox Place Homeowner's Association, and the NorthRidge Citizens Association, to find solutions to this parking problem. Staff has held an informal meeting on site at the corner of Old Dominion Boulevard and Tennessee Avenue, as well as two community meetings to explain the parking issues and discuss possible solutions. In addition, Transportation and Environmental Services Department staff had met with Lenox Place Homeowner's Board

members and conducted a walking tour of the neighborhood in August of this year. The Traffic and Parking Board held a public hearing on these issues on September 24.

DISCUSSION: The vast majority of the parking in the Arlandria West area is on-street, and the number of on-street parking spaces is not sufficient to meet the demand. Staff, in analyzing the situation, determined that additional parking spaces could be made available if the parallel parking that currently exists on certain streets could be changed to diagonal parking. However, in order to change from parallel to diagonal parking, these streets have to be of sufficient width to make the change workable. Old Dominion Boulevard and Notabene Drive could meet this requirement if diagonal parking was confined to one side of the street only, leaving parallel parking on the other side, and each street was made one way.

To provide this increase in parking spaces, the staff is recommending making Notabene Drive and the majority of Old Dominion Boulevard one way streets, and changing parallel parking on one side of both streets to diagonal parking (Attachment 1). Currently, there is a total of approximately 80 unmarked parallel spaces on Old Dominion Boulevard and on Notabene Drive. Creating diagonal parking spaces on Old Dominion Drive and Notabene Drive would add another 70 spaces. As another alternative to this increase in on-street parking spaces, staff examined the parking lot owned by Dominion Virginia Power located on Glebe Road west of the apartment area. Staff determined that, even if Dominion Virginia Power would allow Arlandria residents to park on the lot (which they will not), it is unlikely that the lot would be utilized because the walking distance is too far from the Arlandria apartments. National and local studies indicate that motorists will walk up to a quarter of a mile for parking, and this lot is farther than that.

At the September 24 Traffic and Parking Board public hearing, about half of the people who spoke in favor of the staff recommendation lived in the NorthRidge area and half lived in the Arlandria area. The Lenox Place Homeowners Association is not in favor of the recommendation. While the Association acknowledges the shortage of parking spaces, they prefer to solve the problem in a way that would not increase the number of on-street spaces. Suggestions to date from the Association include the City leasing or purchasing private land to construct a parking garage facility in the Arlandria area or the City constructing a parking facility on private property. The Association expressed a desire to work toward achieving another solution.

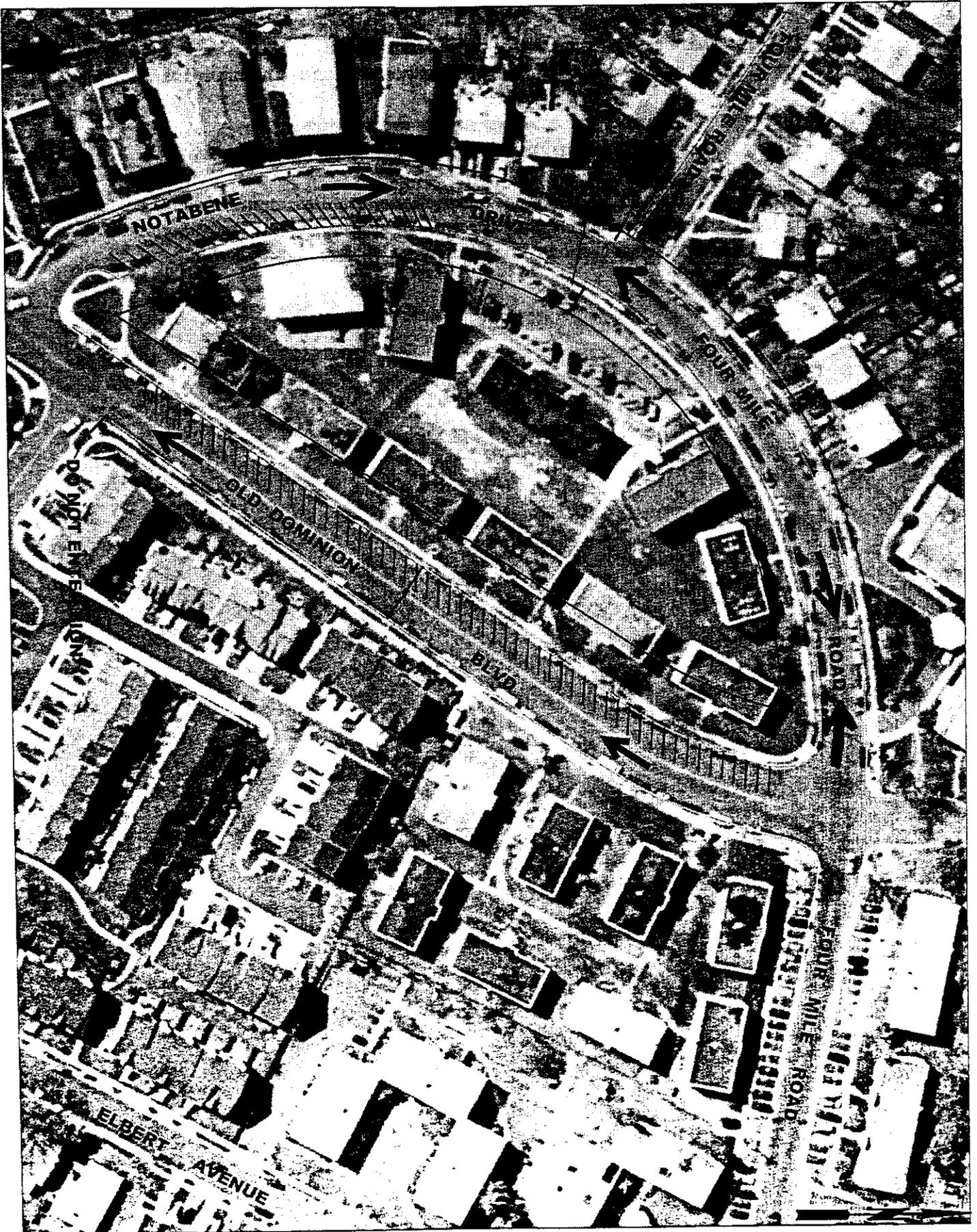
Following its public hearing, the Traffic and Parking Board approved the staff recommendation. Members of the Board recognized the need for additional parking and felt the staff recommendation was a good beginning in meeting the needs of the community.

The Police and Fire Departments have been consulted and are not opposed to the recommendation. The Alexandria City Public Schools' Transportation unit does not oppose the recommendation but notes minor re-routing of bus travel ways will be necessary.

FISCAL IMPACT: The cost of striping the diagonal parking space is \$500. These funds are in the FY 2002 operating budget of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Map showing proposed parking improvements.
2. Letter from Randolph Sengel, Commonwealth's Attorney

STAFF: Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, Transportation and Environmental Services
Douglas McCobb, P.E., Deputy Director/Transportation and Transit Services,
Transportation and Environmental Services





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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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LARRY CUNNINGHAM

October 1, 2001

Dear Mr. West,

I am writing to advise you that the comments of Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Thomas Cullen made at your September 24, 2001 meeting regarding the proposed configuration of angled parking in the existing right of way on north Old Dominion Drive and Notabene Drive do not reflect the position of this office. While I had discussed this matter with Rich Baier before your September 24 meeting, I had not communicated that discussion fully to Mr. Cullen, and that failure to communicate with him, for which I take responsibility, in part resulted in his comments at your meeting.

In my view, solutions to traffic and parking issues in Alexandria are generally beyond the purview of my staff and are being handled in a capable and professional manner by Mr. Baier and his staff. Mr. Baier and his staff devoted substantial time and effort to developing a solution to this particular problem, and I am sorry if Mr. Cullen's comments at your meeting created any misunderstanding that my office is opposed to staff recommendations in this case. We are not.

Very truly yours,

S. Randolph Sengel
Commonwealth's Attorney

cc: Tom Cullen
Rich Baier
Joe Bowman
William Clayton
Don Shepperd

3603 Old Dominion Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22305-1325
November 7, 2001

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11-17-01

City Manager Philip Sunderland
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Sunderland,

I am writing to thank you for your support of the proposal received by Council on October 23 (Agenda item 17: Proposal to Change to Notabene Drive and Old Dominion Boulevard north of West Glebe Road). As you know, this proposal was approved by the Traffic and Parking Board on September 24 by a vote of 6-1, and is scheduled for a public hearing at Council's November 17 meeting.

It seems to me that the proposal suggests a very practical, low cost, and common sense way to solve several problems:

It creates, by changing parallel parking to diagonal parking, 70 new parking spaces where they are needed - next to the apartments of many people who live in the Arlandria area north of West Glebe.

By providing parking where it is needed, it should alleviate the parking problem in the Beverly Hills area south of West Glebe, where the Arlandria-area residents are forced to park now. I am very familiar with this problem; my home is the first house on Old Dominion Blvd. in the Beverly Hills area, and every parking space bordering my property is occupied every night. Sometimes parkers partially block my driveway.

It should alleviate the safety hazard posed by many pedestrians, including children, forced to cross busy West Glebe twice a day to find a place to park.

I am aware that Lenox Place opposes this proposal, but they have guaranteed parking places at their homes, and do not have people parking in front of their houses, since they are a gated community.

I believe that the residents of the Arlandria area have a right to park as near to their homes as possible, and this proposal, which has been approved by the Fire Department, Police Department, and Sanitation Department, is a low-cost way to provide this parking. Again, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Barbara P. Hayes



Judith Bliss, President
 Arlandria Civic Association
 725 Four Mile Road
 Alexandria, VA 22305
 703 683-2954

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ARLANDRIA CIVIC ASSOCIATION

October 17, 2001

Kerry Donley, Mayor
 301 King Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Donley,

I am writing on behalf of the Arlandria Civic Association requesting you DENY the request to make Old Dominion Boulevard and Notabene Drive one way streets.

This request came from Northridge Civic Association due to the fact they do not want "those people" (this is a direct quote) parking on their street. Therefore Northridge decided to change the parking on the streets in our neighborhood.

There has been no communication between Rich Baier or anyone at T&ES and this community except for the meeting at Lenox place, which I just happened to hear about while attending another meeting and I ask if I could come. There has been no study or traffic count on the cars going through the neighborhood. There has been no meeting with the managers of the apartments this will effect. No communication at all.

Assistant Commonwealth Attorney Tom Cullen and spokespersons from Lenox Place spoke at the board meeting and ask for this proposal to be denied.

I am asking you to please DENY this request.

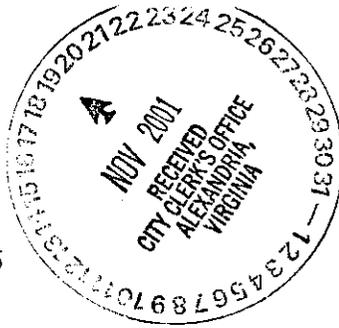
Sincerely,

Judy Bliss

Judith Bliss, President
 Arlandria Civic Association



Mr. Ian R. Broennle
600 West Glebe Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22305



Sent to
cc, cm, T&S #9
PF 11/17/01

November 13, 2001

Dear City Council Representative:

I write to you to express my deep concern for a parking problem that has persisted in my neighborhood since I moved to my Alexandria residence at the end of May 2001. It is evident to me that the apartment complexes Presidential Gardens and Arlandria located along Four Mile Drive, Notabene Drive, north Old Dominion Boulevard, Elbert Avenue and Executive Avenue do not have sufficient parking for the residents living along those streets. The individuals residing in these apartments have do not have enough parking in front of their buildings to park their cars. Some of the streets near their apartments that choose to park include Tennessee Avenue, Overlook Drive and the south side of Old Dominion Boulevard. My property borders the south Old Dominion Blvd. and our driveway opens up to it. Having people continually parking here spreads the parking dilemma facing my neighbors on the north side of West Glebe road to those living off of south Old Dominion Blvd., Tennessee Ave., Overlook Dr., my roommate, friends, family and me. Indeed, this deficiency of parking in close proximity to a person's residence has caused a parking crisis for everyone living in this area.

My roommate and I rent the home we live in from his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Heath. The house sits on the corner of West Glebe Road and the southern side of Old Dominion Blvd. Our driveway is suitable for one car and either my roommate or I must park along the street. To my chagrin, our neighbors on the northern side of West Glebe Road park their automobiles at the foot of the driveway and on both sides of the street every day from the afternoon to the next morning taking up all the available spaces. Therefore there is rarely parking in the immediate vicinity of my house for my roommate, visiting family or friends or myself. The inconvenience of having to park a few hundred feet is an unnecessary nuisance. In turn, I am certain that my neighbors on Tennessee Ave. or Overlook Dr. do not appreciate having me park in front of their homes, that I would prefer to park in front of our home, but am unable to do so because of other cars parked here.

The litter people deposit on our lawn as they walk to and from their cars to their residences on the northern side of West Glebe Road serves as another cause for concern. This occurs regularly when people park their cars along south Old Dominion Blvd or Tennessee Ave. and walk back to their residences. Again and again these people show no respect for our property as they tread across our lawn, and drop their disgusting refuse, such as opened condoms and beer bottles, in their wake. I deplore these unacceptable, yet sadly common incidents.

Safety for those families now walking back and forth across West Glebe Road is the most troubling aspect of people not having sufficient parking close to their residences. West Glebe Rd. is a hazardous street, innate with dangers due to its curves, heavy traffic flow, and speeding drivers. An existing flashing pedestrian crossing sign does help warn drivers to use caution in this area, but the risk of a car hitting a pedestrian remains because of the high number of people crossing the road.

I am sure you are aware of this parking dilemma as you prepare to review legislation on it on November 17, 2001. Undoubtedly you are also aware that insufficient parking had not been a central issue for residents of the Beverly area living along south Old Dominion Blvd. or Tennessee Ave. before the apartments that stood where the new Avalon apartments now stand were condemned and their inhabitants evicted. Indeed from discussions I have had with neighbors and what I learned at a parking meeting run by city officials on Monday November 12, the prevailing opinion amongst them maintains that parking only became a significant problem along our streets when those displaced in South Arlington moved in with friends and family living in the apartments in off of Four Mile Dr., Notabene Dr., north Old Dominion Blvd., Elbert Ave. and Executive Ave. These people have caused over-crowding in that area. An upshot of this over-crowding is that the number of inhabitants and vehicles now exceeds the available parking in close proximity to their residences. These residents now must park elsewhere.

The displacement of people living in South Arlington and parking around my home becoming scarce is not coincidental. Residents living here testify that the disappearance of available parking in front of your house coincided with the eviction of residents in from apartments in S. Arlington before their demolition.

During the past 6 months that I have lived here the situation has not improved. In fact, it seems that those displaced are content to stay with family and friends. I sympathize with the plight of those individuals evicted from their apartments in south Arlington, but feel more than sufficient time has passed for them to find a new residence. I have little compassion these people content to stay with friends and family as it causes the current parking crisis. I would expect that such actions are illegal under current lease agreements and would hope that the county would play an active role in seeing that these suspected activities stop. I was given an unsatisfactory answer at the parking meeting that there was little the county could do to end the over-crowding in the aforementioned apartments because of logistics and cost. The over-crowding of these apartment complexes has created an unacceptable problem for other residents of Alexandria and it deserves your immediate care and attention. The city must recognize that over-crowding as a consequence of displaced persons from south Arlington represents the central cause of the current parking crisis.

City officials told us at the parking meeting held 11/12/01 their strategy for resolving the parking situation. We were informed that the apartment complexes along Four Mile Dr., Notabene Dr., North Old Dominion Blvd., Elbert Ave. and Executive Ave. were built in the mid 20th century and were designed to offer one parking place for every 2 units. I learned that because of their "grandfather" status these apartments would be exempt to new parking ordinances established by the city in the last 30 years. We were told that for a 1:1 ratio of apartment units to parking spaces an additional 300 parking places are needed. That might be a fine goal for the Alexandria County officials and the landlords of these apartment complexes to strive for in the future but it does not, however, address the over-crowding in the apartments, the very root of the parking problem. One needs to address the over-crowding first, because as I have previously mentioned, parking was not the crisis it is today before the tenants in S. Arlington were evicted from their apartments and moved in with family and friends in north Alexandria.

The first step city officials would like to take towards solving the parking problem presented at the 11/12/01 meeting involved changing parallel to diagonal parking along Notabene Dr. and north Old Dominion Blvd. Because of road width, both streets would have to be changed from two-way to one-way streets in order to accommodate diagonal

parking. This would create 70 additional parking places along Notabene Dr. and north Old Dominion Blvd. I share the same concern many neighbors voiced at the meeting that such action would not address the over-crowding in the apartments, which we feel is the true cause for the parking crisis. In fact, creating 70 additional parking places at this time seems to reward those guilty of causing over-crowding in the apartments with the opportunity of finding more convenient parking to where they are illegally staying.

Another solution I would like to suggest in this letter that would reduce the number of people waking across an unsafe W. Glebe Rd and solve the parking dilemma for people living along south Old Dominion Blvd., Tennessee Ave. and Overlook Dr. would be to establish and enforce zoned parking on these streets. Although this does not deal with the root of the parking problem, it will alleviate the situation for all homes on the southern side of W. Glebe Road. Issue a parking sticker to residents living on these streets and post signs indicating that it is illegal to park longer than 2 hours on these streets without a sticker for this zone on evenings during both the week and weekend until 5am- the hours when parking is particularly in demand. Such action would discourage those living on the northern side of W. Glebe Rd. along Four Mile Dr., Notabene Dr., Old Dominion Blvd., Elbert Ave. and Executive Ave. from parking along south Old Dominion Blvd, Tennessee Ave. I am open to other ways the city might recommend bringing this persistent difficulty to a quick and fair resolution.

As a voter and taxpayer, I feel that everyone paying the Personal Property Tax on their automobile in addition to a county sticker is entitled to a safe parking place in the immediate vicinity of their residence. The prevailing situation does not allow this for residents in my area. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I sincerely feel that the current parking crisis necessitates your full attention and look forward to your response.

Very sincerely,



Ian R. Broennle

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11-17-01

Received by CC, sent to
CM, P+Z, T+ES

William E. Clayton
Traffic Chair
North Ridge Citizens' Assn.
3402 Halcyon Drive
Alexandria, VA 22305-1311
(703) 548-0958

future

8-31-01

Mayor Kerry Donley
City Hall, 301 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Donley,

Sorry to add to a blizzard of paper concerning parking problems in North Ridge, but I wanted to write each member of Council to counter criticism from residents of Lenox Place, a self-contained community that intends to obstruct what almost everyone else considers a good idea to solve a long-standing problem.

The subject is a proposal by North Ridge Citizens' Association for angle parking on Old Dominion Blvd. (north of West Glebe Road) and angle parking on Notabene Drive.

The NRCA Board, working in a constructive partnership with the City's director of Transportation and Environmental Services, Rich Baier, has voted without dissent for the two sets of angle parking. The purpose is to provide more parking in an area that has had an explosive population increase without enough increase in parking.

The rental buildings along the two streets involved were "grandfathered" from parking requirements long ago, so they don't provide adequate parking for their tenants. Consequently, parking has crowded over into North Ridge in a way that North Ridge residents feel denies them the safe use of their driveways and neighborhood.

Some Lenox Place residents have contacted the Council directly. Mr. Baier and NRCA's police liaison, Sgt. Guy Bishop, have worked with me – as traffic chair for North Ridge – and other neighbors in a thorough examination of options to create more parking in the area nearest the need.

The angle parking is the brightest prospect, promising the most new space with the least disruption.

It will provide scores of new parking places, closest to the homes of those who need it – making it easier for the tenants to carry their groceries home, etc. It will lessen dramatically the parking pressures in North Ridge, including the difficulty Beverley Hills Methodist Church has in providing parking for elderly parishioners on Sundays.

In conversations with employees of the owners of some of the apartment buildings, I have learned the tenants think angle parking is a splendid idea.

The only opposition I am aware of has come from Lenox Place. The president of the residents' group there, Donald Shepperd, and other members of his board say they fear increased littering and working on cars if the angle parking is provided.



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First of all, we in NRCA have said we will work with Lenox Place to minimize those effects, IF they occur. It is a ticketable offense to work on one's car in a parking space on the street. Littering can be counteracted by organizing the residents or their youngsters in the area – similar to an anti-litter effort coordinated by a police officer.

Lenox Place residents fear added congestion. But I say one type of congestion may be lessened, not increased. If people who live on Notabene and Old Dominion north of West Glebe are parking blocks away, the angle parking virtually at their doorsteps will mean less pass-through pedestrian traffic and fewer cars wandering about looking for a place to park. It could be a plus for Lenox Place as well as everyone else.

In addition to angle parking, Mr. Baier and I are continuing to explore options in the middle term and long term for additional parking – for example, the wide alleys of Presidential Greens are a prospect, if the various approvals can be obtained.

I, of course, will appear at the appropriate time before Council to defend NRCA's proposal, but meanwhile, if you have questions about our idea or the opposition from Lenox Place, please give me a phone call, FAX or e-mail. I don't want a difference between neighborhoods to boil over into the Council, but also I don't think Lenox Place's fears will be realized.

Thanks for lending an ear,

Sincerely,



William E. Clayton

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