



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

DORIS O. MATSUI  
6TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

December 12, 2018

Andrew Tsai, PE, Project Manager  
Park Development Division  
Montgomery Parks- MNCPPC  
9500 Brunett Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

Re: Capital Crescent Trail- Little Falls Parkway Crossing Design

Dear Mr. Tsai:

In 2017 there was a fatal accident at the mid-block crossing of the Capital Crescent Trail and Little Falls Parkway. A temporary solution was enacted by the Park Department in the name of safety. The current configuration has to be fixed to ensure trail user safety, to improve traffic flow and reduce cut through traffic in adjacent neighborhoods.

You have received letters from many neighborhoods recommending permanent changes to this restrictive solution. The letter of November 16th is from leaders of eight neighborhood associations, the Capital Crescent Trail Board, and the Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights, an organization representing 18 communities in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area. This letter recommends that a bridge be built (Plan C) and that the "road diet" be lifted from Little Falls Parkway and Arlington Road.

However, we need an interim solution because funds for a bridge will take time to acquire. A realistic solution (a modified version of *Alternative Plan B*) that is strongly supported, puts the crossing of the trail at the light on Arlington Road and restores Little Falls Parkway to four lanes.


Since its creation in 1962, Little Falls Parkway has served as a major connector between Bradley Boulevard, Arlington Road and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as the lower area of Bethesda Chevy Chase from Western Avenue to MacArthur Boulevard. The development of Little Falls Parkway has an interesting and unique history. The U.S. **Congressional Capper-Cramton Act of 1930** paved the way for the acquisition, establishment and development of the George Washington Parkway as well as providing for the acquisition of lands in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia for a comprehensive “*park, parkway and playground system for the National Capital*”. It is troubling that the solutions Montgomery County Parks Department has recommended sets policy without due process. Parks has ignored the serious concerns of and impact on neighboring communities in the greater area. *The policy appears to be directed to a narrow group of users rather than the broad interpretation of the original intent of that early Congress.* It is important to remember that the Capital Crescent Trail is a *recreational* trail for many users. The greatest number being walkers.

What is of great concern is the “road diet” policy. The term and policy of a “road diet” was established as recently as 2014. The strategy was created to implement the idea of getting people out of their cars and choosing to walk or bike. This policy is not fair to neighborhoods that exist in urbanized areas and is unrealistic to implement on an established commuter road. Little Falls Parkway is a commuter connector that is heavily used. The future use of this parkway will only increase as development plans for Bethesda and the Westbard sector are realized within the next 5 years.

To enact a “road diet” on Little Falls Parkway is a major policy change. The Montgomery County Park Department is reducing lanes on a major road. Concern for the safety of all: neighborhoods, walkers, bikers and drivers must be considered. In the interim, the modified version of Alternative Plan B is strongly supported. It would ensure safety and would lessen the impact from growing development. It would allow bikers and walkers to cross safely, it would restore Little Falls Parkway

to its original four lanes, reduce cut through traffic and improve traffic flow. It is a safe and practical solution.

Sincerely,

  
DORIS MATSUI  
Member of Congress

CC: Michael Riley, Director of Parks, M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks  
Andrew Franks, M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks  
Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Councilmember Albornoz, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Friedson, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Glass, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Hucker, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Jawando, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Katz, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Navarro, Montgomery County  
Councilman Rice, Montgomery County  
Councilmember Riemer, Montgomery County