

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 19, 2014**

DOCKET ITEM: 7

ISSUE: Consideration of a request to remove four parking spaces in conjunction with Safe Routes to School safety improvements at the intersection of Cameron Mills Road and Monticello Avenue and permit loading and unloading on Sundays for the Church on Cameron Mills Road.

APPLICANT: Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

LOCATION: Cameron Mills Road and Monticello Avenue

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board recommend to the Director of T&ES to remove four parking spaces along Monticello Avenue at Cameron Mills Road and permit loading and unloading on Sundays for the Church on Cameron Mills Road.

DISCUSSION:

The intersection of Cameron Mills Road and Monticello Boulevard was identified for pedestrian safety improvements as part of the City's Safe Routes to School initiatives. Safe Routes to School is a national, federally grant funded effort to examine conditions around schools and conduct projects and activities that work to improve safety and accessibility, and reduce traffic and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. Safe Routes to School initiatives are coordinated through the City's Complete Streets Program, and involves designing streets and sidewalks to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in the vicinity of schools.

The intersection of Cameron Mills Road and Monticello Avenue has long, skewed crossings that pedestrians use to access the school (Figure 7a). During school hours, there is a crossing guard at this intersection to help students cross safely. Crossing guards, through informal conversations, voiced their support for this project. The proposed project shortens the pedestrian crossings and slows turning vehicles to make the intersection safer. Fire Station 203 is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Cameron Mills Road and Monticello Avenue and the. Westminster Presbyterian Church is located on the southeast corner, just north of George Mason Elementary School (Figure 7a).

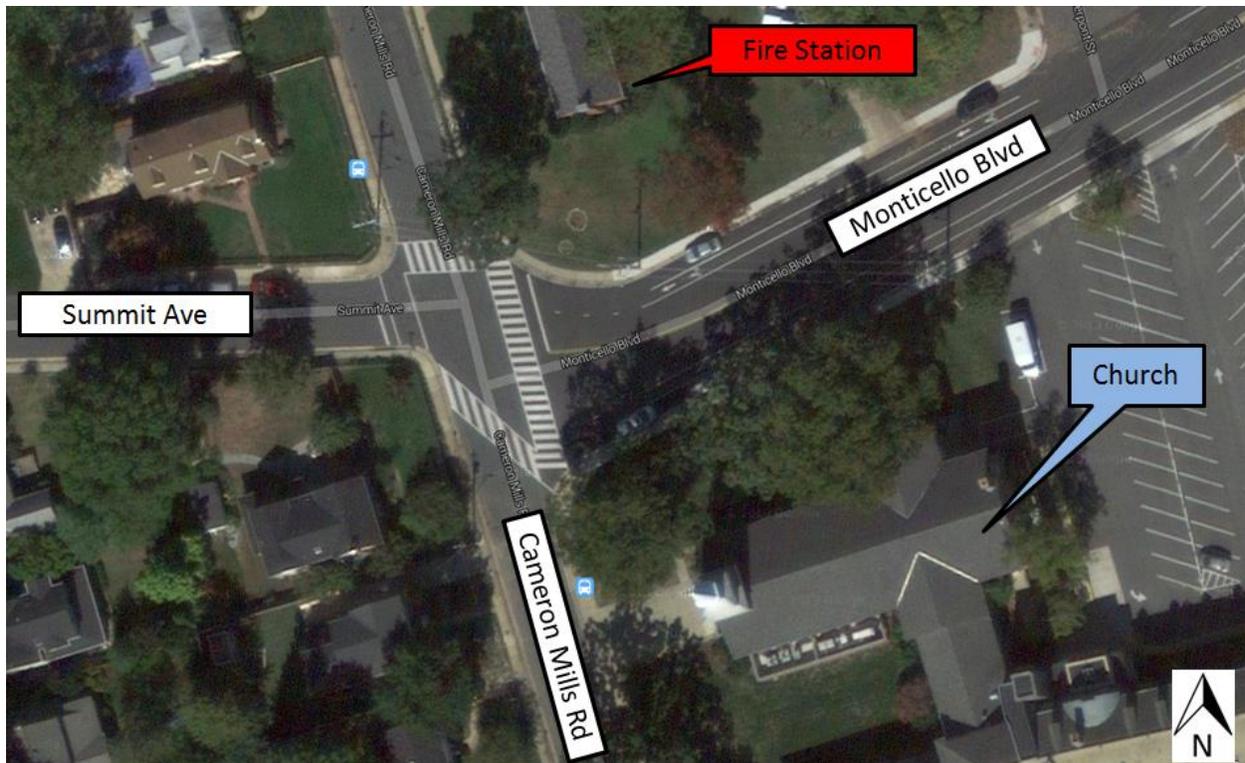


Figure 7a shows the existing Conditions

The project was presented to the North Ridge Citizens' Association on December 9, 2013. At this time, the public was receptive of the project, and also submitted a request for an all-way stop at this intersection. City staff collected data and conducted a feasibility study which showed that the intersection did not meet the warrants for additional stop signs along Cameron Mills Road.

City staff met with the Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) to review the plans in March 2014. The AFD requested modification to a few of the proposed curb extensions due to the needed turning radius for their trucks and did not support the installation of all-way stop signs at this location. Staff revised the design to incorporate their comments.

After the design was revised, staff attended another North Ridge Citizens' Association meeting on April 14, 2014 to present the new plan and the findings of the all-way stop study. Flyers were distributed to homes in the vicinity of the project. Additionally, the George Mason Elementary School PTA also distributed the flyer to their members and presented the project at their April 28, 2014 meeting. The North Ridge Citizens Association submitted a letter of support for this project (Attachment 1).

On May 1, 2014, City staff met on-site with representatives from the Westminster Presbyterian Church and the principal of the George Mason Elementary School to discuss the designation of a loading and unloading zone on Sundays for the church. Currently, parking is not permitted on Cameron Mills Road between W Braddock Road and Monticello Boulevard. There is an existing DASH bus stop on Cameron Mills Road just south of Monticello Boulevard that is not used on Sundays as the route changes and does not stop at this location. Staff is proposing allowing drop off and pick up on Sundays at this location.

The final proposed design, shown in Figure 7b, realigns the northeast and southeast curbs to shorten the crossing distances slow turning vehicles. In order to accommodate the new design, four parking spaces would be removed as shown in Figure 7c. The school and the church have both expressed support for the loss of spaces in order to provide a safer intersection.

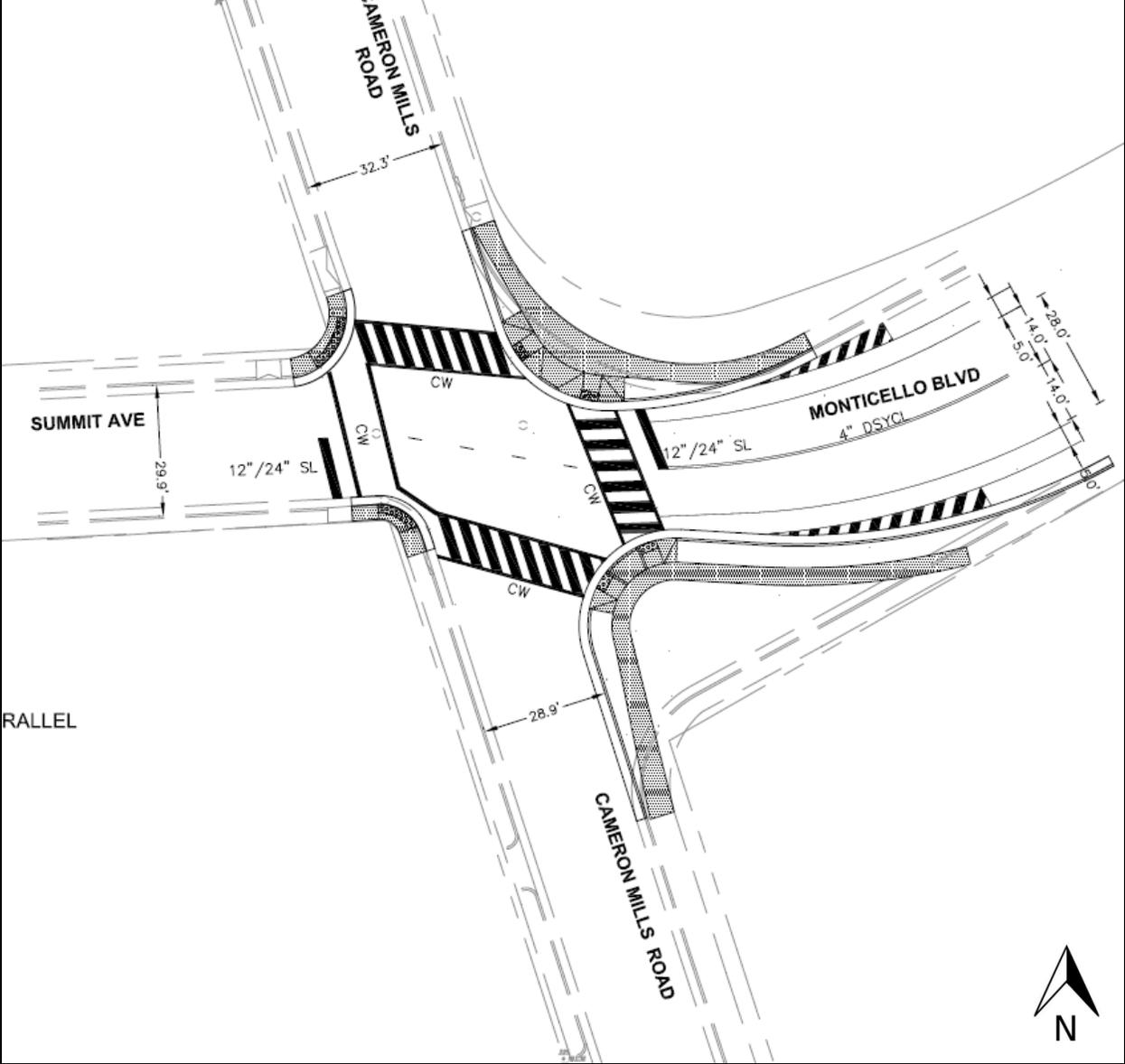


Figure 7b show the proposed intersection design

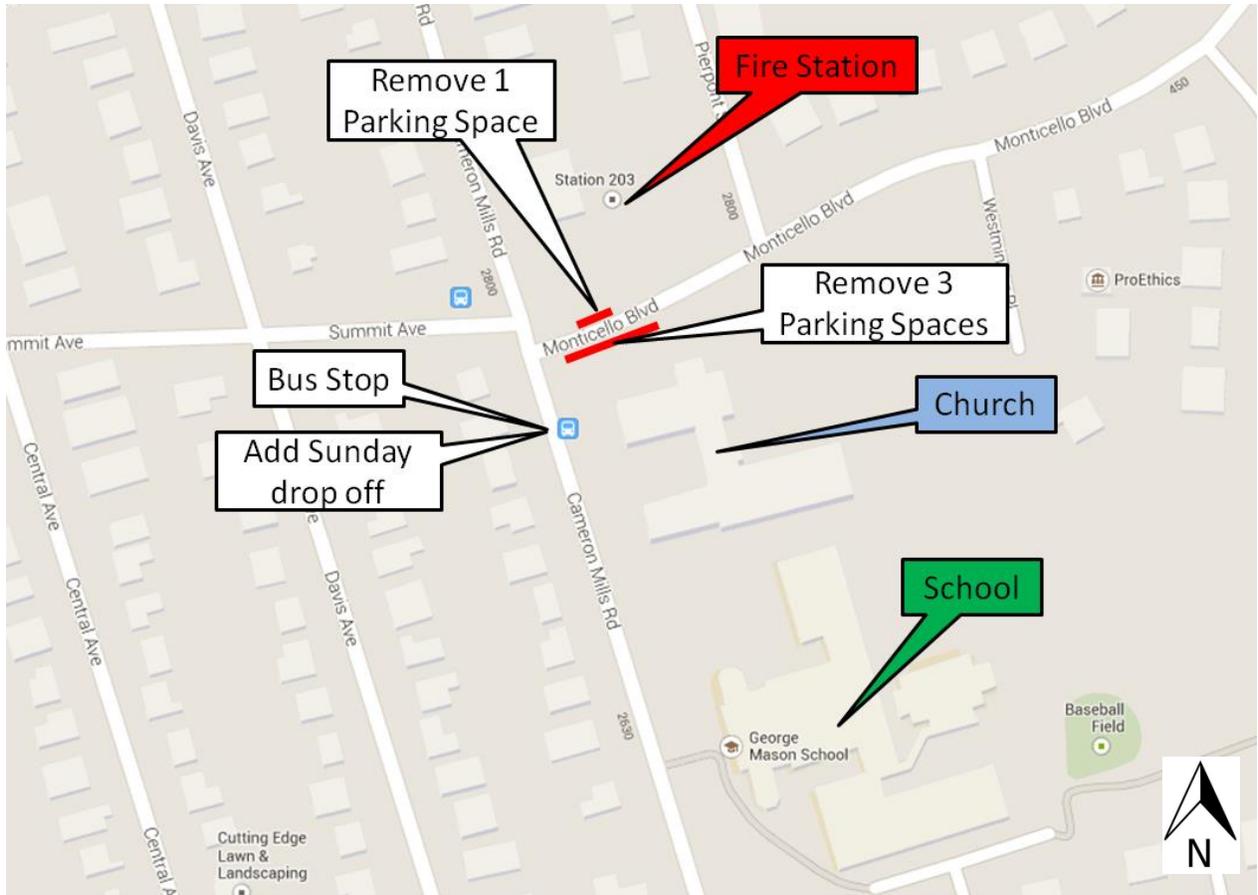


Figure 7c shows the proposed parking regulations

North Ridge Citizens' Association
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May 7, 2014

Ms. Hillary Poole
Complete Streets Coordinator
Department of Transportation & Environmental Services
City of Alexandria

To Whom It May Concern:

As President of the North Ridge Citizens' Association ("NRCA") I'm happy to provide this letter of support for the Safe Routes to School project that has been proposed for the intersection of Cameron Mills, Summit Avenue, and Monticello Boulevard.

The potential safety problems this intersection poses for drivers and pedestrians are well known to those who regularly pass that way. Monticello enters its intersection with Cameron Mills from the east and becomes Summit Avenue on the western side. Monticello is substantially wider than Summit and does not intersect directly across from Summit but rather somewhat to the south at an awkward angle, such that cars traveling east on Summit wishing to proceed on Monticello must carefully shift to the right to insure that they enter on the correct side and avoid on-coming westbound traffic. Moreover, the greater width of Monticello results in longer crosswalks for pedestrians crossing Monticello as well as those crossing Cameron Mills from the south side of Summit. Given the distractions faced by drivers, this raises concerns about the safety of the large number of school children (and their parents) who must cross the intersection on their way to and from George Mason School.

The NRCA has been monitoring developments as the planning has proceeded. Hilary Poole, Director of the Safe Streets Program, has had regular communications with members of our Traffic Committee, and she made presentations on the project to our Board and answered questions at our December and April meetings. Based on what we have learned, we believe that this project is long overdue and in the best interest of the North Ridge Community.

Sincerely,

Ken Hill, President
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