

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 20th, 2013**

DOCKET ITEM: 7

ISSUE: Consider request to remove parking spaces along Commonwealth Avenue and ban the left turn from southbound Mount Vernon Avenue onto northbound Commonwealth Avenue to accommodate bicycle lanes and a bicycle box

APPLICANT: T&ES

LOCATION: Commonwealth Avenue between Mount Vernon Avenue and East Clifford Avenue

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the board approve the removal of three parking spaces along Commonwealth Avenue to accommodate bicycle lanes on this roadway and ban the turn from southbound Mount Vernon Avenue onto northbound Commonwealth Avenue to improve safety for the bicycle box that is to be enhanced on Commonwealth Avenue.

DISCUSSION:

The existing bicycle lanes along most of Commonwealth Avenue are some of the highest utilized bicycle lanes in the City. According to the 2012 Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Report for the National Pedestrian and Bicycle Documentation Project, the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Mount Vernon Avenue is estimated to accommodate over 200,000 cyclists per year. Nearly the entire length of Commonwealth Avenue has existing bicycle lanes, with the exception of the stretch between Mount Vernon Avenue and Ashby Street, leading to the bicycle box at the intersection of Mount Vernon Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue. The bike box is an intersection safety design to prevent bicycle/car collisions. It is a painted green space on the road with a white bicycle symbol inside. The box creates space between motor vehicles and the crosswalk that allows bicyclists to position themselves ahead of motor vehicle traffic at an intersection. The proposed bicycle lanes would provide a protected connection for the thousands of cyclists using this facility each year but would require the loss of approximately three parking spaces on Commonwealth Avenue between Mount Vernon and East Clifford Avenue. See Figure 1 for the exact location.

Additionally, to improve safety for the bicycle box on Commonwealth Avenue and to accommodate enhancements to the bicycle box, vehicle turns onto northbound onto Commonwealth Avenue from southbound Mount Vernon Avenue need to be prohibited. Evening peak counts of vehicle movements showed that only one car made this left turn between the hour of 4:45pm and 5:45pm. Because of the required placement of the bicycle box, left turning vehicles would encroach into the designated bicycle area if permitted to make this movement. See Figure 2 for a diagram of the proposed turn ban.

This project was presented to the Del Ray Citizens Associate on May 13th, 2013 and no objections were made to the removal of parking and ban of the left turn. See Figure 3 for detailed plans.

Figure 1



Figure 2



