

June 9, 2010

Jessica Keller
Chief, Transportation Planning
Baltimore City Department of Transportation

Dear Ms. Keller,

This letter is sent on behalf of representatives of the Greater Remington Improvement Association (GRIA), Charles Village Civic Association (CVCA), and Old Goucher Community Association (OGCA).

It details a list of traffic improvements that we would like to see implemented as part of the proposed 25th Street Station redevelopment that will include a Lowe's and Wal-Mart. The following items of Agreement are all connected and must be done at the same time in order for the Community Agreement to be maintained.

Items of Agreement between GRIA, CVCA, and OGCA:

1. Streetscape improvements shall be made on BOTH SIDES of all street sections outlined in Image 1 in red.
 - a. For the purposes of this letter, "streetscaping improvements" include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Pedestrian-scaled lighting;
 - ii. Street trees;
 - iii. Countdown crosswalk signals
 - iv. Crosswalks made of a material other than asphalt (e.g. brick, or a reasonable substitute);
 - v. Crosswalk repainting (where replacement is infeasible);
 - vi. Street resurfacing;
 - vii. Reconstructed sidewalks.
 - b. The street sections in need of streetscaping are:
 - i. Sisson Street between 29th Street and 24th Street;
 - ii. Sisson "Alley" between 24th Street and 23rd Street;
 - iii. Fawcett Street between Sisson "Alley" and Hampden Avenue;
 - iv. Hampden Avenue between 23rd Street and 24th Street;
 - v. Hampden Avenue between 26th Street and 27th Street;
 - vi. Miles Avenue between 26th Street and 27th Street;
 - vii. Huntingdon Avenue between 23rd Street and 24th Street;
 - viii. Howard Street between 23rd Street and 27th Street;
 - ix. Maryland Avenue between 23rd Street and 27th Street;
 - x. Charles Street between 23rd Street and 27th Street;
 - xi. Saint Paul Street between 23rd Street and 27th Street;
 - xii. 27th Street between Sisson Street and Saint Paul Street;
 - xiii. 26th Street between Sisson Street and Saint Paul Street;

- xiv. Huntingdon Avenue / 25th Street between 26th Street and Saint Paul Street;
- xv. 24th Street between Sisson “Alley” and Saint Paul Street;
- xvi. 23rd Street between Sisson “Alley” and Saint Paul Street;
- xvii. Lorraine Avenue between Huntingdon Avenue and Howard Street.



Image 1: Streets in need of improvements

2. At the proposed 25th Street Station entrance at the 25th and Huntingdon “bend,” the following pedestrian safety measures must be implemented:
 - a. Crosswalks, of a surface different than asphalt, must be installed
 - b. Eight (8) countdown crosswalk signals (facing in every direction) must be installed.
3. Remove all rush hour parking restrictions on both sides of Howard Street between 26th and 29th Streets.
4. Remove all rush hour parking restrictions on 28th and 29th Streets between Sisson Street and Greenmount Avenue.
5. Install Angled Parking on Huntingdon between 30th Street and proposed shopping center entrance at the 25th and Huntingdon “bend.”
 - a. See attachment.
6. At 24th and Sisson Streets, install physical traffic calming device (e.g. speed hump at 15 M.P.H.) to calm traffic moving from Sisson to 24th Street, and vice versa.
7. Install left turn signals from northbound Howard Street onto 24th and 25th Streets
 - a. Give northbound and west-turning traffic at each intersection a 10-second signal priority;

- b. Install a bumpout at the northeast corner of Howard at 26th (in front of Miller's Court);
 - c. Re-time traffic lights on 25th Street to enable some northbound traffic to turn right from Howard Street onto 25th Street and then left at Charles Street;
 - i. This recommendation is based upon an informal count done by Chris Merriam at 29th and Howard, which demonstrated to him that few cars are making a left onto 29th from northbound Howard and that most are traveling north to Wyman Park Drive or Charles Street via Art Museum Drive. Those cars which are using Howard to get to Charles should instead make a right onto 25th at Howard and make a left onto Charles from 25th Street.
8. Install a left hand turn only lane for traffic to turn left from northbound Howard Street onto westbound North Avenue.
 - a. Give a 15-second signal priority to all northbound traffic at Howard and North.
 - b. Install a "To I-83" sign at Howard Street and North Avenue
 - c. Remove the "To I-83 North" sign from the pole at 25th and Howard Streets.
 9. Sisson Street between 29th and 24th Streets should be improved by rehabilitating sidewalks and planting trees on both sides of the street, and replacing the bridge over CSX railroad.
 10. Install a bumpout on 28th Street at Sisson Street (at the gas station) to create a right hand turn only lane which will prevent drivers from using that lane to "cut in line" at that intersection.
 11. Install sign at 28th and Sisson directing traffic bound for 25th Street Station to use Sisson Street; install a second sign at 26th and Sisson directing traffic bound for 25th Street Station to use 26th Street.
 12. Turn 26th Street from one-way into two-way, and rehabilitate sidewalks and plant trees on both sides of 26th Street.
 13. Install sign on Southbound I-83 (north of the 28th Street exit) and Northbound I-83 (south of the North Avenue exit) directing 25th Street Station-bound traffic to use the North Avenue exit.
 14. Implement all other traffic calming and pedestrian improvements at 28th and Sisson and at 29th and Sisson as shown on the drawings made by DOT Engineer John Thumbi in connection with GRIA and the CVCA Traffic Calming Committee.
 - a. Community does not have copy of letter; John Thumbi has it.
 15. Re-time the traffic lights on 28th and 29th Streets, pursuant to the December, 2009 letter written by Patrick McMahon.
 - a. See attachment
 16. Construction Traffic Issues:
 - a. Construction workers are forbidden from using neighboring streets for parking. Developer shall provide off-street parking for construction workers on-site, so that they do not park on the streets. If parking is not

- provided onsite, the developer shall provide off-street parking for construction workers offsite, and transportation to the construction site.
- b. Construction Traffic, such as dump trucks, cranes, and other construction related vehicles, shall use the designated truck route, as outlined in the PUD.
 - c. Use of heavy construction traffic such as dump trucks, roll off trucks and movement of heavy equipment shall be restricted to 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
17. Prohibit all truck traffic on 28th and 29th Streets between Sisson and Greenmount, and also on Howard between 25th and 29th. Instead, all trucks bound for Remington, Charles Village, and Waverly should use North Avenue, Howard Street (between North Avenue and 25th Street), and 25th Street to reach their destinations.
 18. At 27th Street and Remington Avenue, install a full stop sign for traffic turning from westbound 27th Street onto Remington Avenue or Cresmont Avenue.
 19. At 25th Street and Saint Paul Street, install a left-turn light for cars turning from westbound 25th Street onto southbound Saint Paul Street.
 20. Investigate amended signal timing on 25th Street between Howard & Guilford – North & South traffic currently gets priority, and 25th Street traffic takes a long time to make it through.
 21. Install a traffic light at 21st Street and Maryland Avenue. Traffic on 21st currently has difficulty crossing Maryland due to poor sightlines.
 22. Improve bus service to the site.

Sincerely,

Chris Merriam, GRIA
Judith Kunst, GRIA
Craig Bettenhausen, GRIA
Eric Imhof, GRIA
Sharon Guida, CVCA
Julie Galbo-Moyes, CVCA
Eric Dymond, CVCA
Peter Duvall, OGCA
Derek Demaree, OGCA

CC:

Alfred Foxx, Jamie Kendrick, Valerie LaCour
City Councilwoman Belinda Conaway
City Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke
City Councilman Carl Stokes
City Council President Bernard Young
Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Jon Laria
Rick Walker
Salem Reiner
JHU President Ronald Daniels

December 9, 2009

Mr. Alfred H. Foxx, Director
Baltimore City Department of Transportation
417 E. Fayette Street, 5th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Director Foxx,

It has come to our attention that the Baltimore City Department of Transportation is beginning a process to retime the traffic signals in the area generally between North Avenue, University Parkway, Greenmount Avenue, and the Jones Falls Expressway. We are excited that you are starting this important work and want to be active participants to ensure the project meets community objectives.

Many of these major arterial routes run through our communities and the way they operate have a significant impact on the livability, safety, and health of our neighborhoods and business districts. We recognize that these roads serve a broader City purpose, but we also believe strongly that the communities through which they pass should have a say in how they are managed. The community's goals for these facilities are to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers and increase the vitality of the business districts and the livability of the community by managing the speed of automobile traffic.

As such, we believe strongly that the retiming plans should aim for management of the traffic through this area at speeds that are conducive to an improved pedestrian environment. This suggests a relatively slow, but steady pace. The default speed limit for Baltimore City streets is 25 miles per hour and, seeing no signage to indicate otherwise, we hope and expect that these streets should operate at, and not above, this speed.

The area in question has had two pedestrian fatalities and one bicycle fatality over the past six months. Regardless of whether the signal timing was a factor in the vehicle speeds in these crashes, these recent fatal crashes should be an indication that we need to do more to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in Baltimore, and the retiming of signals in this area provides an opportunity to do so. The fatality rate for a pedestrian hit by a car at 20 mph is 5 percent, while the fatality rate rises to 80 percent when vehicle speed is increased to 40 mph. It would be valuable to know what travel times and speeds have been found during the data collection process and we hope that the City will time the signals not to the 85th percentile of current travel speeds, but to a speed appropriate for all modes and the context of these streets.

The large number of one-way streets in north central Baltimore makes it possible to time signals for good progression, but also gives the flexibility to manage those speeds by combining short cycle lengths with the signal timing. Many of those streets are predominantly residential and have large numbers of pedestrians crossing and bicyclists riding on those streets.

As such, we would like to recommend the following:

- Cycle lengths for this area, and all of Baltimore City, should be as short as possible given the pedestrian crossing time needed. Ideally, this will result in cycle lengths in the range of 60 seconds, which will minimize delay to pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobile drivers and discourage red light running, but the cycle lengths will need to be determined based on crossing distances and other factors.
- The one-way streets should be timed to provide progression at 25 miles per hour. Combined with the short cycle length, this should allow vehicles to pass through the neighborhoods with minimal delay but also do so at a speed that is safe for more vulnerable road users and respects the residential character of the communities. Timing the lights for higher speeds would be especially inappropriate given the City's new use of speed cameras near schools (several of which are located in this area).
- Progression should be planned for on major east-west cross streets, such as 28th and 29th Streets, as well as the north-south streets in order to create a more efficient street network. For the lower volume cross streets (both north/south and east/west), the quarter cycle offset concept used in the area north of Monument Street downtown could be applied here to provide progression in all directions where possible.
- As a part of this project, it would be helpful to know the balance of local and through traffic on the north-south and east-west arterials and that might help guide whether it is appropriate to redirect some of that volume to I-83 rather than on surface streets.
- The City should also evaluate changes to the signal timing at the corner of 33rd & Charles Streets, where the current phasing does not allow for safe passages of pedestrians on two of the three crosswalks. Significant changes will likely need to wait until the reconstruction of Charles Street, but a few seconds of time allowing pedestrians to start across the street could be very helpful. This same issue is a challenge at some intersections along University Parkway.
- In the long run, countdown signals should be installed at intersections with high pedestrian volumes to improve the information available to pedestrians and minimize risky behavior. These may not be feasible within the budget for this project but should be part of the plan for this area.
- Also any longer-range planning should look at the elimination of peak-hour parking restrictions unless they are clearly justified by the traffic volumes and there is evidence

that the restrictions are providing additional capacity that is well-utilized. The restrictions are frustrating for corridor residents and do not seem to provide much benefit. Likewise, adding curb extensions at locations where parking is permanent would help reduce speeds, shorten crossing distances, improve pedestrian safety, and assist transit passengers. Those types of improvements are beyond the scope of the current project but would be valuable to incorporate in future projects.

We believe that these steps would improve the safety and quality of life for the drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, residents, and other road users in north central Baltimore and we hope that you will incorporate these into the retiming of signals in this area.

We look forward to hearing from you as this study progresses and working with the Department of Transportation to better manage our roadways in the future.

Sincerely,

Paul Burk, President
Abell Improvement Association

W. Brad Schlegel
Barclay Leadership Council

Sharon L. Guida, Chair
Charles Village Civic Association Traffic
Calming Committee

Laura Wexler
Charles Village Parents Group

Sandra Coles, President
Greater Greenmount Community Association

Eric Imhof, President & Chris Merriam, VP
Greater Remington Improvement Association

Lynda Riley, President
The Guilford Association

Sandy Sparks, Chair
North Charles Village PUD Design Review
Committee

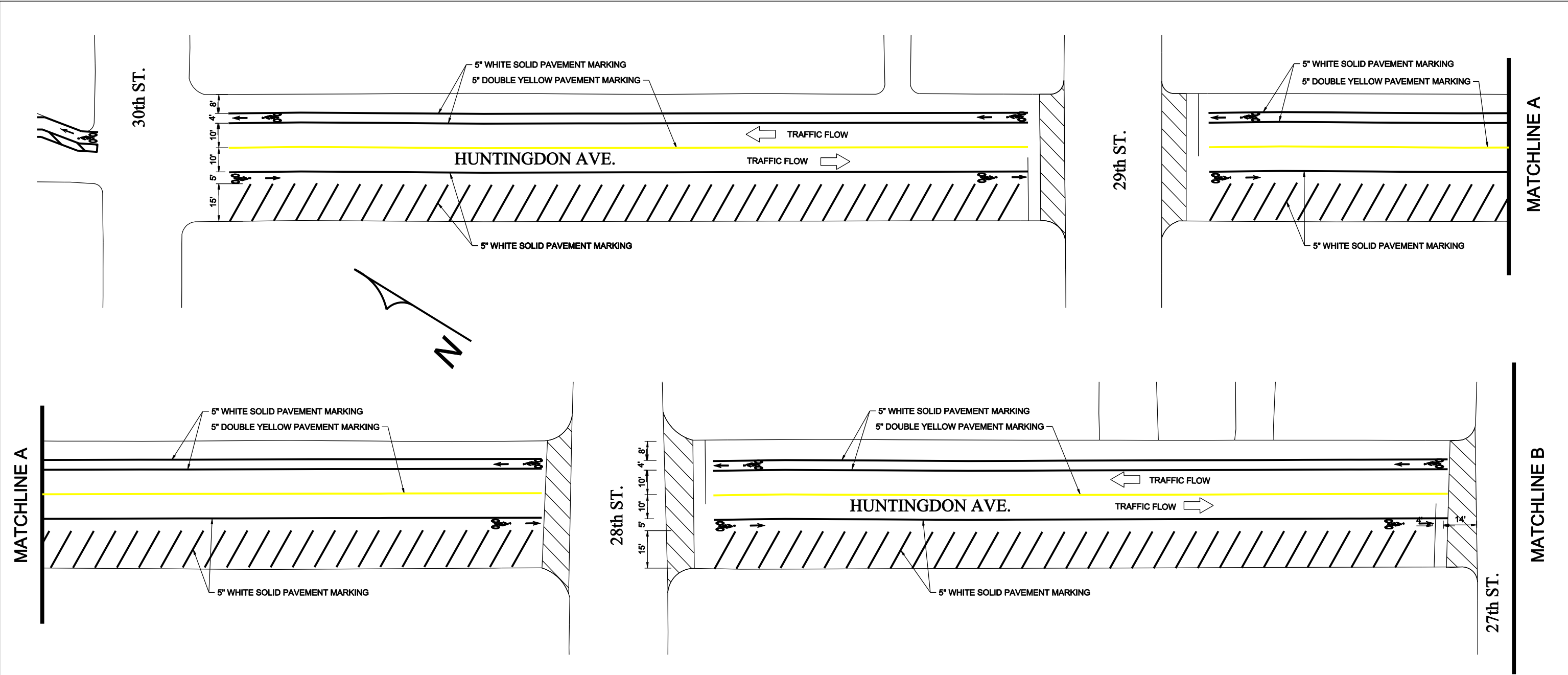
Mark & Susie Counselman, Co-Presidents
Oakenshawe Improvement Association

Bowen Nelson, President
Old Goucher Community Association

Patrick J. McMahon, Transportation Chair
Sierra Club, Greater Baltimore Group

Susan Talbot, President
Tuscany-Canterbury Neighborhood Assoc.

cc: Jamie Kendrick, Deputy Director
Randall Scott, Chief of Traffic
Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke, District 14
Councilman Bernard “Jack” Young, District 12



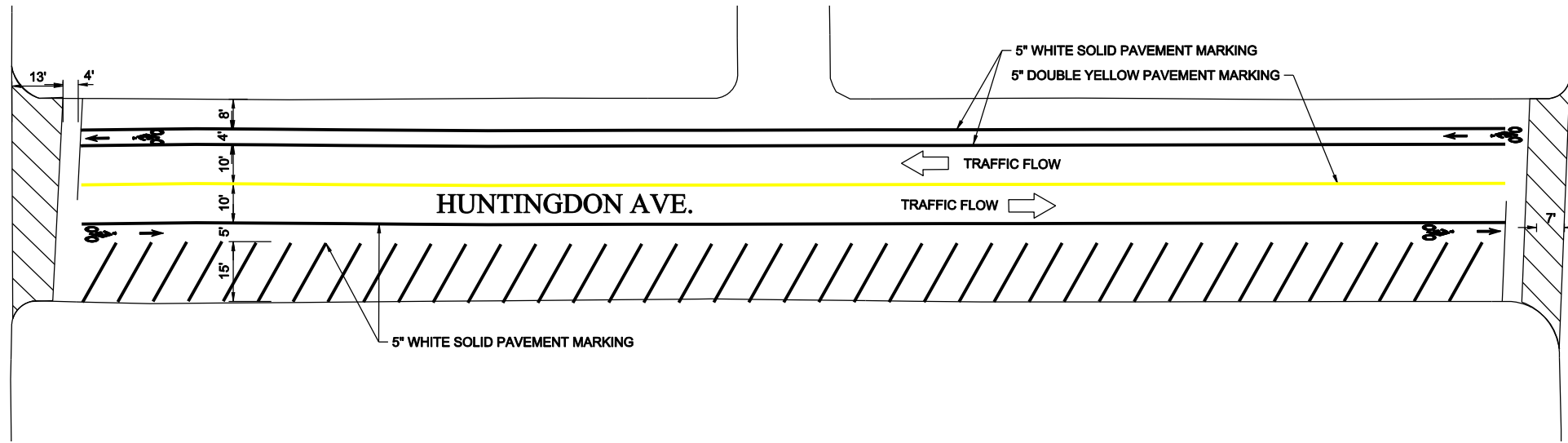
REVISIONS			

**BIKE LANE LAYOUT
HUNTINGDON AVENUE
from 29th St. to 25th St.**

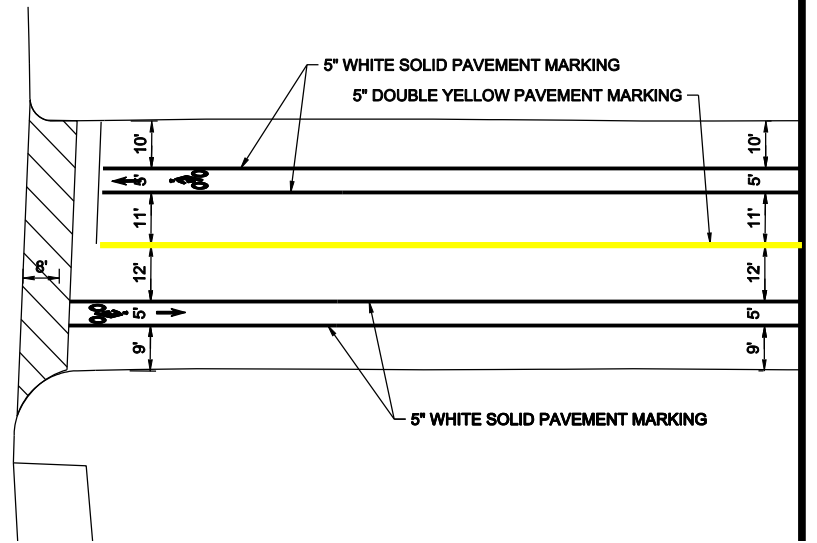
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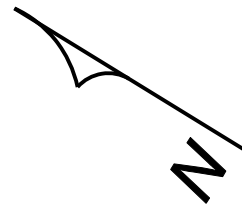
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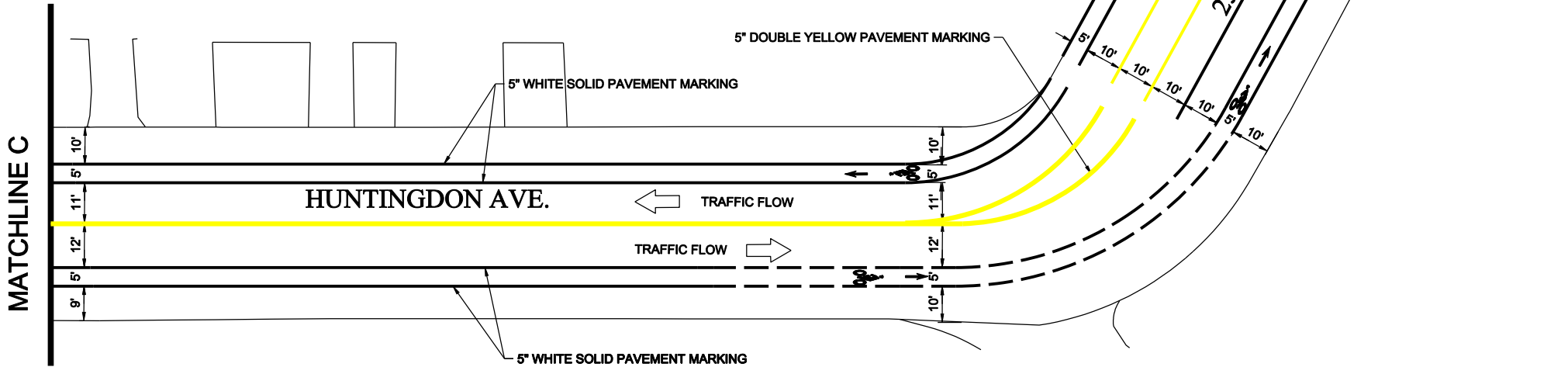
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MATCHLINE C



25th ST.



REVISIONS			

**BIKE LANE LAYOUT
HUNTINGDON AVENUE
from 29th St. to 25th St.**

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