



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Cc: Khara, M.S. - DPW
Friday, September 22, 2017 3:15 PM
Summers, Donald R. - DPW; Cuffee-Glenn, Selena - CAO; Son, Joshua L. - PDR; Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR; Olinger, Mark A. - PDR
Vincent, Bobby - DPW; Copple, Brian - DPW; Sawyer, Michael B. - DPW; Helmboldt, Jakob C. - DPW

Subject: Portland Loo opposition to UDC Recommendation 09-22-17

Attachments: Portland Loo opposition 09-22-17.docx

Please find attached a formal response from DPW. I am sending this on behalf of Brian Copple, ROW Manager. Please let us know if we need to discuss. Thanks.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Don Summers, DPW – Special Capital Projects

FROM: Brian Copple – DPW – Right-of-Way Manager

Cc: Bobby Vincent, Director, DPW
M. S. Khara, P.E. – DPW, City Engineer
Mike Sawyer, P.E. – DPW – City Traffic Engineer
Josh Son, PDR

DATE: September 22, 2017

RE: Monroe Park – Location of Portland Loo

Department of Public Works strongly opposes UDC recommendation of moving Portland Loo 'Loo' in the Franklin Street sidewalk area from the Monroe Park location suggested by the applicant.

The Urban Design Committee's role is to approve general Location, Character and Extent of the project design as submitted by the applicant. The location of 'Loo' as submitted should have been voted. We question if this is under UDC purview to recommend to CPC a different parcel/property that is not even part of the application?

Franklin Street in this area has annual daily traffic of over 7000 Vehicles Per Day (VPD). There is large pedestrian traffic at this section of Franklin Street serving VCU, general public and special events. There is only 5' clear uninterrupted pedestrian sidewalk width available at present which is already below the minimum width of 10' required for the area such as this.

The need of 'Loo' is for general public visiting Park but not travelling public. Amenities such as 'Loo' is not a streetscape feature and cannot be supported by DPW. We recommend the 'Loo' is placed within Monroe Park.

Public Right-of-way is unique and based upon the complete streets policy, foot traffic should be accommodated within the public right-of-way. The proposed location of the 'Loo' as recommended by UDC is a change in use from space for people to walk, to space for people to complete the digestive process. We are concerned that the people waiting to use the 'Loo' will take width from a minimum 5' wide sidewalk making it inadequate for public traveling by foot. With the context of a dense urban campus and the increase in people

who walk and bike, this space is needed for people who walk and bike. There is plenty of space on public property within the park proper to locate the 'Loo' and have plenty of room for people who wait for their turn.

While street trees and street lights take effective width away in spots, they also add tremendous value to the pedestrian experience and are acceptable as long as there are places where the sidewalk is wider to allow people who walk opportunities to move. A Portland Loo does not add value to people who use the public right-of-way to walk, it takes space away from people who walk.

UDC Recommended Option: Portland Loo located on Franklin Street sidewalk within public Right-of-Way

Pros: None (that DPW can envision)

- Cons:
1. Impact to public travel. (The Portland Loo need is for the general public visiting the Park and its patrons and not for traveling public using sidewalk for trips)
 2. Existing 5'-0" minimum pedestrian and bicycle access is not adequate for the volume of pedestrian and bicyclists in this area and cannot sustain additional impact to the width for use such as this. A 10'-0" minimum sidewalk width is desired in this area.
 3. Sidewalk area in front of Loo is not adequate for staging of public **waiting** for toilet use. The queuing of public will impact the pedestrian traffic.
 4. Non-Administrative Encroachment will require a Council action to approve the encroachment which requires \$1,000 application fee. This is a 30-60 day process. Access for operation & maintenance of 'Loo' is not sufficient. Maintenance vehicle would have to occupy parking lane on Franklin (despite the fact that there is a 30' min No Parking area. DPW plans to recommend against the encroachment if applied.
 5. 'Loo' proximity to street. High risk exists for vehicles running off road and hitting expensive Portland Loo.
 6. Aesthetics. 7000VPD travelling on Franklin St does not need to see the 'Loo'.
 7. Odor of facility will be unpleasant to travelling public (pedestrians and bicyclist) if there is a gap or lack of daily maintenance.
 8. This is a permanent facility. DPW only permits temporary facilities (Port-a-lets, etc.) to be located within the public right-of-way to serve sanitary requirements for construction projects.

Applicant submitted Option: Portland Loo located within Monroe Park

- Pros:
1. No Right-of-way encroachment required. Located on Park Property. No Council action required to approve ROW encroachment. Saving 30-60 days of procedural delay & \$1000 cost to the project.
 2. Easier access/less disruption for cleaning and maintenance of facility.
 3. Adequate pedestrian and bicycle clearances around facility.
 4. Less risk of being struck by vehicles travelling on Franklin Street.
 5. Better suited to serve needs of Monroe Park patrons.
 6. No impacts to public rights-of-way
- Cons: None that DPW know of.

DPW recommends and supports the location of the Portland Loo within Monroe Park per the initial design and request Planning Commission to decline UDC recommendation to move it to Franklin Street sidewalk.