

# The Committee of 100 on the Federal City



www.committeeof100.net

**Founded 1923**

April 30, 2015

**Chair**

Nancy J. MacWood

**Vice-Chair**

Monte Edwards

**Secretary**

Meg Maguire

**Treasurer**

Carol F. Aten

**Trustees**

Judy Chesser

George Clark

Dorothy Douglas

Bobbie Faul-Zeitler

Alma Gates

Stephen Hansen

Erik Hein

Kathy Henderson

George Idelson

Jim Nathanson

Elizabeth Purcell

Laura M. Richards, Esq.

Marilyn J. Simon

Frank Vespe

Bill Wright

945 G Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20001

202.681.0225

[info@committeeof100.net](mailto:info@committeeof100.net)

Samuel D. Zimbabwe  
Associate Director  
District Department of Transportation  
55 M Street, S.E. 5th floor  
Washington, DC 20003

[publicspace.policy@dc.gov](mailto:publicspace.policy@dc.gov), [sam.zimbabwe@dc.gov](mailto:sam.zimbabwe@dc.gov)

Subject: **Comments on re-proposed Regulations on Private Improvements to  
DDOT-Controlled Pocket Parks, 24 DCMR 3314**

Dear Mr. Zimbabwe:

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (C 100) greatly appreciates the efforts of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to protect public triangle parks for public use, a vital benefit to District of Columbia residents. Our comments, filed before the deadline of May 3, 2015, follow.

**Comments**

The regulations provide important protections for public access to triangle parks, but only for parks defined as a "triangle park" in 24 DCMR 3399. In our comments filed on July 29, 2014, we suggested a modification to the definition of triangle parks, to insure that all triangle parks are defined as a "triangle park." This would include those that once were triangles at the intersection of an orthogonal street and a diagonal street, but because of subsequently built roads intersecting the triangle, the triangle has been transformed into two spaces, one a smaller triangle, and the other a larger trapezoid or circle. In addition, a park which currently satisfies the definition of a triangle park may be altered in the future (e.g., by putting a street through the park) so that it is no longer a triangle. Our concern was and is that these triangles with altered geometry (whether in the past or in the future) are "triangle parks" as defined in 24 DCMR 3399. We suggested a reference to a park's past configuration as a triangle to insure that the definition of a triangle park embraced all parks that people consider to be a triangle park, and that Reservation 266 should be added to the list of examples of triangle parks.

Samuel D. Zimbabwe  
April 30, 2015  
Page Two

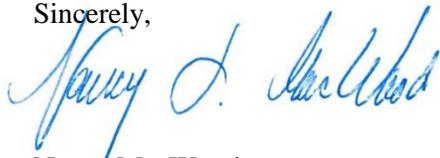
DDOT responded to our comments:

"A number of commentators wanted the definition of a triangle park to specify the configuration the park had when it was transferred to the District. The current park configurations are already as they were at the time they were transferred, so no change was made in response to these comments."

We understand DDOT's response to mean that the parks with altered geometry as of today are triangle parks as defined in 24 DCMR 3399 because they are "*generally* triangular in shape ... located at the intersection of two (2) streets (*generally*, one of which is orthogonal and one of which is diagonal) and has been set aside for public ownership. [*italics added*]. DDOT should further clarify the definition by adding Reservation 266 to its list of examples in the regulations. None of the current examples illustrate this situation.<sup>1</sup> Adding to the list of examples would be an easy step which will help to insure that the regulations achieve their important purpose.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the re-proposed regulations.

Sincerely,



Nancy MacWood  
Chair

cc: Mary Cheh  
Leif Dormsjo  
Andrew Newman  
Alice Kelly

---

<sup>1</sup> "Examples of triangle parks include United States Reservations 142 and 143, located at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and 20th Street, NW; United States Reservation 230, located at the intersection of Independence Avenue and North Carolina Avenue, SE; and United States Reservation 61, located at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and P Street, NW." [Quoted directly from Section 3399, Definitions, 5. Definition of Triangle Park]