

[The Debate on Reopening Klingle Road: There's Another Side](#)

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Dear Dr. Gridlock:

Commissioner [Michele] Saranovich's outrageous assertion that there is very little support for reopening Klingle Road is belied by the fact that her own ANC is hopelessly deadlocked on the issue.

Moreover, several ANCs in the neighborhoods surrounding Klingle Road have voted overwhelmingly to repair our street, including Mount Pleasant, Crestwood, 16th Street Heights, Adams Morgan, Rock Creek East and Shepherd Park. There is also strong support on the D.C. Council for reopening the road.

The argument that portions of Klingle reside in the 100-year flood plain is specious. Most of the roads in Rock Creek Park have portions that lie in the 100-year flood plain.

Assertions that the road is dangerous due to numerous hairpin turns are completely false, as a quick glance at a map will tell you. Yes, the road has curves and steep grades. So do many other roads in Rock Creek Park. The park is in a valley, and most of the roads, like Klingle, are built along streambeds.

Moreover, there is no significant history of serious and fatal accidents on Klingle Road. By contrast, the intersection of Connecticut and Porter does have a history of serious traffic accidents, and the Berger report concluded that public safety at this and other intersections would be improved due to reduced traffic volumes if Klingle was repaired.

The Berger report also concluded that traffic delays would be reduced and traffic operations would be improved if Klingle Road was repaired.

Beneath the hysteria from those who would have us tear out Klingle Road lies a distinct lack of logical reasoning and lots of contradictions. To hear them tell it, fixing the road will divert every motorist trying to get across town to the corner of Woodley and 34th, while at the same time they will tell you that the road will benefit only a privileged few.

The fact is that 3,200 vehicle trips per day (see the Berger report) were carried on Klingle and would be again.

Besides, the current situation cannot stand. The road is deteriorating and has become an eyesore. The sewer system is damaged. The condition of Klingle Valley is atrocious and should be an embarrassment to the environmentalists whose efforts have made it this way.

Those who would have us tear out Klingle Road like to say that fixing the road will be too expensive and will take money from other important projects, but there is no free ride here. Their argument conveniently ignores the very real costs, monetary and environmental, of tearing Klingle Road out of the valley.

Klingle Road served the public well for many, many decades in efficiently moving people and goods across town. Dr. Gridlock has it right. We should fix this road.

Peter McGee
www.repairklingleroad.org
Washington

Dear Dr. Gridlock:

As usual, the opponents of reopening Klingle Road present themselves as if they are an obvious majority ["Is Reopening of Klingle Road an Unsound Idea? Opponents Speak Out," District Extra, April 26].

Michele Saranovich writes "there isn't much support for reopening" the road. I'm not sure how she comes to this conclusion, but many of our [Advisory Neighborhood Commission members] east of the park support it, as do [D.C. Council members] Jim Graham [D-Ward 1] and M. Adrian Fenty [D-Ward 4], not to mention the obvious support from the citizens as noted by the green signs that dot people's front yards.

I couldn't possibly say with certainty that one side or the other has a majority, having not conducted a survey, but it is clear that there is far from "not much support" for reopening the road.

Whatever the case, the arguments for closing it continue to be weak. Most of the proponents loudly wave the environmental flag and tout the lost treasure that is Klingle Valley Park. Yet we are talking about a piece of pavement seven-tenths of a mile long under six lanes of Connecticut Avenue and always within view of large buildings on either side of the same road. Why is this so valuable when we have 2,820 acres of park already that never were a road?

Klingle Road is the only cross-park route under Connecticut Avenue. For those of us who like to use the parts of the city both east and west of the park, it would be an invaluable route.

The alternatives that I use every day include driving through the zoo, driving through narrow residential streets west of Connecticut Avenue such as Porter, Macomb and Davenport or taking the much longer routes to the north or south. These routes waste gas and time and increase the potential for accidents.

Residents of Cleveland Park must endure this added traffic on their heavily pedestrian-traveled neighborhood streets for the benefit of a few Klingle Road homeowners and the knee-jerk environmentalists they've managed to rally, who don't seem to notice that there is a lot of park -- beautiful park, park not under Connecticut Avenue, park that was never a road -- that I and many others have been happily enjoying for years, both before and since the road was closed.

James Treworgy
Washington