

Opponents, Supporters of Klingle Road Debate Environmental Impact

By Ron Shaffer

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Dear Dr. Gridlock:

There's another side of this story. Klingle Road runs through Rock Creek Park and helps unite the city. Just west of the creek, Porter Street, where I live, branches off Klingle and rapidly climbs the hill to Connecticut Avenue, while Klingle winds under Connecticut and on toward Reno Road and Wisconsin Avenue.

Neither Klingle nor Porter is a wide or divided street, and neither, by itself, can handle the quantity of traffic generated by one of the few roads through the park.

Together, they divide the load, with Porter handling the traffic to Connecticut and Klingle handling the traffic west of Connecticut. With Klingle closed, Porter has become overburdened, with increased accidents at Connecticut and frustrated drivers trying to cross Connecticut and push through residential streets to Reno and Wisconsin.

The District has responded to this pressure by rebuilding Porter as a mini-speedway. The part between Klingle and Connecticut is finished and looks like a jet runway. This, the Federal Highway Administration says, is useful for flat roads zoned at 50 mph or higher. Now they are doing the same thing for the portion of Porter up to Reno that is zoned at 25 mph and only 20 mph in spots.

Because Klingle Road is closed, my street is being structurally rebuilt to promote speeding in order to increase traffic flow but will still never be the equivalent of two streets.

Because Klingle Road is closed, neighboring streets are filled with frustrated drivers trying to bypass this needless traffic bottleneck.

Because Klingle Road is closed, the District is even more divided between east and west than it needs to be.

Because Klingle Road is closed, a few people have a calm place to walk their dogs while I and hundreds of my neighbors have the roar of traffic racing over innumerable concrete bumps.

It is simply unfair that Klingle Road remains unopened.

Gabriel Fineman
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