

# Potential for widened Rose Park trail draws objections in Georgetown

By NATALIE GONTCHAROVA  
Current Staff Writer

Neighborhood groups continue to fear that the National Park Service and D.C. Department of Transportation intend to widen the path that runs through Rose Park, which they say would encourage bicyclists' use of a trail they believe is meant for pedestrians.

The executive board of the Citizens Association of Georgetown in December voted unanimously to back Friends of Rose Park's objection to making the path mixed-use.

The Georgetown advisory neighborhood commission will discuss the status of the path at its meeting at 6:30 p.m. today at Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School.

But there is some confusion over the narrow Rose Park path's actual purpose.

A draft "conditions report" from the Transportation Department's Georgetown Transportation Study, which was released in November, refers to the path as a bike trail.

Another city document, the April 2005 District of Columbia Bicycle Master Plan, says that multi-use trails should be at least 10 feet wide. The Rose Park trail is about 4 feet wide.

In late 2006, the Department of

Transportation presented residents with a plan that would connect the Rose Park path to the bike path that runs along Rock Creek Parkway via the P Street ramp. The proposal included repaving and widening the path.

Although the project has been delayed, some residents are concerned that the Transportation Department's intent is to widen the path to 10 feet, which would mean  
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## TRAIL

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tearing down trees or rerouting the path through the center of the southern portion of the park.

"It's such an objectionable idea," said Russell Katz, a member of Friends of Rose Park and the Citizens Association of Georgetown. "And I find it frustrating that it's even being posited."

Bicycles frequently use the path, and they should not, said Katz, who called himself an avid biker. "It's really dangerous. ... There's not enough room for two bikes to pass each other all the time."

But Rock Creek Park superintendent Adrienne Coleman said she does not understand why residents are discussing the issue, because the path is already mixed-use for bicycles and pedestrians. Part of the path is owned by the Park Service and part by the city, she said.

"It's always been mixed-use," Coleman said. "It has never been designated for one particular use." She noted that all of the paths in Rock Creek Park are mixed-use.

Coleman said that the D.C.

Department of Transportation has submitted a proposal to the National Park Service for rehabilitation and restoration of large sections of the Rock Creek Park trail, which stretches from Georgetown to Broad Branch Road. The Rose Park path is part of the project. Coleman said the Park Service is continuing to review the proposal.

Georgetown activists say they have waited a long time for rehabilitation but hope that widening the path is not part of the plan.

Georgetown advisory neighborhood commissioner Tom Birch, whose district includes Rose Park, said that widening the trail would consume green space that is otherwise there for park enjoyment.

"Our position is the same that it was a year ago, which is to maintain the path the width that it is now," Birch said, noting that the neighborhood commission voted in December 2006 to support the path's rehabilitation but not its widening.

Katz said he hopes that the city can soon get the project under way but that neighbors have not heard specifics from the Transportation Department.

## PEDESTRIAN

analogous to a driver seeing a soccer ball roll into the street

Nonprofit

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