

Minutes of ANC 3/4G July 24, 2017, Meeting
Chevy Chase Community Center
5601 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20015

Present: Speck, Maltz, Clayman

Absent: Fromboluti, Tuck-Garfield, Maydak, Bradfield

A quorum was not present, thus no official business was conducted, only discussion.

Approximately 22 persons attended the meeting.

Commissioner Announcements:

Chair Speck: Volunteer Recruitment Fair — On August 17, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Serve DC My Brother's Keeper hosts a one-day volunteer recruitment fair at the National Press Club. This one-day volunteer recruitment fair will host 50 nonprofit and government agencies that provide volunteer opportunities with boys and young men of color. The organizations will inform volunteers of their organization's needs and register them based on their interests and skills. They particularly need specialized career skills (e.g., accounting, art, carpentry, engineering, mathematics, science, technology, web design, etc.) that could provide support and services to boys and young men of color. Register at rebrand.ly/MBKDCVRF and contact Isha Foster-Lee (ishaf.lee@dc.gov or 202-727-8003) with any questions.

Transportation Survey — Greater Greater Washington is conducting a survey as part of a region-wide transportation plan called Visualize 2045. The survey solicits general information about use of all forms of transit but also permits you to make very specific recommendations for what changes should be made in bus, rail, roads, pedestrian, and bicycle services. You may take the survey until July 31 at <https://ggwash.org/view/64072/heres-a-chance-to-shape-the-future-of-transportation-in-our-region>.

Death with Dignity Act Resolution — On June 26, the Commission adopted a resolution urging our elected representatives to “object to, oppose, and seek defeat of the proposed appropriation act language that would prohibit expenditures to implement the [District’s] Death with Dignity Act.” On July 13, the House Appropriations Committee added a provision to the District’s appropriations that purports to preclude expenditures to implement the Death with Dignity Act based on a 1997

statute and would repeal the Act, retroactive to February 18, 2017. The Chair wrote the Attorney General asking him to issue a legal opinion on the effect of the 1997 statute on the Death with Dignity Act. The Attorney General said he would not give a formal legal opinion, but indicated that “We have reviewed the 1997 Statute, and we have not identified any conflict between it and the Death with Dignity Act or the recently promulgated rules that would render either the Act or rules ineffective.” The Mayor announced on July 17 that the District would proceed to implement the Act using non-federal funds. Delegate Norton is also aggressively lobbying Congress to reject this interference with the District’s legislation over local matters. The Commission will continue to press our elected officials to keep Congress out of our local matters.

National Night Out — August 1 will be National Night Out, an annual event that promotes police-community partnerships to make our neighborhoods safer. The MPD Second District event, including Ward 3, will be held at the Hardy Recreation Center, 4500 Q Street, NW from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The Fourth District, including Ward 4, will be held at the Hamilton Recreation Center, 1340 Hamilton St NW, from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

Tennyson Street Traffic — For several weeks, the residents on Tennyson Street between Utah and Oregon have raised concerns about the increased volume and speed of traffic on this street since the Oregon Avenue closure. The traffic is exacerbated by WMATA’s rerouting the E-6 bus on Tennyson. Residents have petitioned DDOT to conduct a traffic calming and a safety study on the street. Today, the residents and the Chair met with Councilmember Todd to walk the street. DDOT is going to look into (1) installation of a temporary speed monitor sign to give drivers feedback on their speed and (2) installation of “bump outs” as traffic calming measures. WMATA is going to consider assigning an “E-6 supervisor” who will monitor speed of the busses.

Pepco rate increase — The DC Public Service Commission announced today that it will reduce Pepco’s requested rate increase from \$77.49 million to \$36.888 million — about \$2 per customer. This increase will be offset temporarily by applying some of the funds allocated in the Pepco/Exelon merger. That will mean that residential customers won’t see the increase on their bills for about two years.

Community Announcements:

Chairman Speck reported for Phillip McAuley, from the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations, asked that the Chair make the following

announcements: (1) DDOT installed the No Left Turn from the alley behind 5333 Connecticut (which had been on our ANC's list of DDOT projects for more than two years); and (2) Mayor Bowser launched the Summer Cohort of Solar Works DC — a job training program that installs cost-saving solar energy systems on the homes of low-income residents and a joint effort between the Department of Energy and Environment and the Department of Employment Services to provide on-the-job technical training to more than 200 DC residents.

David Rydzeki, Institutional Relationship Manager for the DC College Savings Plan, reiterated the tax benefits for DC residents who make contributions to an approved plan. Residents may defer taxes on their contributions up to \$4000 for individuals and \$8000 for joint filers, and those funds will be tax-free if spent for broadly defined educational purposes. More information is available by calling 800-987-4859 or visiting www.dccollegesavings.com.

Michael Warner, the ANC representative for Americans for Transit/Save Our System, described their "Save our System" campaign to improve WMATA's metro bus and rail system. The objectives include (1) a safe, reliable transit system based on investment and management improvements, not privatization; (2) creating a dedicated funding stream for Metro with WMATA Assessment Districts; and (3) establishing flat fares and free transfers between bus and rail with expanded service and hours of operation. His contact is michaeljwarner@gmail.com, and further information is available at americansfortransit.org.

Manley Collins (www.manleycollins.com) announced that he will be a candidate for Mayor in 2018.

Presentation by Michael Chuko, District Urban Forestry Administration, on the status of street trees in front of 5333 Connecticut Avenue:

Commissioner Speck recounted that, as part of the ANC's Memorandum of Understanding with the developer of the apartment building at 5333 Connecticut Avenue, they were to take extraordinary measures to protect the street trees along Connecticut Avenue when installing a circular drive. The protection of these trees was extremely important to the Commission. The developer could make no guarantees, however, that the trees would survive, but did agree to replace any trees that died with the largest trees possible.

As a follow-up to our agreement, the Chair asked the District's Urban Forestry Administration to examine the trees. They reported that two of the three trees are distressed, and they recommend removal. The Chair asked Michael Chuko from Urban Forestry to come to our meeting to explain why these trees have not survived, any lessons learned, and what steps will be taken to replace them. The Chair also asked the developer's arborist, Trini Rodriguez, on several occasions to come to our meeting, but received no reply.

Mr. Chuko indicated that he opposed installation of the circular drive in 2014 because he believed it would damage the street trees. He said that he was "overruled," however, by the Planning Office and the Mayor's Office. The developer did present an elaborate tree-maintenance program, but he was skeptical that it would be sufficient to preserve the trees. The roots that would be cut during installation of the circular drive were substantial, and he was not optimistic that the trees would survive this trauma. The root volume for these street trees was already limited, and the trees would experience a lot of stress when the roots were cut.

The roots were cut in early 2016, so this was the first full growing season after the circular drive was installed. One tree has now lost about 50% of its canopy. The other tree is not as bad, but it probably cannot survive and will eventually need to be removed. Consequently, Mr. Chuko has asked the developer to remove both trees. Under the three-year agreement with the developer, it must replant trees with diameters equivalent to those trees that were lost. It is not possible to plant all of the replacement trees at the site of the removed trees, and Urban Forestry will decide where the replanting will go. The available root volume is too small to plant a large canopy tree like those that will be removed. Instead of oak or maple trees, the new trees will have to be smaller.

Mr. Chuko wants the developer to remove the two trees within a month. He said that the trees have presented a danger of falling once the roots were cut in early 2016. As the trees lose their canopy leaves, however, they have less wind resistance and are less likely to be blown over.

Several lessons can be learned from this experience. First, if you cut roots that are greater than two inches in diameter — even with a clean cut, as here — it will impact the tree's ability to survive. A lot depends on the environment (e.g., the size of the tree box), but this damage to the roots is likely to jeopardize the tree. He said the best advice is to seek a redesign that will avoid root loss all together. Second, although the developer's commitments appeared to be impressive to the lay person, they were not

sufficiently specific to be enforceable. The Mayor's office overruled the opinion of the experts in Urban Forestry. Third, there was not enough emphasis on the details of implementation and followup care for the trees. There should have been notice of when work was going to take place and a clear timeline. The developer did not contact or involve Urban Forestry and the only after-care was mulching and watering. There is also some ambiguity about when the three-year period of the agreement begins with respect to the trees.

Commissioner Speck recounted some of the history of the Commission's follow-up efforts. In July 2014, then-Chair McCarthy wrote to the developer asking for "an update on the measures taken to preserve the five street trees next to the 5333 construction site on Connecticut Avenue." In January 2016, just as work was beginning on the circular driveway, Chair Speck wrote the developer expressing concern "that the contractors were following none of the precautions that were part of the conditions for granting the public space permit for the circular drive and that were [the developer's] commitments in our Memorandum of Understanding. The construction work appears to be a standard installation of the driveway with no consideration for preservation of the trees." The Chair indicated that he had asked Urban Forestry to inspect the work and report to the Commission.

One resident asked how to prevent the Mayor from overruling the expert opinion of Urban Forestry. Mr. Chuko indicated that those supporting the circular drive cited the need to support progress and argued that trees were a "renewable resource." He emphasized, however, that trees of this size are not a renewable resource since they cannot be replaced at this site with anything that will be comparable. The resident also asked whether the Commission's position would have been different had it known about Urban Forestry's objection, and the Chair indicated that it would likely have affected the Commission's views. The Chair also indicated that at the time the Commission voted to support the public space permit application for the circular drive, it was not aware of Urban Forestry's objections, and all it saw on the application was Urban Forestry's sign off with no objections.

Commissioner Clayman asked Mr. Chuko to let the Commission know when the trees would be removed, and he indicated that he would keep the Commission informed of any developments.

Presentation by Tanya Hedgepeth, DC Water, on installation of new water meters:

Commissioner Clayman indicated that DC Water would advise the Commission about two topics: (1) the program to install new water meters, and (2) progress on the Oregon Avenue sewer rehabilitation project that began early this year. Commissioner Clayman also thanked DC Water for the informative tour that it conducted of the Oregon Avenue site on July 15.

Ms. Hedgepath introduced April Bingham, the project manager for the water meter replacement project. Ms. Bingham indicated that meters throughout the District are reaching the end of their useful life. An automated meter reading system was started several years ago, and the transmitters in that system were beginning to fail. The current replacement program involves 85,000 meters that range from five eighths-inch to two-inch diameters and separate transmitters. The meters transmit data twice a day, and customers are billed once a month.

The current project has installed about 25,000 meters and will not be completed until June 2018. The workers doing the installation can be recognized by their uniforms. DC Water personnel are working with the installation vendor in the neighborhoods to address any problems as they arise. The meter replacement also includes a new meter cover that is designed to facilitate the transmission.

In a typical meter installation, the installer will knock on the resident's door and explain the process. About 95% of the meters are in public space, so it is not necessary to do any work on residents' property. If no one is home, the meter installation can proceed, but if the meter indicates that any water is in use, they will skip that home and return later. The replacement takes only about 15 minutes. The installer takes a picture before the installation and after to ensure that the property is returned to its original condition.

When the work is completed, the installer will hang a notice on the door with any instructions. Ordinarily, it is not necessary to flush the system after the installation. There should be no effect on the billing cycle. About 9% of bills are estimated, however, usually when the meter is not transmitting information properly. The new meters attempt to achieve 100% accuracy for billing. Thus, if a previous bill was estimated, the new meter reconciliation may mean that the bill was too high or too low, and the actual consumption will be trued up in the next bill. The cost of the meter replacement project is supported by a metering fee that is included in all bills. Any questions may be sent to MeterPMO@dcwater.com.

Ms. Hedgepath then reviewed the status of the Oregon Avenue sewer rehabilitation project. As she reported at earlier Commission meetings,

this project involves tunneling under Oregon Avenue to replace about 2100 feet of pipe and under Bingham Drive to replace about 2300 feet of pipe. The project, which began in December 2016, is on schedule for substantial completion by the end of 2018 with some work continuing until spring 2019. Normal work hours will continue to be 7:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday through Friday with Saturday work from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm through September 2017. There may also be some work at night as circumstances require.

Ms. Hedgepath also noted that any customer can ask for a free water quality test at any time by calling 202-612-3440.

Presentation by Joseph Walton, District Department of Energy and the Environment, on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and how pest control can be accomplished without the use of hazardous chemicals unless needed as a last resort:

Mr. Walton indicated that the Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2012 established protections for children from the risks of pesticide exposure. These requirements became effective in March 2015, and require each child care facility, school, and District-owned or occupied facility to have an Integrated Pest Management Plan. No chemical pest control measures may be used without such a plan.

Mr. Walton described the various biological, cultural, and physical steps that residents can use to control pests without resort to chemicals. A key component of pest control is sanitation, which deprives pests of food and the environment in which they can live. Chemical controls are often counterproductive since they can create chemical-resistant pests so that the chemicals are no longer effective. Chemicals should be used only as a last resort, and chemicals should be rotated to prevent resistance. More information is available at 202-535-2600.

Review of the results of the pilot survey on the future of the Community Center:

The Commission has been working for several months on a survey that can help us to assess the community's needs and desires for the Community Center's programs and facilities. At our July 10 meeting, we agreed on the basic content of the survey and that we would conduct a pilot survey to be sure that the survey was clear and that it would elicit the information that we seek. Each Commissioner who was in town agreed to get about 10 people to complete the survey and to provide some feedback on how the survey worked.

On July 23, Amy Mack ran the results of the pilot survey — which included 37 respondents when she ran it — and produced a number of reports. The substantive results are not significant since this small survey was not intended to provide a reliable sample, but it is useful to see the kinds of reports that we can expect. We also received comments from some of the respondents about the survey and have shared them among the commissioners.

There are some small changes that seem appropriate based on comments — e.g., adding the Community Center address, correcting typographical errors, clarifying directions, adding an additional age category for those 75 or older, and adding Sunday as a choice in the question on “which days and hours would you/members of your household most likely participate in programs/activities at the CCCC.” Those kinds of changes can be made easily.

For the comprehensive survey that we hope to kick off in September, we have previously discussed including the following categories of survey participants: (1) any resident within the Chevy Chase, DC neighborhood (i.e., within the boundaries of ANC 3/4G or as shown by the boundary map of the Chevy Chase Citizens’ Association); (2) anyone who has enrolled in classes at the Community Center in the past two years; (3) members of the CCCC that are not already included; (4) other interested Stakeholders who want to participate in the survey (e.g., Northwest Neighbors Village, Ingleside, Knollwood), preschools (Chevy Chase Baptist Church, Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, Broad Branch Children’s House, elementary schools (Lafayette School, Murch School), the Avalon Theatre, or any local businesses along the Avenue. Anyone will be welcome to complete the survey, regardless of where they live, but we must necessarily put some limit on the scope of that target respondents.

We have also discussed various ways to disseminate the survey: (1) flyers with the link to the survey at the Community Center office and other locations in the building; (2) posts on the ANC and CCCC websites; (3) posts on the Chevy Chase Community listserv and Nextdoor; (4) links published in the Northwest Current; (5) notifications and distribution of flyers to other ANCs in Ward 3; (6) distribution of flyers at the Chevy Chase Library and Tenleytown Library and at recreation centers in Ward 3; (7) posts on the preschool and elementary school websites; (8) flyers and posts to any relevant websites at Ingleside, Knollwood, Northwest Neighbors Village, and Iona House; (9) booths at Chevy Chase DC Day and the Lafayette Fall Festival; (10) emails to any constituent lists that

commissioners have; and (11) door-to-door canvassing by volunteers (including the ANC 3/4G commissioners).

The commissioners agreed that we should postpone any decisions about the survey until we have a quorum of commissioners. This topic will be addressed at a meeting on August 14.

Discussion regarding proposal to acquire video recording equipment:

Commissioner Malitz had recommended that the Commission purchase a microphone system and video camera to video record our meetings at a cost of about \$550. This entire system would provide needed amplification and a video recording system to record and upload videos of our meetings. The Commissioners generally agreed at the July 10 meeting that this equipment would improve our meetings and assist the Commission in disseminating information to the community at a reasonable price. In the absence of a quorum, the Commissioners agreed to consider this topic at a special meeting on August 14, which will still allow us enough time to acquire the equipment for our September 11 meeting.

Discussion and possible vote on purchase or lease of copier equipment at the end of the current lease:

Our current copier lease expires at the end of July, and we can continue month-to-month thereafter. Our current equipment is three years old, and is prone to need repairs. A new lease will entail a service call fee to set up the copier and connect it to the computer. The costs for a new 36 month lease would continue at the current rate of \$179 per quarter (\$2148 over the life of the lease or \$1850 net present value). (Commissioner emeritus Allen Beach indicated that the actual quarterly charges are more than \$200 per month, which includes taxes and insurance.) (We can purchase the existing equipment for \$988.76, which is clearly unreasonable.) The new equipment would have slightly more features and capability than our current equipment. We could purchase the same equipment on Amazon, however, for \$569 (with free shipping). (A copier with comparable features — e.g., the Brother MFC-9330 CDW Digital Color All-In-One with Wireless Networking and Duplex — is \$324.99.) We could then purchase a three-year service agreement with a local company (or just pay for service as needed) that would certainly cost less than the \$1281 difference (or \$1525 for the cheaper copier).

The Commissioners agreed that the purchase option seems much more attractive, but in the absence of a quorum, no decision could be made. The Commissioners agreed to consider this topic at a special meeting on August 14.

Commission Business

1. Minutes: In the absence of a quorum, approval of the July 10, 2017 minutes was deferred to the next meeting.
2. Checks: In the absence of a quorum, no checks could be approved but will be deferred to the next meeting.
3. The Commission will meet on August 14, assuming that there is a quorum of commissioners available. The topics for that meeting will be limited to (1) review of the results of the pilot survey on the future of the Community Center, (2) discussion and possible vote on proposal to acquire video recording equipment, and (3) discussion and possible vote on purchase or lease of copier equipment at the end of the current lease, plus any necessary Commission business.

The session adjourned at 9 pm.

Signed:



Randy Speck
Chair



Rebecca Maydak
Secretary