



**Government of the District of Columbia  
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G**

CHEVY CHASE, BARNABY WOODS, HAWTHORNE

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**Minutes**

**Special Meeting on Community Center Modernization  
October 15, 2018**

**Welcome and Commissioner Introductions (00:00 on the video recording, <https://youtu.be/xzAMn9mFKTI>)** — Commissioner Speck began this special ANC 3/4G meeting with introductions by the other Commissioners. Commissioners Clayman, Fromboluti, Malitz, and Speck were present.

**Overview (00:01)** — Commissioner Speck summarized the ANC’s first special meeting on the Community Center modernization held on September 17, 2018. (The minutes for that meeting are available at <http://www.anc3g.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Community-Center-Meeting-Minutes-9-17-18.pdf> and the video is available at <https://youtu.be/If3zAAu00qo>.) That meeting focused on two issues. First, the Department of Parks and Recreation’s (DPR’s) project manager described the process that DPR and the Department of General Services (DGS) would follow. They will first develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to do the design work. The RFP will include the ANC’s January 2018 report and recommendations so that prospective designers will understand the community’s needs and desires. Based on responses to the RFP, DPR and DGS will select an architect for the project in early 2019. The design team will then consult with the community on the design. The design will be completed before construction begins, probably in late 2019 or 2020. Second, the group discussed the need to accommodate current programs at the Community Center during the construction period. Commissioners Malitz and Clayman agreed to lead the Commission’s analysis of the needs and planning for temporary relocations.

Commissioner Speck reported that DPR has not yet issued the RFP, and the community will have no active role in the design process until the architect is selected in

early 2019. This meeting will be limited to planning for relocation of current programs. This planning is necessary now because there may be costs involved in using alternative locations. Those costs will need to be identified and included in a presentation to the Mayor for incorporation in DPR's FY 2020 budget. We will need to provide that input to the Mayor's budget recommendations by about the end of 2018 or January 2019.

**Temporary Program Relocation Needs Assessment Process (00:06) —** Commissioner Clayman described the survey that he and Commissioner Malitz developed to identify the needs for current programs. The survey was sent to the leaders of all the programs that could be identified, and thus far, a dozen people have responded. The survey seeks to identify the space required, any special program needs, and the number of participants.

Based on the needs assessment, the ANC will reach out to other possible spaces that could be used temporarily — e.g., other recreation/community centers, libraries, churches, or schools. The ANC will prepare a report to the Mayor recommending ways to accommodate needs during construction. Commissioner Clayman emphasized that we don't want to over promise on what accommodations can be made. It may not be possible to replicate exactly what we have now, but we will make every effort to provide a suitable alternative.

Commissioner Malitz said that the survey included ten questions, both because this was the maximum allowed to use the free QuestionPro subscription and because we wanted to keep the survey short. The average time it took for completion was four to five minutes. The survey was sent to 18 addresses that were gathered at the September 17 meeting and from other sources. The objective is to get one response per program for all of the Community Center's programs. We still need responses from a number of programs, including art, music, gymnastics, and dance, other than ballet. Commissioner Speck suggested that the survey should include the extensive summer programs at the Community Center. Commissioner Malitz said that this may need a more specialized survey that includes an assessment of the needs for outdoor space.

Some questions were raised about coverage of the various senior fitness programs — chair aerobics, fit and well, Zumba, and Pilates. Commissioner Clayman said that they have requested information from the seniors coordinator, Britany Miller, and had tried to reach Will Yates, who runs the YMCA programs. They have heard from telescope making, tai chi, pottery, fencing, ballet, bridge, and the seniors' resistance and cardio programs.

Ted Gest suggested that the survey should go to Kate Barnes-Domotor, the Chevy Chase Citizens Association president, since it holds meetings in the Community Center. Samantha Nolan also suggested that the needs assessment should consider that the Community Center is a polling location for elections, and other arrangements will need to

be made for that function. Another person suggested that Deborah Brouse should complete the survey for the singing group.

Raymond Finkleman, who runs the Community Center's fencing program, described that program's unique needs. It must have high ceilings so that swords will not touch anything, must be at least 60 feet long, must have secure storage space for expensive equipment, and must have electrical outlets for the scoring system. Given the large amount of equipment, it may also be necessary to have a rental van to move the fencing equipment to another site. A school gym may be the most likely alternative location, but limitations on storage could be a problem.

Commissioner Clayman emphasized that the first step in the process is identification of the need, and the survey is a tool in that effort. The ANC is looking for the names of anyone leading a program at the Community Center to complete the survey.

**Current Working Timeframes for Relocating Programs and for Renovations (00:28)** — Lee Schoenecker, a former chair of the Commission, suggested that construction on the Community Center could take longer than anticipated, and arrangements may need to be made to use alternative space longer than the predicted duration of construction. Commissioner Speck noted that Mr. Sisco from DPR had indicated at the last meeting that construction contracts would include penalties for delayed construction, which could be used to offset any additional costs caused by longer than expected construction. Nevertheless, Commissioner Clayman said that we should plan to relocate programs with a flexible end date.

Commissioner Fromboluti suggested a hypothetical timeline for the project. The design RFP could be issued about November 1, 2018, with responses received in mid-December. That would permit selection of the design architect in early 2019. It would then take several months to meet with the community and to develop the final design. If everything goes smoothly, the earliest construction would be September 2019. Construction for a building like this, he said, should be feasible within 12 to 18 months. Of course, it is prudent to build in a buffer in planning for relocation programs since we don't want to be stuck with a gap in available space for Community Center programs.

Based on this timetable for the modernization project, Commissioner Malitz suggested that the needs assessment should be completed by the end of November, and the requirements for all of the programs should be defined by the end of December. Throughout this period, we should be looking for alternative venues, and that process should be completed by the end of January. The period from February through April would be used for DPR to negotiate and arrange for alternative locations to be available by the start of construction.

Samantha Nolan suggested that the Chevy Chase Village Hall at 5906 Connecticut Avenue in Maryland might be a possible venue for some programs. If there are Chevy Chase Village participants, they may be able to use the space at no cost. Ted Gest asked whether there is any precedent for arranging alternative space during construction. Commissioner Clayman said that the process the ANC went through to obtain funding for the Community Center modernization was extraordinary, and even if finding alternative accommodations for displaced programs is unprecedented, we should make the effort. Commissioner Speck added that, with help from our Councilmembers, we expected to be the squeaky wheel that will get DPR's attention. Commissioner Clayman said that we will look to avoid problems that may have occurred in the past.

Brian Williams, DPR's Area 3 Manager, said that DPR would try to make sure that no programs fall through the cracks. They have worked with programs at other community or recreation centers to find alternative space during renovations. He said that DPR will work with the ANC, and there may be available space that could be used at other DPR facilities.

**Open Discussion (00:35)** — A resident asked who would be ultimately responsible for arranging space elsewhere. Commissioner Speck said that DPR is ultimately responsible, but the ANC will do whatever it can to facilitate that process and to make DPR's job easier. Commissioner Malitz said that the ANC can take the lead in defining the needs and identifying possible alternative locations, but it will be up to DPR can make the final contractual arrangements.

One resident suggested that there should be a program manager who will oversee the entire effort. Commissioner Fromboluti said that Brent Sisco is the DPR project manager for the entire project. Commissioner Speck added that at the September 17th meeting, Mr. Sisco had suggested that there were individuals at DPR who could assist in finding alternative space. Ted Gest suggested that Murch Elementary School had moved to the UDC campus for two years during construction, and some kind of similar arrangement might be possible.

A resident asked how decisions would be made about competing design preferences — e.g., solar panels on the roof versus space for outdoor activities. Commissioner Fromboluti said that this would be addressed in the design phase, which will go through several iterations with a chance for the community to communicate its preferences to the design team as the design develops. As for consideration of "green" design features, he said that the District is committed to energy efficient buildings, and the Community Center will certainly be designed to those exacting standards. Commissioner Malitz said that the ANC's January 2018 report included specific design recommendations that will inform the design process.

The director of the ballet program provided more information about the “sprung floor” that is in the Community Center and that will be needed for the ballet program in any alternative location. This is the kind of floor installed in professional dance studios.

Commissioner Clayman summarized the next steps. The ANC will reach out to other programs to complete the needs assessment. If anyone is aware of a program leader who may not have been contacted, please forward that information to Commissioner Clayman or Commissioner Malitz. The ANC will also begin to identify other possible spaces, but would appreciate any suggestions.

**Adjournment (00:58)** — The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm