



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

CHEVY CHASE, BARNABY WOODS, HAWTHORNE

COMMISSIONERS

3/4 G-01 - Abraham Clayman
3/4 G-02 - Chanda Tuck-Garfield, Treasurer
3/4 G-03 - Randy Speck, Chair
3/4 G-04 - Rebecca Maydak, Secretary
3/4 G-05 - Gerald Malitz
3/4 G-06 - Dan Bradfield
3/4 G-07 - Christopher Fromboluti, Vice-Chair

5601 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
P.O. Box 6252 Washington, D.C. 20015
Chevychaseanc3@verizon.net
<http://www.anc3g.org>
YouTube: ANC3G
202.363.5803

Minutes: ANC 3/4G Public Meeting, **November 26, 2018**, Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20015 (Video of this meeting is available at <https://youtu.be/fNq85QVvWAI>. Technical problems prevented recording the last portion of the meeting.)

Present: Speck, Maydak, Tuck-Garfield, Malitz, and Clayman. (Commissioner Fromboluti was representing the ANC at a meeting with DDOT on its study of Connecticut Avenue traffic patterns, including reversible lanes.) A quorum was declared.

Attendance: Approximately 30 people attended the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda (video at 00:00): The Commission adopted the agenda by a vote of 5 to 0.

Commissioner Announcements (00:02):

Commissioner Speck:

Election Results — All of the incumbent Commissioners were reelected in the November 6, 2018 election.

Special Ward 4 School Board Election — On December 4, 2018, there will be a special election for the vacant school board seat in Ward 4. Only Ward 4 registered voters may vote at the usual precinct voting sites. The four candidates are Rhonda Henderson, Ryan Tauaiainen, Elani Lawrence, and Frazier O’Leary (https://dcboe.org/dcboe/media/PDFFiles/2018-SPECIAL-ELECTION_LIST-OF-CANDIDATES-WARD-4-SBOE-11-5-2018.pdf). The Coalition for DC Pubic Schools

and Communities website (<http://www.c4dcpublicschools.org/2018-sboe/>) includes each candidate's answers to a number of questions.

Community Center Modernization — Although funds became available on October 1, 2018, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Department of General Services (DGS) have not yet issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the design work on the Community Center modernization. This is particularly concerning in light of the Mayor's announcement that the Director of DPR, Keith Anderson, has been moved to DGS, and a new interim Director, Delano Hunter, has been named to head DPR. These changes could cause the Community Center schedule to slip, and the ANC has asked Councilmember Cheh to ask the new directors for the status of the RFP.

Ingleside Task Force Awards to Non-profits — In December 2014, ANC 3/4G entered an agreement with Ingleside at Rock Creek spelling out strict conditions for Ingleside's major expansion project. As part of the agreement's oversight mechanisms, it established an Ingleside Expansion Task Force that consists of two ANC commissioners and several resident and institutional representatives from the immediate neighborhood. Ingleside and its contractors undertook a broad range of planning and construction execution commitments designed to minimize community disruption during the almost three-year long project. The Task Force — which operates under the ANC's auspices — meets monthly and monitors compliance with the agreement's terms.

Any contractor missteps — e.g., trucks driving on residential streets or workers parking in prohibited areas — require payments into a Task Force-administered fund. Under the agreement, any money accumulated in this fund “will be paid to one or more non-profit organizations in the District of Columbia to be designated by the Task Force.” Approximately each quarter, the Task Force decides how the money will be allocated. To date, the following organizations have received awards: \$15,000 to the Ingleside Foundation (which assists residents whose resources can no longer cover the costs of care and services and funds special projects and programs for the broader Ingleside community), \$4,500 to Iona Senior Services, \$12,000 to So Others Might Eat (SOME), \$10,000 to Northwest Neighbors Village, \$10,000 to Martha's Table, and \$10,000 to Chattering Children. Construction will continue for another year, so there will likely be additional donations to non-profit organizations in the District.

Chevy Chase Citizen's Association Cookie Decorating — The CCCA will have holiday cookie decorating for children at the Community Center on December 15, 2018, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. There will be nut-free and gluten-free cookies for children with allergies.

Relief from CRIAC Fees — The Council included \$3.4 million in the FY 2019 budget to help reduce the impact of DC Water's Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) on some of the District's non-profits organizations. On November 13, 2018, the

Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) held a briefing on its plans for implementing this relief program. Its proposed criteria for religious and charitable organizations to qualify for relief raise two concerns. First, the proposed criteria would make the Ingleside continuing care retirement community eligible for relief as a “charitable” organization but would make Knollwood, which provides similar services, ineligible because it is classified as a “miscellaneous” tax-exempt organization. These organizations should not be treated differently, and both should be eligible for relief. Second, the proposed criteria make it much easier for “religious” organizations to qualify than for “charitable” organizations to qualify, posing a possible violation of the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause. The Commission is working with DOEE to resolve these concerns.

Commissioner Maydak:

Lafayette Recreation Center Modernization Meeting — DPR and DGS will hold a meeting to review the latest designs for the Lafayette Recreation Center on Thursday, November 29, 2018, at the Community Center from 6:30 pm until 8:00 pm. The new design will reflect the community’s input on previous design proposals.

Commissioner Tuck-Garfield:

Tree Removal Issues — Three residents have raised concerns about DDOT’s removal of street trees that have not been replaced. DDOT has represented that it plans to come back to replace these trees from November through January. If anyone has concerns, they may contact Commissioner Tuck-Garfield. (DDOT’s Sam Zimbabwe indicated that DDOT plans to plant 180 trees in ANC 3/4G this planting season, which extends until winter weather prevents planting and resumes in the early spring.)

Commissioner Malitz:

Community Center Transitional Space — As part of the planning for the Community Center’s modernization, Commissioners Malitz and Clayman have surveyed current program leaders to assess the need for transitional space while the new Community Center is under construction. They have received 15 responses but still have not heard from some of the larger programs (e.g., dancing and gymnastics). When they have a clear idea of the requirements, they will look for resources that can meet that need.

Community Announcements (0:15)

Jessica Wertheim from the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services announced the Lafayette Recreation Center meeting on November 29, 2018, as discussed by Commissioner Maydak.

Discussion with DDOT about comprehensive steps that DDOT should take to address increased neighborhood traffic caused by Beach Drive and Oregon Avenue closures (0:16)

Commissioner Clayman indicated that the closures of Beach Drive and portions of Oregon Avenue for DC Water's sewer rehabilitation project have created increased traffic on neighborhood streets in Hawthorne and Barnaby Woods. These are worthwhile projects, but detouring traffic has been diverted to streets that were not intended for such volumes. He said that the ANC had asked DDOT last year to conduct a comprehensive analysis of these impacts and to improve communications of traffic pattern changes. The community does not expect that there will be no traffic in the neighborhoods as a consequence of these closures, but it looks to DDOT to minimize the impact and to ensure safety.

Commissioner Tuck-Garfield emphasized that there has also been an increase in traffic on Utah Avenue, Nebraska Avenue, and even Northampton Street. DDOT should examine the impact that this traffic has. Commissioner Clayman said that the problems are most acute on Chestnut Street, Beech Street, and Western Avenue during the morning rush hour and on Utah Avenue and Pinehurst Circle during the evening rush hour. Commissioner Tuck Garfield said that Tennyson Street is also impacted, particularly because it is a detour route for the E-6 bus. Indeed, all neighborhood streets are impacted to some degree.

Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT's Chief Project Delivery Officer (accompanied by Derek Voight and Donise Jackson), said that DDOT has been monitoring the impact of the work on Beach Drive, Oregon Avenue, and some work in Maryland. It has implemented some signal adjustments, particularly on 16th Street and East-West Highway to keep traffic moving. He said that DDOT has conducted observations in our area but has seen nothing that represented an "acute" problem. There were some backups, but nothing specific that they could address.

Mr. Zimbabwe distributed the detour plan for the closure of Oregon Avenue in three phases — the northern section from Beech Street to Western Avenue first, the southern section from Military Road to Rittenhouse Street second, and the section from Rittenhouse Street to Beech Street third. He said that DDOT is close to advertising for contractors to do the work, and once a contractor is selected, they will have a better idea of the schedule. Each section should take about nine months for a total of 27 months overall. He recognizes that the driving patterns will be dynamic and changes may be necessary as construction goes forward, particularly since traffic will generally be permitted in one direction since work in each section will be done first on one side of the roadway and then on the other.

Commissioner Tuck-Garfield said that DC Water did a good job of working with the ANC to modify detour routes and signage based on the ANC's recommendations. The ANC would like to work with DDOT in a similar way to make adjustments as necessary. Commissioner Clayman emphasized that the ANC needs routine updates from DDOT, similar to the regular communications it received from DC Water.

Commissioner Speck asked particularly about the impact of the impending closure of Wise Road as part of the National Park Service's Beach Drive rehabilitation. Wise Road is a popular detour now, and its closure in the Spring of 2019 will again change commuter patterns. He also noted that Military Road at Oregon Avenue has a left turn signal and turn lane, but when Oregon Avenue closes, it will impact the intersection at 27th Street and Military Road. When cars attempt to turn left to access Utah Avenue as a detour, they will not have a left turn lane or signal. This has caused problems during the DC Water Oregon Avenue sewer project. He also noted a problem with speeding on Utah Avenue by those detouring around closures on Beach Drive and Oregon Avenue.

Commissioner Clayman noted that on September 28, 2018, the ANC had requested a traffic control officer at Pinehurst Circle and Western Avenue to help expedite the increased traffic during morning rush hours. While this may not be the only way to address the problem, the Circle continues to be a problem with backups during rush hours.

A resident on Beech Street asked whether the breakdown of sections for the Oregon Avenue reconstruction project was written in stone. He said that the current plan makes Beech Street the border between sections 1 and 3, which would mean that it would be the detour route during construction of both those sections. Beech Street is not designed to carry heavy traffic, and he suggested that Chestnut Street would be a more appropriate junction between these sections. Commissioner Clayman said that the appropriate detour may depend on whether Wise Road is closed, and DDOT needs to be thoughtful about its planning. Mr. Zimbabwe said that he would take this back to see whether something could be done.

Thelma Mrazek, a resident at Knollwood, asked whether DDOT was working with WMATA to accommodate the E-6 bus route during Oregon Avenue construction. Mr. Zimbabwe said that they were working with WMATA to assure service throughout the construction. Janean Mann, a resident on Tennyson Street, said that the E-6 bus detour route on Tennyson was problematic because there are a lot of children on the street, and the buses continue to speed despite many admonitions to slow down. She also said that cars on Oregon Avenue routinely ignore the stop sign at Tennyson and speed through, making it difficult for both cars attempting to turn from Tennyson and for pedestrians crossing into the Park.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that the plan is to keep either the northbound or southbound lane open during each segment of the Oregon Avenue construction. Thus, the road will not be completely closed for the 27-month construction period.

Ms. Mann asked whether Bingham Road would be reopened. Commissioner Tuck-Garfield said that DC Water was not able to complete the necessary reconstruction of the road before the asphalt plants closed for the winter. Thus, they cannot resume the work until April and expect to have the road open again in May.

Michelle Cooper, a resident at Pinehurst Circle, raised a concern about the lack of sidewalks in the Circle and on Utah Avenue to Barnaby Street. She said that because there are no sidewalks, students at Lafayette Elementary that would walk or bike to school if it were safe instead must be taken by car, increasing traffic. Mr. Zimbabwe said that DDOT has a project to install sidewalks that can be built more easily, but the timing depends on what can be done in public space and the availability of resources.

Former commissioner Allen Beach suggested that DDOT should make sure to notify their counterparts in Maryland of any closures on Oregon Avenue to protect against protests that Maryland's elected representatives may receive from commuters.

Discussion of concerns about 5333 Connecticut Avenue, including residents' unauthorized use of the alley behind the building for access to Chevy Chase Parkway, residents' illegal left turns from and into the alley behind the building, trucks obstructing the alley behind the building, the improper issuance of residential parking permits to residents, shielding for street lights on Military Road, the status the street trees adjacent to the circular driveway, and possible site for Capital Bikeshare (0:50)

Commissioner Speck — the only Commissioner who was serving when 5333 Connecticut began construction — provided some background for issues that nearby residents have raised related to 5333 Connecticut. In August 2013, the ANC entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Calvin Cafritz, the developer. (The MOU is available at the ANC's website, <http://www.anc3g.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ANC.Cafritz-MOU-02.20.2015.pdf>.) Commissioner Speck introduced each of those commitments in turn. Patrice Gorgone, Regional Manager for Bozzuto, the owner's manager for 5333 Connecticut, and DDOT's Sam Zimbabwe participated in the discussion since both DDOT and the building management had information about performance of the commitments.

1. In the MOU, Cafritz agreed to institute traffic controls and signage, as requested and advised by the DDOT, so that traffic entering and exiting the building will not use the narrow alley that runs from behind the building to Chevy Chase Parkway,

including physical construction of a raised “pork chop” traffic control device to impede a right-hand turn from the building’s garage. (MOU paragraph 8)

Commissioner Speck explained that the ANC was concerned that the east/west alley to Chevy Chase Parkway was too narrow to accommodate tenants from 5333 Connecticut, and they should be directed to use the alley immediately behind the building onto Military Road when entering or leaving the garage. DDOT also installed signs indicating that no left turn was permitted into or from the alley to Military Road. This restriction was necessary to reduce backups on Military Road.

Cafritz installed the “pork chop” at the exit to the garage, but the ANC advised Cafritz on July 6, 2016, that “the structure that has been installed is unlikely to serve the purpose that we all intended” and, “consequently, it will be very easy for drivers exiting the garage to avoid the pork chop and make a right turn” to the alley leading to Chevy Chase Parkway. Cafritz also installed a “No Right Turn” sign opposite the garage exit to discourage tenants from using the east-west alley, but it was missing for a time in the summer of 2018 and has been largely ignored. As a result, substantial traffic uses that narrow alley, and the ANC has forwarded many complaints to the management at 5333 Connecticut.

In addition, those tenants who do use the alley onto Military Road disregard the signs prohibiting left turns. The problem with accessing Military Road is exacerbated by on-street parking that makes it difficult for cars leaving the alley to see on-coming traffic.

Ms. Gorgone said that the building management can alert residents to the requirements for exiting the garage and remind them not to use the narrow alley, but it is difficult to prevent all use of the alley. Mr. Zimbabwe said that there were limits to what DDOT could do to control actions on private property where DDOT has no jurisdiction. He said that there were also challenges to restricting traffic on the narrow alley to Chevy Chase Parkway because it is used by garbage trucks as well as residents whose property backs up to the alley.

Nevertheless, Mr. Zimbabwe said that there were several possible steps that DDOT could take to make it easier for cars to exit on to Military Road instead of using the alley to Chevy Chase Parkway. First, DDOT can remove the parking spaces on Military Road nearest the exit from 5333 Connecticut. This will improve sight lines to give exiting cars better visibility of both eastbound and westbound traffic on Military Road. Second, DDOT can modify the lane shift to the left turn lane at Military Road and Connecticut Avenue. This will make it easier for cars traveling east on Military Road to shift lanes and to be more visible for cars exiting 5333 Connecticut. Third, a more substantial change would be to remove all of the parking on the south side of Military Road from the 5333

Connecticut exit to Connecticut Avenue (about ten spaces). This would greatly improve visibility and permit a longer left turn lane at Military Road and Connecticut Avenue. Each of these changes would require a 30-day Notice of Intent and opportunity for public comment before implementation. In addition, any work to remark the pavement would have to wait for the better weather in the spring.

Commissioner Malitz said that this proposal is similar to DDOT's proposal for the nearby intersection at Military Road and Chevy Chase Parkway. He also said that the elimination of ten parking places would not be palatable without assurances that 5333 Connecticut residents would no longer be able to have Residential Parking Permits, as provided in the MOU. Commissioner Speck said that the third possible proposal to lengthen the left turn lane would significantly mitigate the backups that typically occur for westbound traffic on Military Road. Commissioner Malitz said that drivers regularly illegally pass the cars lined up at the Connecticut Avenue light in order to get to the left turn lane.

Commissioner Speck said that the Commission would await DDOT's recommendations. Meanwhile, Ms. Gorgone would remind 5333 Connecticut residents that they are not to use the alley to Chevy Chase Parkway and inform them that DDOT will be making improvements to facilitate use of the exit onto Military Road.

2. In the MOU, Cafritz agreed to request that DDOT restrict the ability of tenants of the building at 5333 Connecticut to obtain Residential Parking Permits (RPP) (MOU paragraph 5).

Commissioner Speck said that the ANC was concerned that even though the building has ample garage space for tenant parking, tenants would use on-street parking instead. Cafritz made the request as provided in the MOU, and on May 27, 2015, DDOT Director Dormsjo agreed that 5333 Connecticut tenants would not be eligible for RPP.

On May 18, 2018, DDOT advised the ANC, however, that a "handful of people (roughly 10) ended up with permits" despite DDOT's agreement that they would be ineligible. The problem occurred at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), which issues the permits, and DDOT advised that the issue had been resolved "so new permits should not be issued." Permit holders were notified that their permits would not be renewed once they expired. On October 24, 2018, the ANC asked DDOT for a report on what had been done to ensure that new permits would not be issued, emphasizing that on-street parking was an acute problem.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that this problem occurred because of a “data base issue.” DDOT designates blocks that are eligible or ineligible for RPP. In this case, however, the 5300 block of Connecticut includes three blocks with addresses in addition to 5333 Connecticut. As a result, there was some confusion about which residents were eligible and which were not. This problem was corrected in April 2018, with corrections to DMV’s data base so that ineligible residents’ RPP will not be renewed. It was not possible, however, to revoke permits that were issued in error. Mr. Zimbabwe did not have the number of RPP permits that remain valid, but it is less than ten. He will try to get a better number.

Allen Seeber suggested that it would be possible to obtain a data base with addresses and vehicle license numbers to determine whether any parked cars were owned by tenants at 5333 Connecticut.

3. In the MOU, Cafritz agreed to propose — and the ANC agreed to support — an application to provide a circular driveway from Connecticut Avenue that “will avoid removal of an additional major tree on Connecticut Avenue.” (MOU paragraph 3) Commissioner Speck reported that as part of the February 2014 Public Space permit for the circular driveway, Cafritz also agreed on steps that it would take to preserve the street trees closest to the circular driveway and that the owner would manage and accept responsibility for the trees for five years. If the trees fail within five years, Cafritz agreed to pay the cost of removing and replacing the trees.

DDOT’s Urban Forestry Administration determined in June 2017, that two trees were dying and would have to be removed. In October 2018, the developer’s arborist advised the ANC that the developer had applied for a permit to remove the trees, and in November 2018, the Urban Forestry Administration indicated that the application was “in process.”

Mr. Zimbabwe reported that the owner had gone through the permitting process for removing the trees. The permit application is still being reviewed, particularly its traffic control plan to ensure that pedestrians will be protected during the removal. The owner has paid a fee of \$14,000 for the removal.

Commissioner Speck asked what size and type of tree would replace the removed trees. Mr. Zimbabwe did not know, but would check and report to the Commission. Commissioner Clayman asked whether there was a difference in the fees required depending on whether the tree was removed pursuant to a lawful permit or removed illegally. Mr. Zimbabwe said that the fee is based on the circumference of the tree, and he believes that the fee is more for a removal without a permit.

4. In the MOU, Cafritz agreed that it would offer to provide for the installation of a Capital Bike Share station, but it would have no obligations if, after a reasonable effort, either (a) Cafritz reasonably determined that security, logistical, or locational considerations made the Capital Bike Share station impractical, or (b) its offer is not accepted by Capital Bike Share.

Commissioner Speck said that the ANC sought to encourage tenants at 5333 Connecticut and others nearby to use bicycles and public transit instead of cars. Cafritz did ask DDOT to locate a Bike Share station near the building, and in the spring of 2017, DDOT conducted a site visit and met with a Bozzuto representative to discuss possible options for siting a bikeshare station near the property. The best option would require installation of a concrete pad, and DDOT did not have funding to support the station there. On May 26, 2017, Bozzuto informed DDOT that “ownership of 5333 Connecticut is not interested in pursuing Capital Bikeshare at this point in time.”

Mr. Zimbabwe said that there is no planned expansion of Capital Bikeshare in Chevy Chase. (Commissioner Speck noted that the ANC will consider at its December 10, 2018 meeting a request for a bikeshare station at Lafayette Elementary School.)

Ms. Gorgone said that the owner is willing to explore the possibility of a bikeshare station, though she was under the impression that Capital Bikeshare had denied the request. Commissioner Tom Quinn from ANC 3E04 said that DDOT had not denied the request but had said that the developer would have to build a concrete pad. He said that the developer should have installed the pad two years ago and that for “a couple of thousand dollars,” they could comply with the MOU.

Commissioner Speck asked Ms. Gorgone to reconsider whether the owner could install the necessary pad to permit a bikeshare station that would benefit 5333 Connecticut residents and the neighborhood.

5. Commissioner Speck reported that in the fall of 2017, the ANC received a number of reports from residents — including photos — of trucks parked in the alley behind 5333 Connecticut that were obstructing the alley and making it difficult or impossible for Military Road or Kanawha Street residents to access the east-west alley behind the building. On November 15, 2017, a resident and Commissioner Speck met with Lt. Alan Hill at MPD’s Second District and discussed enforcement options. Commissioner Speck said that the frequency of reported incidents may have decreased now that fewer new tenants are moving in.

Ms. Gorgone said that trucks will need to use the loading dock at the rear of the building. Commissioner Speck said that the problem was with vehicles that

blocked the entire alley unnecessarily. He asked Ms. Gorgone to take any steps she could to avoid blocking the alley so that Military Road and Kanawha Street residents are unable to access the alley.

6. Commissioner Speck said that a problem has arisen with the street lights on Military Road that Cafritz installed to DDOT specifications. Residents on the north side of Military Road have asked for shielding that will prevent the street lights from shining into their homes.

Commissioner Maydak said that the problem is the globe light fixtures that were installed without shielding. When shielding was requested, DDOT put the shielding on the south side of the lights — i.e., the side toward 5333 Connecticut. The problem is the light shining in homes across Military Road. She said that the lights should also be 2700 Kelvin for a warmer color. Mr. Zimbabwe said that they need to get the shielding from the manufacturer, and he will follow up to see what can be done.

Commissioner Speck thanked Ms. Gorgone and Mr. Zimbabwe for their help in addressing these issues.

Discussion of pedestrian safety at the Connecticut Avenue/Northampton Street intersection and the effectiveness of the HAWK Light (1:28)

Commissioner Speck provided background on the pedestrian crossing at Connecticut Avenue and Northampton Street. On August 15, 2018, a pedestrian was struck in the crosswalk, the latest in a history of pedestrian accidents at this location. Several years ago, red flags were used by pedestrians when crossing, but that proved ineffective.

On November 26, 2012, the ANC voted unanimously to request that DDOT expedite the installation of a “High-intensity Activated cross-Walk” (HAWK) light at this intersection. The Commission noted that the intersection was a unsignalized and was a six-lane intersection that was crossed by “hundreds of pedestrians each day.” On both sides of the street, there are major attractions, including the Avalon Theater on the west, and the Chevy Chase Library and the Chevy Chase Community Center on the east. Banks, a post office, and other businesses line both sides of the street. In light of a serious pedestrian crash at the intersection on October 21, 2012, the Commission was concerned that the project had taken too long, so the Commission urged DDOT expedite work to install the HAWK light.

In April 2013, DDOT installed the HAWK light. At the time, George Branyan, the District’s pedestrian safety program manager explained that this intersection did not meet DDOT’s engineering standards for a full signal because “not enough pedestrians used the intersection.” Nevertheless, DDOT concluded that this multi-lane crossing where the

traffic is heavy and fast needed some enhancement to get pedestrians safely to the Avalon Theatre and Magruder's market. (A Post article described Mayor Gray's initiation of this signal: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/dr-gridlock/wp/2013/04/30/mayor-gray-inaugurates-new-d-c-pedestrian-crossing/?utm_term=.73f820a9cea2.)

Commissioner Speck noted that HAWK lights have been used in the District since 2009, and they are installed at several locations, including two others on Connecticut Avenue and one on Nebraska Avenue at American University. The light is completely off until a pedestrian activates it. When the lights at Morrison Street and Oliver Street are about to turn red, the HAWK light flashes yellow indicating drivers may proceed with caution. It then changes to a solid yellow, indicating that drivers should slow and prepare to stop. A solid red then means to stop, and a prominent sign says "Crosswalk, Stop on Red." Pedestrians are then given a walk signal. After several seconds, the solid red light changes to flashing red, meaning stop and then proceed with caution if clear. The signal then returns to its default position with no light. (DDOT explains these instructions on its website, https://ddot.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddot/publication/attachments/dc_hawk_pedestrian_signal_guide.pdf.)

Commissioner Speck said that following the accident in August, there were a number of posts on the listserv. Some of them suggested that the HAWK light was confusing and should be replaced by a standard signal. Others said that the light was not confusing and that drivers should pay more attention. Others suggested better enforcement of speed limits or that drivers should be held accountable for understanding the rules related to HAWK lights. Some pedestrians said that rather than risk inattentive drivers, they would simply not use that crosswalk but would go to McKinley and Connecticut to cross. Finally, some suggested that there should be better signage to protect pedestrians from vehicles turning left onto Connecticut from Northampton.

Commissioner Speck noted that the District is committed to improving pedestrian safety and has set a goal in its Vision Zero program to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2024. The ANC advised DDOT of the concerns that have been raised about this intersection and asked them to discuss the continued efficacy of the HAWK light and whether there may be better ways to protect pedestrians.

Mr. Zimbabwe began by urging everyone to report any crash to the police so that DDOT will have a record that will enable it to assess hazards. He said that the reason this intersection does not qualify for a standard signal is the low volume of vehicular traffic on Northampton Street. DDOT has recently observed this crosswalk and checked on the reported crashes. There are no vehicular crashes reported, and no recent pedestrian crashes are in the data base. They did identify some signage improvements that could be made.

During DDOT's observation, drivers generally complied with the HAWK signal. Mr. Zimbabwe acknowledged that despite installations of HAWK lights across the District, they continue to be an educational challenge to inform drivers. People from outside the District may also be unaware of these lights, and pedestrian activated lights in Maryland are different. Overall, however, DDOT has seen good compliance at HAWK lights in the District. The Connecticut/Northampton intersection has high pedestrian usage — in fact, significantly more than the number of vehicles on Northampton.

Commissioner Malitz noted that older residents may not get across the six lanes of this intersection as fast as the timing for the light so that it begins to flash red before they reach the other side. Mr. Zimbabwe said that it may be necessary to adjust the timing. Commissioner Clayman asked whether the HAWK has made the intersection safer, and Mr. Zimbabwe said it seems to have made it safer. Commissioner Tuck-Garfield noted that reports of crashes may be understated since police dispatchers sometimes tell callers that police will not respond to complete a report if there are no injuries.

Peter Range, a resident, said that he witnessed the pedestrian struck in the intersection on August 15, 2018, and he said it was a serious incident. The pedestrian was struck by a car in the third lane from the curb that did not stop for the red light although the cars in the first two lanes had stopped. In addition, there have been many close calls. He said that following his post on the community listserv there were 16 responses, many indicating that the HAWK light was confusing and not intuitive. He said that drivers approaching the light when it is dark (not lit) do not know that it's a controlled intersection. He suggested instead, a light that remains green until pedestrian activated — like the light at 5454 Wisconsin in Chevy Chase, MD.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that this intersection does not meet the standard for an on-demand light. He said that someone running through a signal can happen at any intersection, regardless of the type of light. He said that the HAWK light makes it much safer to cross, and it's not possible to address driver inattention. He said that a blinking red light always means stop.

Commissioner Tuck-Garfield said that there is no warning when the light goes from dark to yellow, and the sudden yellow light can be confusing. She said that there are a lot of travelers who use our roads and are unfamiliar with this type of light. She asked why DDOT could not explore a green light with an on-demand red light when activated by pedestrians.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that the HAWK is the right solution for this intersection, notwithstanding the recent pedestrian accident. Commissioner Tuck-Garfield asked for the basis for concluding that a green light with on-demand pedestrian activation was not warranted. Commissioner Malitz asked whether there were any green lights in the District with on-demand activation.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that there are very few pedestrian activated lights in the District. The pedestrian expectation is that they do not have to press a button to cross. He said that there are operational issues with the green light-pedestrian activated since it will require longer crossing times.

Commissioner Speck emphasized that if the District is to achieve its Vision Zero objectives, it must address pedestrian safety concerns like the one at this intersection. Mr. Zimbabwe said that this was a “textbook case” for the HAWK light.

Possible votes on grant applications by Northwest Neighbors Village, the Wilson Crew Booster Club, and Ch/Art

Commissioner Speck reported that the Commission heard presentations from four grant applicants at its October 22, 2018 meeting. Northwest Neighbors Villages applied for a grant of \$1500 to develop and implement a software platform to manage NNV’s operations. The Wilson Crew Booster Club asked for a grant of \$2000 grant to purchase ten new oars. The Ch/Art group seeks a grant of \$1200 — \$700 to build a website and a presence on social media (Facebook and Instagram) and \$500 to create a marketing presence for the spring art walk through a map, flyers, and posters. The Friends of Chevy Chase Circle sought a grant of \$844 to pay for 2500 red tulip bulbs that the National Park Service would to plant in Chevy Chase Circle this November.

Under the Commission’s grant guidelines, applicants make a presentation at one meeting, and the Commission votes on the grants at the following meeting. The Commission made an exception and voted to approve the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle application since they needed to purchase the tulip bulbs so that they could be planted this fall. The Commission is considering the other three applications at this meeting.

The Commission’s grant budget for all of FY 2019 is \$5390. The four applications that the Commission received total \$5544. Each of the remaining three applicants has some merit, but we have only \$4546 remaining, and these three grant proposals total \$4,700 (\$154 short of the full funding amount needed). The Commission may also want to save some of the budget for the Spring.

Commissioners offered various proposals to approve various combinations of grant applications. Some commissioners suggested that the Ch/Art group needs more work to become an established group, and it is not clear what they want to do. She said it may be premature to give them a grant when they are not sufficiently formed yet. Others suggested that the Wilson Crew Booster Club may benefit too narrow a slice of the community while others noted that Lafayette and Deal feed into Wilson so it does have a community benefit. It was also noted that the Commission has given grants to the Wilson

crew in the past, although that was before a statutory change made the criteria for grants more stringent.

Commissioner Speck proposed that the Commission defer any decision on the grants until the December 10, 2018 meeting. That will provide time to check with the ANC Office to determine whether grants to Ch/Art and Wilson Crew Booster Club will be approved as benefiting the community as a whole and thus passing the public interest test. The Commission agreed to the postponement. Commissioner Malitz noted that whenever a vote is taken, he will not participate in the discussion or vote on the Ch/Art application due to a personal conflict of interest.

Commission Business

1. The Commission voted 5 to 0 to approve the minutes for its October 22, 2018 meeting.
2. The Commission approved the following checks by a vote of 5 to 0: \$18.00 Jerry Malitz (batteries for AV equipment), \$136.00 Postmaster (box rental) \$26.28 DOES (replaces lost check – unemployment July- Sept) \$140.94 (Verizon)
3. Items for December 10, 2018 meeting may include: vote on grant applications by Northwest Neighbors Village, Wilson Crew Booster Club and Ch/Art; presentation by Celeste Duffie on the Department of Public Works’ plans for leaf collection; discussion of garbage storage and pickup in the alley behind the Connecticut Avenue restaurants between Livingston and Morrison; presentation and possible vote on petition for the installation of a Capital Bikeshare station at site of Farmers Market at Lafayette Elementary School; presentation and possible vote on public space permit application for renovations to the driveway at 5363 29th Street, NW (DDOT Tracking Number 322064)

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Signed:

Randy Speck
Chair

Rebecca Maydak
Secretary