



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

CHEVY CHASE, BARNABY WOODS, HAWTHORNE

COMMISSIONERS

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

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Meeting Minutes
ANC 3/4G Public Meeting
February 24, 2020
Chevy Chase Community Center, 7:00-9:00 pm
5601 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20015

Summary:

- The Commission heard from many E6 bus riders and adopted a resolution to be submitted to WMATA on its proposed FY 2021 budget opposing the proposed elimination of stops on the E6 and M4 bus routes and supporting other uses for the Chevy Chase bus terminal;
- The Commission discussed concerns about out-of-state car rental or car-sharing companies parking in residential neighborhoods and heard from affected residents;
- The Commission heard presentations on the need for an enhanced District Archives and approved testimony on this topic for the agency's performance oversight hearing;
- Commissioner Fromboluti provided an update on the status of the design for the modernized Chevy Chase Community Center;
- The Commission approved testimony at the performance oversight hearings for the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, DC Water, and the Department of Aging and Community Living; and
- The Commission approved the minutes for its February 10, 2020 meeting and one check.

Video of this meeting is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzVWuU5iuAs>, and the time notation in these minutes reference the time each item appears on the video.

Introduction and Adoption of Agenda (00:00:00): Commissioner Speck called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Commissioners Fromboluti, Maydak, and Malitz were also present, and Commissioner Speck declared a quorum. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting. Commissioner Speck reviewed the meeting procedures. After noting items that had been deleted, the amended agenda was adopted by a vote of 4 to 0.

Commissioner Announcements (00:04:53):

Commissioner Speck encouraged anyone that rides the E6 or M4 buses or has an interest in preserving the E6 and the M4 to provide comments to WMATA on its proposed FY 2021 budget that would eliminate key portions of those routes. WMATA will hold a hearing on its budget on Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at the WMATA Headquarters, 600 Fifth Street, NW at 4:30 pm. If you are unable to attend the hearing, you should fill out an online survey or submit comments online at <https://metro2021budget.sawtoothsoftware.com/> before March 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

Commissioner Speck reported that on January 31, 2020, the District released its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (available at <http://bit.ly/2SQJsgM>) for FY 2020, which shows that agencies underspent by over \$75 million, and revenues exceeded budgeted estimates by \$492 million. The Mayor is now preparing the District's FY 2021 budget that will be released on March 19, 2020. Revenue growth for the next year is expected to be at least \$601 million (7.43% over FY 2020). The Council will hold hearings on each agency's budget from March 23, 2020, through April 9, 2020 and the ANC expects to participate in those hearings, as appropriate, to let the Council know our community's priorities.

Commissioner Speck announced that the Chevy Chase Citizens Association will have a Happy Hour and Meet and Greet on Tuesday, February 25, from 5:30 - 7:00 pm, at the Chevy Chase Lounge, 5510 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20015. Everyone is invited.

Commissioner Speck said that this year, the census will be conducted primarily online. Our neighborhood's initial non-response rate in the 2010 census was between 8% and 20%. In March, the Census Bureau will begin sending postcards with instructions about how to go online to complete the census form. Please don't mistake them for junk mail. Go online to be sure everyone is counted. "Census Day" is April 1, 2020, and the ANC

will provide additional information to make sure that everyone is counted. The latest updates will also be available from DC Census 2020 at <https://dccensus2020.dc.gov>.

Commissioner Speck said that the Murals DC program is taking applications from businesses that would like a free mural on their wall. The value of murals has been brought home by the recent closure of Circle Wine and Spirits and its replacement by a Chase Bank office. The first evidence of this change was the removal of the terrific murals of old Griffith's Stadium. See <http://bit.ly/2HTGgdY> for photos. More information about getting a free mural is available at <https://muralsdcproject.com>.

Commissioner Fromboluti noted that a complete census count is important because the District receives substantial federal funds that are distributed based on population. A complete and accurate count means the District receives the funding and services to which it is entitled. Census data is also used for planning, policy, and budgeting decisions across the City, and boundaries for wards and ANCs will be adjusted based on the census.

Community Announcements (00:11:25)

Jessica Green, from the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services, announced that on Wednesday, ahead of WMATA's budget hearing, Mayor Bowser will host a rally to support the region's workers in the ongoing push to Keep Metro Open. (Commissioner Speck asked that the Mayor also support continuation of the E6 bus, which supports many workers in our neighborhood.) She also announced that the Mayor had wrapped up the budget engagement forums, but input on budget priorities is still welcome at <http://bit.ly/2w1ZH0W>.

Dee Smith from Councilmember Cheh's office announced that the Councilmember will testify in person at WMATA's February 26, 2020 budget hearing about the proposed cut-backs in bus service. The Councilmember will also be at the Chevy Chase Citizens Association meet-and-greet on February 25, 2020. Finally, there are two upcoming performance oversight hearings, one on February 27, 2020, for the Washington Aqueduct and DC Water before the Committee on Transportation and the Environment and on March 5, 2020, for the University of the District of Columbia and the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs before the Committee of the Whole.

Kirti Suri, legislative counsel on Councilmember Robert White's Facilities and Procurement Committee, reported that the Councilmember has held performance oversight hearings for WMATA, the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, and the Office on Returning Citizen Affairs, and the hearing on the Department of General Services is upcoming on February 27, 2020. Anyone wishing to testify at the DGS hearing can email

facilities@dccouncil.us. She also emphasized the need to comment on WMATA's proposed cutback of the E6 bus route. She said the Councilmember heard from several witnesses about the E6 at the performance hearing.

Discussion of and possible vote on comments on WMATA's proposal to merge the E6 and M4 bus routes (00:23:10)

Commissioner Speck provided background on the Washington Area Transit Authority (WMATA) board's authorization for a public hearing on its proposed FY 2021 budget. The key issues in the budget that will particularly affect our constituents are (1) WMATA proposes to combine the E6 and M4 bus routes,¹ thereby eliminating seniors' and students' access to important services and adversely impacting our community; and (2) the capital budget for rehabilitation of the historic bus terminal on Connecticut Avenue, NW, just south of Chevy Chase Circle² does not include reasonable use of this valuable site for other purposes — e.g., to address the need for more affordable and moderate-income housing — that can incorporate the existing structure in a mixed-use facility.

WMATA proposes to extend the M4 route to include the current E6 stops along Western Avenue, Oregon Avenue, and Chestnut Street. It would, however, eliminate E6 bus services to Lafayette Elementary School, the Community Center, the Public Library, the Avalon Theater, the Safeway grocery store, and to shops and restaurants along the Connecticut Avenue corridor as well as to the Friendship Heights Metro and the nearby shops, restaurants, and doctors' offices. The proposal would also eliminate all of the M4 service on 30th Place and Military Road.

The Commission's testimony at WMATA's performance oversight hearing described the impact that these proposed changes would have on elementary school students and their families, seniors — particularly those residents at Knollwood and Ingleside, but also those aging in place — and commuters who use these buses to get to and from work. WMATA made an almost identical proposal in 2011, and, in the face of uniform opposition from the community, WMATA did not implement that proposal.

The draft resolution — which will be submitted to WMATA for its hearing — again opposes this proposed change because it will not provide bus service for destinations that residents need, and transferring to another bus or Metro is not a realistic alternative for the seniors and elementary school students who use this service.

¹ The proposed E6 and M4 bus route changes are available at <http://bit.ly/2HDS83x> at pages 29-30 and 35-36.

² The proposed capital budget for Historic Bus Terminal Rehabilitation is available at <http://bit.ly/2V1f7xq>, Appendix D, page 156.

With respect to the bus terminal on Connecticut Avenue, the Commission has been pushing WMATA to plan for other uses for this site for at least the last six years. The Comprehensive Plan also contemplates mixed use residential for this site. The ANC's resolution calls for WMATA to include in its capital budget funding ways to make better use of the bus terminal site so that it can be integrated into a mixed-use building to better benefit the community and the District.

A number of E6 bus users explained their need for this bus:

- A father and his two young boys said that they moved to this area because of the accessibility provided by the E6 bus. Both boys said that they have taken the E6 to school and other activities. WMATA's proposal would take away public transportation from a swath of the neighborhood. The M4 is often late, and being on time is important. One of the boys said the E6 was his "favorite bus."
- A mother with two very young children said that her caretaker — who does not drive — takes her older son to preschool on the E6, and the M4 would be a much longer walk that would not be possible in bad weather. She teaches at Blessed Sacrament and uses the E6. The caregiver uses the E6 to and from Friendship Heights. The children will be attending Lafayette next year, and the caregiver can take them on the E6, but not the proposed combined M4.
- A resident said that we went through this before when WMATA tried to take away the E6. The proposed combination with the M4 would not take him where he wants to go. He reiterated the importance of filling out the survey and that we should let the Mayor and Council know about the importance of the E6 as well. He said that even if the E6 requires subsidies, it provides necessary transportation to provide a livable community.
- A resident reported that he has taken the E6 for ten years. The M4 will not do him any good and would create a much longer commute. WMATA's proposal effectively "cancels the E6 bus route."
- A woman said that she is nervous having to walk further at night from the bus stop without the E6. The E6 gives her greater security about her personnel safety.
- A resident on Worthington Street said that the M4 at rush hours is a "school bus" that often does not stop because it's full. Her 99 year old landlord uses the E6 with his caregiver and would not be able to transfer to another bus.
- A Knollwood Military Lifeplan Community resident said the E6 is essential to get residents to Connecticut Avenue and Friendship Heights with the many doctors' offices there. The doctors' offices are more important as residents can no longer use Walter

Reed. She said that many Knollwood employees also use the E6 from Friendship Heights.

- A federal employee said that he and his wife use the E6 to commute to work. The E6 helps them to earn a living and pay taxes.
- A resident on Broad Branch Road said that her three children used the bus to Friendship Heights, and the M4 would be much less convenient. She now uses the E6 with her grandchildren. The E6 gives teens and seniors independence so that they are not reliant on a car. The E6 provides a community service.
- A resident said that he has ridden the E6 for 20 years. He rejects the argument about saving subsidies by eliminating the E6 since all bus service is subsidized; if it didn't require a subsidy, it would be run by a for-profit company.
- A Broad Branch Road resident said that the M4 is much longer and she cannot rely on it to be on time. She also values the covered transportation hub at Friendship Heights that protects from the weather and is safer. The M4 stop at Tenleytown is not covered. She also pointed out that the option for those who can afford it will be ride-sharing, which is not as efficient or environmentally friendly. She said the E6 is a "community bus" where regular riders talk with each other and value that shared community.
- An E6 rider on Western Avenue said that her children use the bus for extra circular activities. It is the only way to get to work. Young adults who don't have access to a car have to take the bus.
- An E6 rider on Rittenhouse near Broad Branch said that the proposed change would make for a much longer commute. She bought their home in part because of the access to the E6 bus route.
- A Maryland resident who lives just off Western Avenue said that the need for the E6 bus doesn't stop at the District line. He takes the E6 because it is convenient and reliable, and he believes in public transit.

Commissioner Clayman, who could not attend the meeting, said, "I fully support the draft resolution calling for the preservation of the E6 bus route and the inclusion of funding in WMATA's capital budget that would allow for a better use of the bus terminal site on Connecticut Avenue."

The Commission adopted the proposed resolution by a vote of 4 to 0.

Discussion of concerns about parking by car rental or car sharing companies on residential streets and proposed new legislation (01:09:24)

Commissioner Speck said that the current law (DC Code § 50-1401.02(a), available at <http://bit.ly/39Yd0i2>) exempts non-resident vehicle owners from registering their vehicle for 60 days. Some car rental or car-sharing companies have been using this provision to park in neighborhoods that do not require Residential Parking Permits, and they are not subject to ticketing for 60 days. This is becoming a significant problem for residents where these cars are sometimes parked for days or weeks.

Commissioner Speck reported that Councilmember Todd's office said that he has plans to introduce emergency legislation that would eliminate the 60-day exemption period for cars owned or operated by a car-sharing company that is not registered in or that does not have a contract with the District. He also plans to introduce permanent legislation that will be more comprehensive.

Commissioner Malitz said that cars are parked illegally on Chevy Chase Parkway between Military Road and Jennifer Street in a Residential Parking Permit zone and are not ticketed. Eight to ten cars can be found there and are often parked for days. Many are Free2Move cars. This is an enforcement failure since they are not permitted to park in RPP zones.

Elliott McCalkin, a resident on 32nd Street, said that Councilmember Todd had described his proposed legislation as requiring out-of-state companies to pay to park in the District. He said that he did not want them to be able to pay to park in residential neighborhoods. These are residential neighborhoods that should not be dumping grounds for rental cars, scooters, and bikes. He said that the proposed legislation may not work.

Commissioner Malitz said that the Department of For-Hire Vehicles regulates companies like car-sharing companies like Free2Move.

Commissioner Speck said that he would do more research and would talk with Councilmember Todd about what can be done to address this problem.

Discussion and possible vote on resolution to fund the District Archives (01:23:40)

Kim Bender (founding executive director of the Heurich House Museum) and Neil Flanagan (writing a book about the Reno community and the origins of urban planning in the District) made a presentation about the need for a functioning Archives for the District. Mr. Flanagan said that the current Archives is in a renovated stable on an alley. He said that the District needs to fulfill its promises to (1) build a new archives facility; (2)

use the available money to address the backlog in processing archival materials, and (3) create an independent agency to administer the Archives, as is the norm elsewhere.

Ms. Bender and Mr. Flanagan said that they represent many historians and genealogists in the District who seek to improve the Archives. Ms. Bender said that she is not even able to get access to District records. She said that the Archives are the foundation for the health of the city to be able to store and access its historical records.

Commissioner Malitz said that his neighbor had a collection of maps and historic documents that his heirs wanted to give to the District, but there was no one to take care of them, so they gave them to George Mason University in Virginia.

A resident suggested that Apple might be interested in assisting with an on-line repository, but Ms. Bender said that Apple has no interest in helping.

Commissioner Speck said that the proposed testimony before the Government Operations Committee at the oversight hearing for the Secretary of the District of Columbia explains the importance of archived documents, which allow both historians and family genealogists to reconstruct the lives of ordinary residents. The Archives also holds records of public figures, objects, and private collections of public interest. Among other things, these collections chronicle the struggles for home rule and civil rights that have defined the District.

The current inadequate facility has allowed many documents to degrade. This facility is also too small and has required the District to pay for storage elsewhere. Moreover, there are no facilities for proper reading rooms that would allow public access. Comparable jurisdictions around the country have much better facilities.

Between FY 2015 and FY 2019, the District appropriated over \$80 million to construct a new District Archives facility, and there were plans for locating it at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), with construction slated to begin in 2019. To date, however, no contracts for design or construction of these facilities have been issued, and there is no public land transfer agreement between UDC and the District.

In particular, the distinctive history of neighborhoods like ours needs to be preserved. For instance, the Archives should include documents related to the Moten family, the residents who lived in what is now Lafayette Park, and on the many historic buildings in our community. The Archives should also collect the papers of ward councilmembers and provide a place to preserve ANC records.

The District needs a new facility and reasonable resources to make public records a public resource. The ANC's testimony before the Council's Government Operations Committee urges the Mayor and the Council to secure a site for the DC Archives and Office of Public Records at UDC, to design a facility, and to begin substantial construction by the end of FY 2021. Earlier appropriations for capital plans that are not dedicated to establishing a new facility at the UDC should be spent to complete the 25-year backlog of conservation work. The testimony also urges creation of an independent agency.

The Commission approved testimony to be given at the oversight hearing for the Secretary of the District of Columbia by a vote of 4 to 0.

Update on the Chevy Chase Community Center modernization design process (01:35:15)

Commissioner Fromboluti reported that he and Commissioner Speck met with DPR's Brent Sisco and David Bell, principle of Bell Architects, on February 24, 2020, to review the status of the design work on the Community Center. DPR and Bell reported that the currently appropriated \$19 million for the Community Center modernization will not be enough to meet the requirements that the Commission identified in its study of what the community needs, as reflected in the ANC's January 2018 report and recommendations, available on the Commission's website at <http://bit.ly/2Lydz7C>. Much of the increased cost is attributable to a much higher estimated cost per square foot than DPR had provided the Commission in 2018. Part of that increase is due to delays in getting the project going and the inflation in construction costs during that period. DPR and Bell are going to provide an estimate of the additional costs needed to do the work that the Commission recommended, and the Commission has asked for a meeting with DPR Director Hunter.

Discussion and possible vote on testimony to be given at the Council's Performance Oversight hearings for the Department of Aging and Community Living, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, and DC Water (01:42:00)

Commissioner Speck said that the proposed testimony for the Department of Aging and Community Living supports the work that Iona Senior Services has been doing with a DACL grant to develop technology to support seniors in Wards 2 and 3. Those wards do not have a senior wellness center, so Iona has created Around Town DC as a place where seniors can find information about activities for them in our community. The testimony describes the outreach that Iona did to plan and create this program and its successes in the last year.

The Commission approved the testimony before the Council’s Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization at the February 25, 2020 oversight hearing for DACL by a vote of 4 to 0.

The proposed testimony for the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs addresses DCRA’s inability to address situations in our ANC where a developer partially demolishes a house and then leaves the property derelict. The currently pressing problem is the house at 2900 Military Road, NW, but similar problems arose in the past at 5301-5303 Connecticut Avenue, NW. The testimony asks the Council to enact legislation if DCRA does not have the power to take more decisive action.

The Commission approved the testimony before the Council’s Committee of the Whole’s March 5, 2020 oversight hearing for DCRA by a vote of 4 to 0.

The proposed testimony for DC Water addresses two issues that the ANC has raised before — the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) and lead service pipe replacement. As in its previous testimony, the Commission urges the District to pay its fair share of the CRIAC fee by paying for its contribution to stormwater runoff from impervious streets, alleys, and sidewalks. The testimony also urges DC Water to provide more transparency in implementation of the lead service pipe replacement program and for the District to work with DC Water on a more comprehensive program to remove all lead from drinking water lines.

The Commission approved the testimony before the Council’s Committee on Transportation and the Environment’s February 27, 2020 oversight hearing for DC Water by a vote of 4 to 0.

Commission Business (01:51:30):

1. The Commission approved the February 10, 2020 minutes by a vote of 4 to 0.
2. The Commission approved a check to Verizon for \$152.63.
3. Items for March 9, 2020 meeting may include: presentation by and discussion with DDOT Director Marootian about improving safety in Chevy Chase Circle; update on the Community Center modernization design; discussion and possible vote on Broad Branch Market’s application to the Board of Zoning Adjustment for a variance to use its small basement space for a fitness center; presentation by a Director of a Cabinet-level department about the Mayor’s proposed FY 2021 budget

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:57 pm (01:53:00).

Signed:

Randy Speck
Chair

Abe Clayman
Secretary