

ANC 3/4G Fall 2021 Information Exchange Series

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Session 6: “Vibrant Public Spaces: How Can We Create a Great Central Meeting Spot in Chevy Chase, DC? Can the Redevelopment of the Library and Community Center into a Campus with Affordable Housing Provide Such an Opportunity?” with ANC 3/4G resident Ellen McCarthy, Principal, The Urban Partnership an faculty member, Georgetown University, Urban and Regional Planning Masters Program, and ANC 3/4G adjacent resident Matt Bell, Principal, Perkins Eastman

Commissioner Chang (3/4G-05) as host/moderator
Commissioner Gore (3/4G-01) present
Commissioner Speck (3/4G-03) present
Commissioner Zeldin (3/4G-04) present

Q&As and Chat

CHAT LOG

19:03:22 From Randy Speck (ANC 3G03) to Everyone:

WELCOME!! to the ANC 3/4G Fall 2021 Information Exchange Series!

Good evening. Thank you for joining us. You are joining Session 6: “Vibrant Public Spaces: How Can We Create a Great Central Meeting Spot in Chevy Chase, DC? Can the Redevelopment of the Library and Community Center into a Campus with Affordable Housing Provide Such an Opportunity?”

Speakers tonight are ANC 3/4G resident Ellen McCarthy, Principal, The Urban Partnership an faculty member, Georgetown University, Urban and Regional Planning Masters Program, and ANC 3/4G adjacent resident Matt Bell, Principal, Perkins Eastman (just added!)

You can find Ellen’s bio here:

<https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014TTgCAAW/ellen-mccarthy>

You can find Matt’s bio here: <https://www.perkinseastman.com/people/matthew-bell/>

Here are some guidelines for tonight. This is a Zoom webinar. Panelists as well as ANC 3/4G commissioners are on video.

Use the Q&A to ask questions.

Use the chat to make comments addressed

19:08:03 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:

For the Ward3Vision urban design approach:

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fward3vision.org%2Fshaping-the-future-of-chevy-chase-dc%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Dt93mr4y6sDwwNXTbpPtWGOo1nILQ8ZJsO3lbn9U70Xzm5GWIHYTF70&h=AT1EdesUJSMaphxcpSK7IRFKcka21Cg_8AfvHpqytCDgwJWSN1QFIQYefwk2jo4h_k2wUUNk1UHDRMqVzlolpab1RPtdAwqUBJSJ_C5bK8qiVqGr4zimibObahLEXw2Po76BpQJhFLJaR5CIDnWRa5F0ZE7WrM67IWR

19:12:20 From Stuart to Everyone:

Matt lives in a Harry Potter house, bigger on the inside than the outside!

19:12:32 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:

LOL

19:13:40 From chevy Chase community center ballet program to Everyone:

I would like to remind our stellar ANC 3/4G Commissioners, that the CC Community Center was supposed to begin a major renovation in March of 2020 but had been postponed indefinitely before covid due to being \$7,000,000 over budget, and not due to Covid 19. At first the ANC said that the CCCC renovations would begin as soon as the budget shortfall was met, but then Covid-19 hit and all the work put in by the Community's resident surveys, the fencing and ballet contractors working with the Architects, the input of the ANC Commissioners- all seems to have been for nought.

The original plans included a state of the art theater for community access to live performing arts , new amenities and spaces for seniors, upgrades for fencing and ballet studio and art studio for state of art community fitness and art programs.

19:32:40 From chevy Chase community center ballet program to Everyone:

What about the current existing architectural plans that were drafted for the community center renovation that was supposed to begin in March 2020 ? We have been here before. The community provided so much input. Do we just through those Ms plans away or build upon all the hard work already executed ?

19:41:22 From Thomas Laryea to Everyone:

Is the priority of the space to create a public space incorporating the library and community center or is the affordable housing an equal priority component? I am not hearing much of the affordable housing component in this discussion.

19:41:45 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:

Please ask your question in the Q&A

19:49:36 From Stuart to Everyone:

You read a question from Robert Gordon, but I can't see it in the Q&A. Do you know how to reveal all the Qs? Thanks

19:51:07 From chevy Chase community center ballet program to Everyone:

The CC community center has always been open until 10pm

19:51:10 From Randy Speck (ANC 3/4G03) to Everyone:

The Avalon Theatre would like the redeveloped library/community center to include film projection capable auditorium space, where the Avalon could present programs of community interest. A prime usage of this space would be to facilitate the Avalon's programming expansion for film education programs for adults and kids. The auditorium could be as small as 25 seats or any larger capacity.

19:51:13 From Stuart to Everyone:

Thanks, it popped up now

19:53:41 From Randy Speck (ANC 3/4G03) to Everyone:

Deanwood involved both DPR and the Library.

19:56:27 From Lisa Gore, ANC 3/4G-01 to Everyone:

The management agent is crucial to the success of affordable housing

19:59:35 From Randy Speck (ANC 3/4G03) to Everyone:

For examples of affordable housing with libraries or community centers in other cities, see the ANC's Task Force on Housing report from 2020 at <https://anc3g.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Housing-Group-Draft-Report-11-13-20-.pdf>, footnote 34.

20:00:08 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:
Ron, please share the Ward 3 Vision's 30 year Chevy Chase, DC presentation to address a Q&A.
Thx.

20:02:40 From Lisa Gore, ANC 3/4G-01 to Everyone:
Great reimagining of the use of space

20:03:24 From Randy Speck (ANC 3/4G03) to Everyone:
The plans for the community center in 2019 included a multi-use auditorium. DPR was enthusiastic about this feature of the community center.

20:06:21 From Linda Komes to Everyone:
Can we be assured that the setbacks that create the wide sidewalks will be retained in the SAP?

20:06:35 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:
Please ask your question in the Q&A

20:15:46 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
Re: Historic District:

1) There is absolutely nothing worth preserving on the East side; 2) The Avalon and Arcade are protected; 3) There are better ways to preserve and enhance the good qualities - scale, diversity of architecture, retail pattern, etc - of the west side without freezing the existing buildings in amber and limiting options for shop owners or landlords to expand or add residential 'above the store.' Design guidelines, form-based codes, etc. should be explored rather than the uncomfortable force fit of an historic district.

20:16:37 From Lisa Gore, ANC 3/4G-01 to Everyone:
I believe NY is exploring similar models

20:16:55 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
8:12 PM @Linda Komes: yes the sidewalk widths should not change. They are determined by the public right of way and the lot lines of the buildings

20:18:06 From Stuart to Everyone:
Thank you very much for an interesting and informative discussion.

20:19:22 From Stuart to Everyone:
Ellen, I hope you have a personal connection, because we can't even get a rise out of Cheh's office re illegal construction

MEETING ENDED – PANELISTS STAYED ON AND SEVERAL ATTENDEES AS WELL

20:26:13 From Linda Komes to Everyone:

Checkout the new Wheaton Public Library, Recreation Center and Public Park. It is the 1st time that 3 separate agencies in MoCo have co-located. DC could maybe learn something from MoCo

20:27:34 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:
Thanks Linda!

[Essie Bowman, DPR manager, was elevated to panelist to appear on video and introduce herself and say that DPR has been listening to these panel sessions and the community]

20:31:27 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
@Zeldin: Historic District = doubling down on exclusivity

20:31:57 From Stuart to Everyone:
OR does it prevent infill development for you?

20:32:52 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
She said she could work within the constraints of a HD, but she did not address the FACT that it would reduce the amount of residential

20:34:13 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
The push for HD is purely a play to reduce the amount of new development. It is cynical and should not be considered

20:37:16 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
This is simple: if you can build less in a HD, you will have less affordable housing. And smaller projects are less economically feasible

20:38:14 From Stuart to Everyone:
IN a previous session, I thought the Habitat for Humanity person said a Historic District would not be a hindrance to affordable housing and could be a help.

20:38:45 From Connie K. N. Chang, ANC 3/4G-05 to Everyone:
She meant historic preservation not district.

20:39:21 From Stuart to Everyone:
According to our notes, that wasn't what she said.

20:39:31 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:
Habitat for Humanity is happy building tiny projects that are very different than the kind of projects appropriate for the Avenue

20:40:51 From Stuart to Everyone:

Your personal incentives may be very different than that of the neighborhood at large. In particular, those who live within the SAP border lines.

20:40:59 From Ron Eichner to Everyone:

Yes, Matt, but the intent of the HD advocates in ChCh is to prevent larger buildings. That's clear

20:42:24 From Stuart to Everyone:

Why did the City draw such narrow boundaries around the SAP? That is an artificial constraint the City is forcing us to live with.

20:43:51 From Stuart to Everyone:

To Connie and others organizing these sessions, Thank YOU! Very helpful and educational

20:44:00 From Ellen McCarthy, Panelist to Host and Panelists:

Several residents pushed to limit the boundaries.

Q&A LOG

Robert Gordon 7:34 PM

Matt, clearly the structures you showed us are high quality design and construction. How do you make sure that similar design and construction quality is incorporated in CC?

This question has been answered live

Robert Gordon 7:36 PM

How do you retain the old and the new along Connecticut Avenue? Can we save the storefronts and provide the opportunity to higher density behind/above it?

This question has been answered live

Stuart 7:43 PM

In our experience, the City is VERY bad at working across silos and listening to constituents. What can you say that might reassure us that that won't be true here, too?

This question has been answered live

Thomas Laryea 7:43 PM

Is the priority to create public space involving the community center and library or is the affordable housing component an equal priority? I am not hearing much of the affordable housing priority in this discussion.

This question has been answered live

PETER RANGE 7:45 PM

Please tell us about your experiences combining public spaces with affordable housing

This question has been answered live

Stuart 7:47 PM

Reacting to Matt's answer to Robert Gordon's Q: what influence/leverage do community members have to ensure a good team is hired by the City?

This question has been answered live

467579 7:49 PM

what options are there for managing this completed space, ie options to them having the library or community center run things? Tad Baldwin

This question has been answered live

Patrick Williams 7:51 PM

Question for Matt: in a situation where the library and community center are programmed in one facility, what are the inherent advantages and disadvantages with the fusion of those two facility types?

This question has been answered live

Stuart 7:53 PM

Our concern, as expressed above, is that the proposal for this site is very complicated and involves multiple agencies. We agree they all need to be rowing in the same boat, but...

This question has been answered live

chevy Chase community center ballet program 7:58 PM

Looking at the plot of land on which the current Community Center and Library sit, it is not large enough to also include housing. What is the concept ? Where should the housing fit ? And also, will it be for families who are at 30% or below of AMI , or only 80% ?

This question has been answered live

Ron Eichner 8:00 PM

There is a great opportunity to coordinate civic space at the Library/Comm Centet with the wide sidewalks along the Avenue - branding, landscaping, activities etc. How might that be achieved?

This question has been answered live

Ron Eichner 8:01 PM

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fward3vision.org%2Fshaping-the-future-of-chevy-chase-dc%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Dt93mr4y6sDwwNXTbpPtWGOo1nILQ8ZJsO3lbn9U70Xzm5GWIHYTFT70&h=AT1EdesUJSMpxhpcSK7IRFKcka21Cg_8AfvHpqytCDgwJWSN1QFIQYEfwk2jo4h_k2wUUNk1UHDRMqVzlolpab1RPtdAwqUBJsJ_C5bK8qiVqGr4zimibObahIEXw2Po76BpQIJhFLJaR5CIDnWRa5F0ZE7WrM67IWR

This question has been answered live

Stuart 8:05 PM

We keep hearing about over crowded schools and we want to invite more families into the new affordable housing. The library/rec center site used to be a public school. Can we integrate a public school function into shared spaces? Perhaps not a full pre-K thru 5, but a feeder to Lafayette and Murch's 4th and 5th grades? Recreation and library and meeting rooms could be shared, for example -- different times of days you have different programmatic functions.

This question has been answered live

Linda Komes 8:07 PM

Can we ensure that the building setbacks that have created the wide sidewalks will be included in the SAP recommendations?

Ellen McCarthy, Panelist 8:15 PM

Yes, that is not a problem, because the sidewalks are on public space -- Private development is not permitted there, except temporary uses like sidewalk cafes, which must be approved by the Public Space Committee, and they must be able to be taken down within 48 hours.

Linda Komes 8:11 PM

The commercial uses on the west side, on some blocks, wrap the corner-Salon Famila, the stationary store on McKinley. Should we retain and encourage this?

Ellen McCarthy, Panelist 8:20 PM

Yes.

Ron Eichner 8:12 PM

@Linda Komes: yes the sidewalk widths should not change. They are determined by the public right of way and the lot lines of the buildings

This question has been answered live

Ron Eichner 8:14 PM

Re: Historic District:

1) There is absolutely nothing worth preserving on the East side; 2) The Avalon and Arcade are protected; 3) There are better ways to preserve and enhance the good qualities - scale, diversity of architecture, retail pattern, etc - of the west side without freezing the existing buildings in amber and limiting options for shop owners or landlords to expand or add residential 'above the store.' Design guidelines, form-based codes, etc. should be explored rather than the uncomfortable force fit of an historic district.

This question has been answered live

Stuart 8:14 PM

One of the panelists in a previous session said the folks in SW by the waterfront were victims or a bait and switch. They were promised affordable housing and did not get it. What can you tell us about ensuring that does not happen here -- if true affordable housing is to be part of the library/rec center site?

Ellen McCarthy, Panelist 8:20 PM

The city can require that in the RFP for a developer who is chosen to do the housing on the city -owned site. For private development, the city has a zoning requirement for affordable housing that is mandatory. Unfortunately, several zones in the SW were exempt from Inclusionary Zoning, because they had no extra density room. That is not an issue for Upper NW.

OPEN Qs

Stuart 8:28 PM

I was concerned that the Ward3Vision proposal for affordable housing was for "family housing" averaging 900 square feet. That is not family-sized space. The session w/ CCDC apt dwellers made it clear they want affordable 2, 3, and 4 bedroom apts, if they can't get a detached or semi-detached home w/ a yard and basement. We want families, not DINKs