



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

Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, Hawthorne
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COMMISSIONERS

3/4G-01 - Lisa R. Gore, Vice Chair 3/4G-02 - John Higgins, Treasurer
3/4G-03 - Randy Speck, Chair 3/4G-04 - Michael Zeldin 3/4G-05 - Connie K. N. Chang
3/4G-06 - Peter Gosselin, Secretary 3/4G-07 - Charles Cadwell

Minutes
ANC 3/4G Public Meeting
February 14, 2022
Zoom Meeting 7:00 – 11 pm
[Meeting Link](#)

00:00:00 **Introduction of Commissioners**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with Commissioner Randy Speck, Chair (3/4G-03), presiding. Also present were Commissioners Lisa R. Gore (3/4G-01), John K. Higgins (3/4G-02), Michael Zeldin (3/4G-04), Connie K.N. Chang (3/4G-05), Peter Gosselin (3/4G-06), and Charles Cadwell (3/4G-07) Speck declared a quorum (being four Commissioners present).

00:03:13 **Zoom Meeting Procedures**

As has been true since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, the Commission met virtually. Chair Speck described the ANC's Zoom meeting procedures.

00:04:40 **Adoption of Agenda**

Chair Speck proposed modifying the agenda to include discussion of a letter concerning the American City Diner property at 5532 Connecticut Avenue NW. The motion with modification was adopted 7 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain).

00:05:25 **Commissioner Announcements**

Chair Speck

ANC Redistricting — The Ward 4 Redistricting Task Force met on February 6 to hear testimony from the community about the “big picture” for setting the ANC boundaries for Ward 4. Jerry Malitz, the former ANC 3/4G-05 commissioner and chair of the Ward 3 Redistricting Task Force and Chair Speck testified on the same panel, and our testimonies were quite similar — keep the ANC 3/4G neighborhoods together. He said that the Ward 3 Task Force has voted to do just that. There were no questions from the Ward 4 Task Force members for Malitz or Speck. Abe Clayman wrote Speck later that he has heard no one on the Ward 4 Task Force suggest anything other than leaving our Commission intact, which he supports.

Malitz mentioned two possible changes to SMD boundaries in his testimony. First, the Ward 3 Task Force will probably propose that the 269 people from Ward 3 that are now in ANC 3/4G03 be moved to a Ward 3 SMD so that no SMDs would cross ward boundaries. Second, he said that they are also considering adding an SMD to our ANC — making it eight commissioners — to accommodate additional population growth. He said that these changes could be made with minimal impact on the boundaries of existing SMDs. The Commission expects to hear presentations from both the Ward 3 and Ward 4 task forces at its meetings on either February 28th or March 14th. All task force meetings are open to the public, and more information is available on the websites for the [Ward 3](#) and [Ward 4](#) task forces.

Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (OANC) Strategic Plan — Councilmember Robert White held a roundtable hearing on February 8, 2022, to gather ideas for a strategic plan for the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions. White said that ANCs are at an inflection point with an expected increase of 40 to 50 in the number of commissioners because of population growth and because commissions’ increasing use of technology necessitated by the pandemic. He said that the OANC will soon have a new executive director, and he wants it to develop a strategic plan for meeting commissioners’ increasing needs. A number of commissioners testified about how the OANC can assist them so that they can serve their constituents better. The video of the hearing is available on the Council’s [website](#).

Ward 3 Covid Center — There is now a Ward 3 COVID Center open in Chevy Chase Pavilion, 5335 Wisconsin Avenue NW. The hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, Friday and Sunday, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm, Thursday 11:00 am to 9:00 pm,

and closed Tuesday. At all of the COVID Centers, individuals have access to vaccinations, boosters, take-home rapid antigen tests, PCR tests, and KN95 masks. More information is available [here](#).

FY 2023 Budget — The Mayor is expected to deliver her proposed budget to the Council on March 16, 2022 — about a month earlier than the usual budget schedule. The Council will begin public hearings on the budget on March 21st and conclude on April 7. The Council has posted a [schedule for the public hearings](#), but it still contains a number of “TBD” entries. The Commission plans to testify at several budget hearings and will consider that testimony at its March 14th and March 28th meetings.

Commissioner Gosselin

Military Road-Chevy Chase Parkway – Commissioner Gosselin reported that there was another accident at the dangerous intersection on Saturday, February 12, 2022. He said that, while safety measures the ANC helped get in place at the intersection have helped reduce the danger, the latest crash shows that more must be done. He said that at a future meeting he would ask the ANC to consider a proposal by Commissioner Chang for “Don’t Block the Box” signage at the intersection. He said that signage and pavement markings could help in lieu of stop signs on Military Road, which city transportation planners have said won’t be installed because the road is a major east-west thoroughfare.

Commissioner Zeldin

Traffic Safety at Lafayette School -- Commissioner Zeldin said he has been working with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to increase safety around Lafayette Elementary School. Options include additional signage, multiple speed humps around the perimeters, risers at existing stop signs to ensure full stops rather than rolling stops and other traffic calming measures as DDOT deems appropriate. Input on this issue would be helpful to help guide the process. Comments can be sent to the ANC email address: 3G@anc.dc.gov.

Commissioner Higgins

Maret-ECC Update – Commissioner Higgins said the Commission will conduct a special meeting on February 16, 2022 to hear from three municipal agencies – DDOT, the Urban Forestry Division and the Department of Energy and the Environment – that are involved in the review of the proposal by the Maret School to develop sports fields on part of the campus

of the Episcopal Center for Children at 5901 Utah Ave, NW. It will conduct a second special meeting February 24, 2022 to consider a draft resolution about project. The District's Board of Zoning Adjustment (ZBA) will hold a hearing on Maret's application for a special zoning exception for the project March 9, 2022.

00:23:14

Community Announcements

Emir Gur-Ravantab, Ward Liaison, Ward 3 | Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS)

Changes in Bowser Administration COVID Policies – On February 14, 2022, Mayor Bowser said the limited public health emergency caused by the winter surge in the Omicron variant was ending. She said the vaccine mandate known as VaxDC would be lifted February 15, 2022, meaning businesses will no longer be required to verify if their patrons are vaccinated. The mask mandate will be lifted at the end of February. Ravantag said that businesses will still be free to require masks and vaccine status for patrons, and masks will still be required in schools, libraries and childcare facilities, congregate facilities like shelters, nursing homes and dorms, public transit and rideshare vehicles, healthcare and medical facilities, as well as DC Government offices with public interaction such as DMV and DHS.

COVID Boosters – Ravantab said DC Health stresses the importance of getting boosted. Boosters can increase your immunity above even what two doses of vaccine provide, especially with variants like Omicron. If it has been 6 months since you were fully vaccinated, the District health agency recommends receiving a booster dose.

COVID Help for Businesses -- The city's Bridge Fund is open for applicants until next week, February 25th. The fund is designed to help businesses that have experienced financial hardship since the public health emergency began.

Budget Season -- Mayor Bowser and her cabinet are now crafting the administration's proposed budget for FY 2023. As part of the process, they are seeking public comment. Since COVID, the administration has held tele-townhalls, where residents can view and listen in webinar format, on DCN channel 16, or by dialing in on a phone. Residents will be able to offer input, suggestions or questions concerning the budget. The teletownhall for the general public starts Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 6 p.m.

00:32:22

Public Space Permit, Alley Behind 6451 & 6455 Barnaby St. NW

The Commission was asked to approve a public space permit to extend a paved alley behind 6451 and 6455 Barnaby St. NW to provide vehicle access to the rear of the property at 6455 Barnaby. (TOPS Tracking Number 384882) The alley runs from a through alley between Barnby and 32nd streets between the rear yards of the houses on the two streets. Elizabeth Stuart, an architect representing the owners at 6455 Barnaby St., said that 430 feet of the alley is paved and then is unpaved. She said there is a stormwater channel for the first 47 feet of the unpaved portion. Stuart said the unpaved portion is being used by vehicles as an alley. She said her clients are seeking to extend 15-foot-wide pavement 76 feet to the rear of 6455 Barnaby Street. She said they have received initial approvals for the project from city agencies, including DDOT and DOEE.

Vice Chair Gore said that she and Commissioner Zeldin have been working on this issue. Gore said that the current stormwater channel was installed to alleviate flooding of adjacent yards. It directs runoff directly into the Pinehurst Tributary. But she said that in the course of renovating 6455 Barnaby Street, the owners covered the stormwater channel with heavy gravel to extend the alley for construction trucks. She said that when she walked the alley with DDOT officials, they could not find any evidence of the channel. She said homeowners at 6455 Barnaby told her their aim in seeking to extend the alley is to provide access to a parking pad at the rear of their property.

Commissioner Zeldin said that the stormwater channel had eliminated flooding problems until it was buried by the 6455 Barnaby Street owners, apparently without proper permitting. He said that extension of the paved portion of the alley and construction of a parking pad would worsen flooding. He said he did not see why the extension and pad were necessary when the owners have adequate street parking. "Personally...I just can't see why this should be acceptable," he said.

Michael Henry, who lives adjacent to 6455 Barnaby at 6346 32nd Street NW, said the Barnaby Street property was being renovated by a developer who repeatedly misled neighbors. Henry said that 34 neighbors, including all five of those who are immediately adjacent, oppose changing the alley. He said until the 6455 Barnaby owners brought in gavel fill the unpaved extension of the alley was not useable by vehicles but basically forested. Other neighbors who testified were: Susan Caras at 6342 32nd St. NW; Dania Palanker and Michael Bogomolny at 6501 Barnaby St. NW, Jesse Irwin at 3220 Worthington St. NW and Jennifer Bertsch at 6451 Barnaby St. NW, Dean Girdis at 6431 Barnaby St. NW, Gerald Burg at 6350 32nd St. NW and Rachel Levinson-Waldman at 6338 32nd St. NW.

The Commission refused to support the public space permit for the extension of alley. The vote was 7 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain).

01:52:10

Maret School Application for Nebraska Avenue Curb Cut

Maret School has submitted an application for a public space permit (Tracking No. 383995) for a 24-foot-wide curb cut on Nebraska Avenue in conjunction with its proposal to develop sports fields at the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) site. The curb cut would allow vehicles to enter and leave a proposed parking lot at the site. Chair Speck emphasized that the only issue before the ANC during the meeting was the curb cut and that broader issues of traffic, intensity of use, stormwater runoff and so forth are being handled separately.

Paul Tummonds, Maret's zoning lawyer, said the school's application would be heard by the city's Public Space Committee on February 24, 2022. Tummonds listed a series of steps that he said Maret and ECC have taken to reduce problems, including agreeing to close an existing ECC curb cut so the number of cuts on Nebraska Avenue would be unchanged by approval of the new one and moving the proposed parking lot further back on the site in response to concerns. Maret assistant head of school Trey Holloway said that because of the closing of the existing curb cut, a pick-up-and-drop-off area on Nebraska adjacent to the parking lot will be moved away from the nw curb cut so vehicles in it are less likely to limit drivers' field of vision as they enter and exit the lot.

Claudia Russell, a member of the Friends of the Field, a community group opposed to the overall project and whose house abuts the site said what she called a "commercial" curb cut raised concerns about pedestrian and bicycle safety. She said the group opposes the application. Citing a letter from the group that said there are now 15 curb cuts on the south side of Nebraska, Speck said that 6 of those were shared by two households and therefore are 24 feet wide and similar in size to the cut Maret is proposing.

On a motion by Speck, the ANC approved the application for the curb cut contingent on the BZA's approval of the overall project without changes that moot the need for the cut. The vote was 7 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain).

02:28:50

Oregon Avenue Reconstruction Update

DDOT officials said the reconstruction project, which began in the fall of 2019, is scheduled to be finished by the end of March. The last major piece of work is completing the bridge over Pinehurst Run. Construction crews have run into a series of problems with the bridge and have had to change design several times. But officials said all that remains to be done is

getting PEPCo, the regional electrical utility, to temporarily cut power in the area to allow the pre-fabricated superstructure of the bridge to be brought on site and lowered into place.

02:45:29 **Bingham Drive Reconstruction Update**

After a lengthy delay, DC Water is reconstructing Bingham Drive, which runs from Oregon Avenue NW to Beach Drive NW in Rock Creek Park. The work is expected to take about four months and is not expected to affect traffic on Oregon or Nebraska avenues. The pedestrian/bicycle path that runs beside the road will remain open during construction. The road itself will remain closed to vehicles after construction.

02:52:54 **New DDOT Traffic Safety Investigation Reporting System**

Christian Pineiro, Ward 3 communications specialist for the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), made a presentation with slides of the agency's new system for receiving residents' traffic safety complaints, assessing them and coming up with solutions. Pineiro said the primary aim of the system is to reduce the time between the filing of a complaint, DDOT's response and implementation of safety measures. He said the system is designed to ensure that DDOT's traffic engineers decide what the agency does about complaints.

Commissioner Zeldin raised questions about the new system with an example of how it has handled his repeated requests for stop signs to slow traffic on Western Avenue NW. He said he received a response that thanked him for his request for a stop sign at the intersection of "Webster and Tennyson" missing the fact he asked for a sign on Western. The response continued "A stop sign does not slow traffic according to a study by the street department of Spokane, Washington and therefore your request is denied."

Zeldin said the new system provides no mechanism for residents and ANC commissioners to engage with the department so that if agency engineers decide one suggested solution doesn't work there can be a conversation about how else a problem might be dealt with.

Vice Chair Gore followed up arguing that the agency has a long record of avoiding engagement. As a result, she said, "DDOT has been so divisive in communities. Out of every agency I've seen in this city government..."

03:41:43 **Chevy Chase Small Area Plan Update**

Commissioner Chang said that the city's Office of Planning will conduct an open house from 3 to 7 p.m. on February 23, 2022 at the Chevy Chase Public Library. The session is in direct response to the ANC's request for better visual representations of how upper Connecticut Avenue might grow in the future

03:43:52 **Approval of ANC Testimony**

The Commission unanimously approved testimony at Council oversight hearings on DDOT and DC Water and agreed to take up draft testimony about OP at its February 16, 2022 special meeting.

03:48:06 **American City Diner Letter**

Commissioner Gosselin said the former diner at 5532 Connecticut Ave NW has been empty and an eyesore for four years. He said that the property has come off a list that made it exempt from tax penalties for being a blighted property. He asked the ANC to approve a letter to the city's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) asking the agency to inspect the property for blight and, if found, to notify the Office of Tax and Revenue to impose tax penalties. In addition, it asks the department to examine whether the owners' and leasing agents' use of the billboard over the property violates city billboard regulations. The Commission unanimously approved sending the letter.

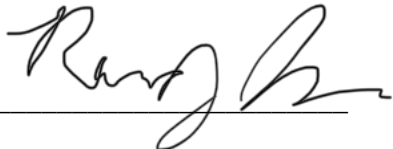
03:53:31 **Commission Business**

Minutes – On a motion by Commissioner Gosselin, the ANC unanimously approved minutes for its January 24, 2022 regular meeting and February 1, 2022 special meeting

Quarterly Financial Report – On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, the Commission unanimously approved its quarterly financial report to the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (OANC)

03:58:50 **Adjourn**

APPROVED at a regular public meeting notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of four (4) of seven (7) members was present on February 28, 2022, by a vote of **7** yes, **0** no, **0** abstentions. .



Randy Speck, Chair



Peter Gosselin, Secretary