

## **A WAY FORWARD ON CHEVY CHASE SMALL AREA PLAN**

- 1) Embrace the Office of Planning's suggestion on the last page of the draft plan to create a new zoning area (or zone) encompassing both sides of the Connecticut Avenue NW commercial corridor from the Chevy Chase Circle to Livingston St NW.
- 2) Ask and expect that as part of the ANC's conditional approval of the SAP that the language designating the new zone be drafted by a committee that includes OP officials, members of the ANC and of the Chevy Chase community. This drafting would occur before any proposal to the Zoning Commission and the start of the normal public review process that accompanies a zoning change.
- 3) Ask and expect that the designation language for the zone would incorporate as directives not only the building-form and use-related guidelines in the draft plan, but also a series of development standards that the ANC will begin to lay out in its resolution and that will be more fully fleshed out by the joint OP-community committee drafting the language for the zone designation
- 4) Ask and expect that the final SAP include language on the Commission's top five (or whatever number is arrived at) issues to ensure that the SAP provides authority for the joint drafting committee to address these matters as part of establishing the new zone
- 5) Append as part of the resolution a version of "Suggested ANC Questions & Requests to OP for Clarification, Elaboration or Source" to ensure that the ANC's conditional approval of the SAP is not construed as approval for a variety of problematic material in the draft.
- 6) Suggested candidates for top-five issues:
  - **Affordable Housing:** In seeking a small area plan, the ANC asked for innovative ways to use non-profit developers, community land trusts and the like. The SAP should include language that serves as authority for the joint drafting committee to include requirements in the new zone that encourage their use.
  - **Height:** Community residents have expressed concern about over-development and overly tall buildings. The draft plan includes no limits on height. The SAP should include language that serves as authority for the joint drafting committee to include height limits in the new zone.
  - **Neighborhood-serving Retail:** In seeking a small area plan, the ANC asked for ways to support and retain local businesses, including during construction. Many residents have expressed concern about commercial vacancies and blight. The SAP should include language that serves as authority for the joint drafting committee to require robust business assistance programs in the new zone.
  - **Infrastructure:** In seeking a small area plan, the ANC and community expressed asked for solutions to school overcrowding, traffic congestion

and parking. The SAP's treatment of these issues should be bolstered and language included that provides authority for the joint drafting committee to include requirements about them as part of the new zone.

- **Design:** The design guidelines in the SAP need to be made more prescriptive and detailed, especially about setbacks, alley design and buffers with adjacent lower-density residential areas. These changes will provide authority for the joint drafting committee to include provisions on these matters in the new zone.
- 7) A proposal for striking a balance between streamlining the process for new development and setting limits:
    - For a proposed building of up to 45 feet in height that complies with the letter of a set of community-and-OP authored requirements similar to, but stronger than the draft plan building guidelines, the proposal can advance without further zoning or ANC approval. Forty five feet is five feet above what current zoning allows
    - For a proposed building that meets all the same requirements but also directs X percent of square footage to affordable housing as defined by the ANC, the height limit would rise to 60 feet and again could be built without further zoning or ANC approval. Sixty feet is five feet below what standard height for the zoning designation that OP has said is likely to be approved for the upper Connecticut Avenue corridor, absent a new zone.
    - For anything above 60 feet, the proposal would have to undergo a full public scrub – zoning, ANC, community.
  - 8) As part of the resolution, the ANC establish a standing zoning, development and design subcommittee to oversee the operation of the new zone and review designs.
  - 9) Include a statement that nothing in the resolution or the SAP precludes establishment of an appropriately supported historic district either along the West side of Connecticut Avenue or more broadly.

**Peter Gosselin**  
**Commissioner – District 6**  
**ANC 3/4G**