



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

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**ANC 3/4G Resolution on the
Office of Planning's Draft
Chevy Chase Small Area Plan
May 9, 2022**

1. ANC 3/4G submits this Resolution to the District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP) as our comments on OP's draft [Chevy Chase Small Area Plan](#) (CCSAP) released on March 14, 2022. The Commission expresses its deep appreciation to OP for developing this plan in response to the Commission's original request in its February 12, 2020 [Resolution](#) that was based on ANC Task Force initiative that began in late 2019.
2. Those members of the community who have been engaged in the process are sharply divided on many of the prescriptive aspects of the CCSAP. Some urge the Commission to reject the CCSAP entirely or to adopt it without reservation, others propose greater detail and specificity, and some believe the Plan does not go far enough in addressing the identified concerns. No compromise would be able to rectify these competing positions.
3. This resolution reflects the extended and in-depth engagement of all the members of the ANC, the wide and detailed input from residents of Chevy Chase, as well as experts who have contributed to our nine recent Information Exchange Sessions

carried out from Fall 2021 to Spring 2022. We have worked with the Office of Planning and have been both supportive and critical at various times.

4. The Commission looks forward to positive change in Chevy Chase DC and, in asking two years ago for the development of a Small Area Plan, emphasized the need to increase diversity, promote and accommodate growth, while balancing the livability of Chevy Chase DC that is characterized by its scale, function, and character. The amenities that have drawn people to Chevy Chase for decades need to be open to greater economic and racial diversity. A Small Area Plan *alone* does not accomplish these goals. As expressed in the reports and our resolutions related to our 2019-20 Comprehensive Plan and Racism Task Forces, we are committed to take concrete steps to shape our more inclusive future.
5. We appreciate that the CCSAP is one part of a longer journey — an important one, but still only part of a longer-term project toward making the Connecticut Avenue corridor (Gateway, Civic Core, Western Frontage, and Eastern Frontage) more equitable, environmentally sustainable, and vibrant for us and the next generation of residents. While we remain committed to the broad, descriptive goals and visions in the OP draft, we have concluded that to reach the aims of the CCSAP will require an extended level of community engagement on the issues covered within the Plan, enhanced steps by the city to communicate with citizens as the details of change are specified and adopted, and OP’s coordination with other city agencies with a role in shaping our community’s future. We are committed to helping guide change, maintain community engagement, and work closely with District agencies who are tasked to implement these ideas. To that end, we will establish a Standing Committee on Zoning, Design, and Development to advise us on a new zoning overlay or zone to govern land use and urban design guidelines, as suggested in the CCSAP.
6. Perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the CCSAP is its failure to articulate at a granular level how it intends to implement and enforce its various recommendations and to further ensure that its recommendations be made mandatory for all developments in the covered area. This resolution endeavors to begin to articulate affordable housing mandates and requirements, including specifying the number and size of affordable units.
7. With respect to the draft CCSAP, the Commission asks and expects OP to make the following changes to help assure this planning effort’s success.
 - It is essential that the CCSAP require creation of a new zone and form-based codes that will apply to all future development (as mentioned on page 59 of the

CCSAP). Those standards must include, among other things, specifications for height, setbacks, buffers with nearby residents, alley accessibility, and design features. This is the only way to ensure that new structures will meet the community's expectations for balanced development.

- The CCSAP requires language specifying that during the period before a new zone or form-based code is developed, the design guidelines in the CCSAP serve as a benchmark or floor for any decisions that may come before the Zoning Commission.
- It is equally essential that the ANC and the community (particularly those residents who live closest to the commercial strip) be integrally involved in the creation of the new zone and form-based codes. We will, of course, solicit the views of zoning and design experts and the District's experience with other special zones, but residents have a large stake in how the CCSAP is implemented, and as their representative we ask and expect to have a seat at the table on any steering committee or other mechanism as the detailed standards are developed and before they are presented to the Zoning Commission. The Commission's proposal to create a Standing Committee anticipates the public engagement elements of the CCSAP with authority to participate in zone drafting activities similar to other projects within the District, such as St. Elizabeths (CCSAP, pp. 7 and 59; Brookings report, [Redeveloping the St. Elizabeth's Hospital Campus: Opportunity and Complexity on a Hill](#), Brookings Institution, September 2003).
- The CCSAP requires specificity for affordable and workforce (hereinafter affordable) housing goals. The Commission continues to support its [March 22, 2021 resolution](#) to include mixed-income housing in the Civic Core with a goal of at least 50% dedicated affordable housing and for the remaining Plan area a "goal of at least 25% affordable housing, with a focus on households earning 50% or less of MFI, considering other requirements as well." The Commission also strongly supports Recommendation 4.3 and a commitment to develop "options for providing deeper affordability for rental and *homeownership*, such as vouchers and *community land trusts*" (emphasis added), as well as exploration of opportunities for not-for-profit developers to provide more affordable housing (CCSAP pp. 32-33).
- The CCSAP must address more specifically how infrastructure — schools, transportation, parking, water, sewer, etc. — will be planned concurrently with any new development on the Connecticut Avenue corridor. As the Commission emphasized in its 2020 Resolution, whatever growth may occur in the Chevy

Chase planning area cannot happen without accompanying infrastructure, and there must be a plan to make that happen.

- The CCSAP should not include topics that are outside the scope of this planning effort. In particular, Recommendations 4.4 and 4.7 of the draft CCSAP should be stricken. Though they may be considered in another forum at another time, they do not belong in the CCSAP, and the Commission does not support their inclusion.
 - The Commission specifically notes Recommendation 2.6, which “support[s] community efforts for historic landmark and historic designation of eligible resources within the Connecticut Avenue commercial corridor,” which encompasses the possible designation of the west side of Connecticut Avenue as a historic district. The Commission emphasizes that nothing in the CCSAP should preclude consideration of a historic district for the west side of Connecticut Avenue.
8. Contingent on the acceptance of the points in paragraph 7 of this resolution and the establishment of a committee structure on which the ANC and the community have seats at the table in order to implement and to bring greater granularity and enforceability to the CCSAP, the Commission supports the CCSAP.

ADOPTED at ANC 3/4G’s properly noticed public meeting on May 9, 2022, by a vote of 5 yes (Commissioners Cadwell, Chang, Gore, Higgins and Speck), 2 no (Commissioners Gosselin and Zeldin), 0 abstentions (a quorum being 4).



Randy Speck, Chair



Peter Gosselin, Secretary