



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

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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
April 25, 2022
Zoom Meeting 7:00 – 9:29 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 (3G-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).

[00:03:23](#) **Zoom Meeting Procedures**

Chair Speck briefly described the meeting procedures. The Commission recently began asking residents to register in advance to attend the meeting in order to try to prevent a repetition of a Zoom-bombing incident.

[00:04:36](#)

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously adopted

[00:05:15](#)

Commissioner Announcements

Chair Speck

Temple Sinai Construction — Temple Sinai has received permits to build an approximately 9,000 square foot addition within the footprint of its developed property, adjacent to the playground/south entrance. This project was delayed by COVID, but construction will begin shortly. The development will make Temple Sinai’s building more functional and, at the same time, improve stormwater management and beautify the south end of the property. The Temple will hold an information session for those in the community who would like to learn about the project, see the plans, hear about logistics both during and after construction and to ask questions. They anticipate holding this neighborhood meeting sometime in mid- to late-May, and the ANC will distribute information about the meeting. The project itself is expected to take around 15 months from June 2022 – August/September 2023.

Carnegie Neighborhood Lecture — The Carnegie Institution for Science on Broad Branch Road will begin its spring neighborhood lecture series on Thursday, April 28, 2022, from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm with a discussion by Dr. Peter Gao on his work with the new James Webb Space Telescope to explore unusual exoplanets — “Hot Jupiters, Super Puffs, and Lava Planets.” You can register for this lecture [here](#). Carnegie plans to hold the next lecture in this series on June 16, 2022, and it will be in person.

Commissioner Chang

Community Center-Library Playground – After more than a year of pressing city agencies, the playground surface has been patched.

Speed Humps – Speed humps will not be installed on Broad Branch Road between Military Road and Morrison Street NW after two residents objected and the District’s Department of Transportation (DDOT) concluded there was not a pattern of speeding along that stretch of road. Instead, DDOT will install other traffic calming measures such as pavement markings and parking boxes on either side to visually narrow the road.

Commissioner Gosselin

Vetting Tenants -- After an April 21, 2022 incident in which a woman fell from an eighth-story window after an apparent domestic dispute at an apartment in the 4500 block of Connecticut Avenue and the April 22, 2022 incident in which a gunman on an upper floor of an apartment building fired more than 200 bullets at the adjacent Burke School at 4101 Connecticut Avenue NW, Gosselin said he will renew efforts to organize a meeting between apartment building managers and the DC Housing Authority to discuss vetting requirements under the Housing Choice Voucher program. While he said he does not know whether there is a connection between the two incidents and the voucher program, he said that there have been several instances that suggest vetting is not adequate and that buildings owners and managers need to be reminded of their obligations under the program.

Commissioner Cadwell

Commissioner Zeldin

[00:16:26](#)

Chevy Chase Small Area Plan (CCSAP) Discussion

The Commission asked for a small area planning process for Chevy Chase in early 2020. After more than a year of public sessions, the District's Office of Planning (OP) released a draft plan for upper Connecticut Avenue on March 14, 2020. The Commission must submit its comments by May 13, 2022.

Chair Speck set the stage for the evening's discussion, saying it was for commissioners to "go through some of the aspects of the (draft small area plan) and discuss among ourselves what we want to include in a resolution." He said the Commission would take no votes during the current meeting and would aim to vote on a resolution at its next meeting, May 9, 2022. Speck said that Commissioner Gosselin would lead the discussion, starting with a proposed overall strategy and then bearing down on five key areas, affordable housing, building height, neighborhood-serving retail, infrastructure and design guidelines.

Gosselin said that in recent weeks he talked with commissioners individually to sort out areas of agreement and disagreement and consulted with zoning experts and land-use lawyers to understand what happens once the draft plan leaves the community and goes downtown for final approval. Based on these conversations, he prepared a strategy for how

the ANC should approach the task of commenting on the CCSAP. He pointed meeting attendees to a document on the ANC's website outlining the approach and available [here](#).

Gosselin said the nub of the strategy is that the Commission take OP up on a proposal that it makes for the first time in the draft plan to create a special zoning area for the upper Connecticut Avenue commercial core and ask that Commission members and residents be equally represented with OP staff on the committee that draws up the rules for the area before the proposal is presented to the Zoning Commission.

Gosselin said that in order to begin drafting a resolution for the ANC, commissioners needed to give guidance about whether they want to work toward what he termed a "Yes, if" resolution, where the Commission would say that it supports the CCSAP if OP makes certain changes or takes certain action, or a "No, but" resolution, where the Commission would say that it does not support the CCSAP, but would reconsider if OP agreed to various changes. Gosselin said he favored a "Yes if" approach.

Speck said he too favored a "Yes, if" resolution. "We can have the most influence if we say "yes we think this is appropriate for our neighborhood, but we think that these conditions are essential,'" he said.

Commissioner Higgins said he was "a little bit leery of putting (the resolution) in the caveat category," asking what would happen if OP accepted some, but not all of the ANC's conditions. Commissioner Cadwell responded that he thought the Commission needs to make firm, clear-cut requests. Commissioner Chang said that the ANC should ask for "more precise language" and needs to be "at the table" during the next steps, but should not antagonize OP. "It does us no good to be adversarial," she said. Commissioner Gore agreed about not being adversarial, but said the Commission should "advocate for our community."

Commissioner Zeldin took a different tack, saying "I think we're more empowered as an ANC to say 'No, but we want to continue to work with you so that we can collectively – OP and us – get to a better place.'"

Moving on to discussion of the five key areas, Gosselin said that if commissioners want to see various provisions in the rules for the special zoning area, it's crucial that the CCSAP include language about these matters. He said that city officials and lawyers with whom he's met in recent weeks told him that when the small area plan becomes part of the District's Comprehensive Plan, it will become the authorizing document for the drafters of the new zone, giving them the right and obligation to take up issues discussed in the plan, but not those that are unmentioned. As one official put it, "if it ain't in the plan, fight over."

Affordable Housing: Gosselin said that in the 2020 ANC resolution asking for a planning process, commissioners expressed skepticism about the city's principal tools for encouraging affordable housing, so-called Inclusionary Zoning and Inclusionary Zoning Plus. He suggested that the ANC ask that the draft CCSAP be amended to ask for procedural mechanisms that favor non-profit developers and community land trusts in affordable housing development.

Chang said that the draft plan already contains mention of nonprofits and land trusts. She said the Commission should seek specific word changes in the OP draft plan. Speck said the Commission should go back to what it has said in the past about wanting deeply affordable housing and family units, not just one- and two-bedroom apartments. "We want much more affordable housing than has been considered in the past," he said.

Higgins said that before affordable housing is addressed, the Commission must make sure that the community's infrastructure is sufficient to handle new residents. Cadwell and Gore both said that while infrastructure is important, it should not keep Chevy Chase from moving forward with new affordable housing. Zeldin said that he wants any new units to be for families and that they be for sale so that families can build wealth.

Gosselin returned to the question of whether commissioners wanted to include a request for some kind of favoring of non-profit over for-profit developers. Gore indicated skepticism about favoring non-profits, saying she favors whatever produces the most affordable housing.

Retail: Gosselin said that the draft plan includes some provisions that favor small retail businesses, but overall does not see much of a problem with store-front business along Connecticut Avenue. He said that this view differs from that of the Commission and many residents, who believe the commercial corridor has serious problems. He asked whether the Commission should ask for more help for businesses, such as giving existing businesses a right of first refusal to return to spaces they vacate during construction of new structures.

Zeldin indicated that he favors a historic district for the west side of Connecticut Avenue as a means of controlling the dimensions of the development and to help existing small businesses there. Speck said there is no either-or choice between the CCSAP and a historic district.

Infrastructure: Picking up on remarks by Speck and Higgins, Gosselin said that the draft plan's treatment of the community's infrastructure issues needed bolstering. In some instances, there was a need for repair, as, for example, with parking, where the draft says that it was a perennially voiced concern of residents and that surface parking should be reduced.

Chang, who, with Cadwell, sits on the Community Advisory Committee for DDOT's Connecticut Avenue redesign study, said surveys show surface parking is important, especially to many older residents. She said that she has suggested some sort of the parking space availability monitoring system and the idea of using apartment building parking facilities during the day for retail employees. She said she expects the city to study parking all along Connecticut Avenue. Gore said that "the idea is not to grow our parking." She said that the Commission should "push for better public transportation."

Design Guidelines: Commissioners discussed and generally agreed that the design guidelines in the draft plan were good as far as they went, but need to be substantially more detailed and prescriptive. Higgins raised the idea of a "form-based code" for the new zoning area or zone, saying that it could be the mechanism for imposing detailed requirements on developers.

Project Approval and Building Heights: Gosselin asked commissioners to consider including a proposal that would provide for a streamlined project review process in return for certain fixed height limits. For proposed structures up to 45 feet tall that comply with a predetermined set of design requirements – a form-based code -- there would be no local review. For structures that meet all of the same requirements, but devote 30 percent of space or more to affordable housing, a developer could build up to 60 feet with no local review. Beyond 60 feet, the proposal would have to be brought back to the ANC and the community.

Higgins said he generally supported the approach. Zeldin said that he is "agnostic" until he sees more information about how form-based codes have worked elsewhere. Other commissioners were silent. Gosselin said he would draft more detailed language and bring it back to the Commission.

Additionally, Gosselin proposed establishing a standing zoning, development and design committee of the ANC to handle these issues as they come before the ANC. He also said that whatever resolution the Commission approves should stipulate that nothing in it be interpreted as discouraging or interfering with the establishment of an appropriately supported historic district, either on the west side of Connecticut or more broadly.

Speck asked Chang, Cadwell and Gosselin to draft a resolution that could be publicly posted on May 2, 2022 and taken up at the Commission's next meeting May, 9, 2022. He also asked commissioners to sit in on an OP public hearing April 26, 2022 from 2:00 pm to 7:00 p.m that is scheduled to take place at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church located at 1 Chevy Chase Circle.

Chair Speck reported the Committee met April 19, 2022 to discuss the small area plan. He said members had strong feelings about what the plan should include and that two members were delegated to prepare a document the panel might submit to the full ANC.

[02:24:35](#)

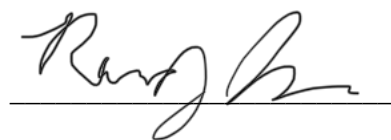
Commission Business

- Minutes for March 28, 2022 meeting, unanimously approved;
- A check to Verizon, due May 2, 2022 for \$162.56, unanimously approved; and
- A motion to approve the ANC3G Quarterly Financial Report for the second fiscal quarter of 2022 with a final balance of \$26,052.95, and a restatement of approval for fully budgeted payments during the second quarter of fiscal 2022 as follows: three payments to Randy Speck for \$222.58 each for Zoom services; two payments to Verizon for \$155.76 each and one for \$162.88; \$25.00 for the ANC Security Fund; \$2,000 to the Chevy Chase Citizens Association grant; \$1,989 to the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club grant, and \$61.48 to Michael Zeldin for ANC signage, unanimously approved.

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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 May 23, 2022, by a vote of **6** (Yes), **0** (No), **0** (Abstentions).



Randy Speck, Chair



Peter Gosselin, Secretary