



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

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**ANC 3/4G Testimony Before the  
Committee of the Whole on PR 24-789, the  
“Chevy Chase Small Area Plan Approval Resolution of 2022”  
July 5, 2022**

Chairman Mendelson and Councilmembers, I am Randy Speck, Chair of ANC 3/4G (Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, and Hawthorne), and I am testifying on behalf of our Commission, which authorized this testimony at its properly noticed June 27, 2022 meeting by a vote of 7 to 0 (a quorum being 4). After nearly two and a half years of intensive efforts by the Commission, the Office of Planning (OP), and the Chevy Chase community, we ask the Council to pass a resolution that will provide the framework and tools that guarantee community participation through the ANC earlier in the formal [Chevy Chase Small Area Plan](#) (CCSAP) implementation process than OP currently proposes. Such early engagement is essential because the CCSAP will shape our neighborhood’s future for decades to come.

Our Commission’s resolution and testimony in 2020 initiated the process that has culminated in the CCSAP now before the Council.<sup>1</sup> After the Council provided funding for the planning process, the Commission was actively involved in OP’s year-and-a-half long development of the CCSAP, including discussing it at almost every Commission meeting in 2021 and 2022,<sup>2</sup> adopting six CCSAP-related resolutions,<sup>3</sup> and conducting nine “information exchanges” on a various topics related to the Plan.<sup>4</sup> The Commission has demonstrated its commitment to this effort and to the CCSAP’s success.

In principle, the Commission supports the CCSAP’s broad, descriptive goals and vision. Much work remains, however, if we are to reach the goals we set out to increase diversity, promote and accommodate growth, while balancing the livability of Chevy Chase DC that is characterized by its scale, function, and character. No one knows this community better than its residents and elected ANC representatives. The record of

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<sup>1</sup> See ANC 3/4G Resolution Requesting Changes to the Office of Planning’s Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, February 10, 2020, available [here](#); ANC 3/4G Testimony Before the Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs, Committee on Education, Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, and Committee of the Whole Budget Hearing on the Department of Parks and Recreation, DC Public Library, Office of Planning, and Housing Production Trust Fund, May 27, May 29, June 4, and June 8, 2020 (ANC 3/4G 2020 Testimony), available [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> In addition to discussions at regularly scheduled meetings, the Commission held a special meeting on [April 21, 2021](#), to hear from OP’s director and to permit the community to ask questions.

<sup>3</sup> See resolutions adopted [February 22, 2021](#), [April 12, 2021](#), [April 26, 2021](#), [April 26, 2021](#), [November 8, 2021](#), and [May 9, 2021](#).

<sup>4</sup> The topics covered in the nine information exchanges and links to all of the videos are available [here](#).

engagement we have described, as well as our commitment to on-going attention to this core neighborhood issue demonstrates that this community and its elected representatives are best positioned to provide essential context and assistance as the details of implementing the CCSAP are fleshed out. Proceeding to prepare those details without ANC and community participation at the very outset of the development and implementation process unnecessarily increases the risk of a less than completely successful outcome and increases the risk of community opposition.

We appreciate that OP made important modifications to the draft CCSAP to address some of the Commission’s recommendations for changes. Notably, OP added specific recommendations to create a new zone along Connecticut Avenue incorporating the CCSAP Urban Design Guidelines, including those that address building form.<sup>5</sup> At the Commission’s urging, OP “corrected” its recommendation to “support community efforts for historic landmark and historic district designation of eligible resources within the Connecticut Avenue commercial corridor.”<sup>6</sup> OP also deleted recommendation 4.7 as “not part of the CCSAP,” as the Commission requested.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [CCSAP](#), page 27, Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2, Letter from OP Director Anita Cozart to ANC 3/4G ([Cozart June 3rd Letter](#)), page 2, paragraph 7.1.

<sup>6</sup> [CCSAP](#), page 27, Recommendation 2.7; [letter](#) from OP Director Anita Cozart to District of Columbia Councilmembers, June 1, 2022, page 3; [Cozart June 3rd Letter](#), page 5, paragraph 7.7.

<sup>7</sup> [Cozart June 3rd Letter](#), page 5, paragraph 7.6.

While the Commission remains concerned about how infrastructure — e.g., schools, transportation, parking, water, and sewer — will be planned to support any new development, we will look to the responsible agencies’ obligations under the District’s Comprehensive Plan to guide coordination of infrastructure and redevelopment during CCSAP implementation.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, while the CCSAP, the Comprehensive Plan, and District law set floors for the amount and type of affordable housing that will be included in any future development,<sup>9</sup> the Commission will continue to advocate for more ambitious goals, both in the quantity of affordable housing and its emphasis on housing for very-low- and extremely-low-income households, and will support solutions for realizing these goals while addressing community concerns.

Finally, the Commission’s experience demonstrates the need for and value of robust community input at the earliest stage of plan implementation. For this reason, our May 9th Resolution<sup>10</sup> in support of the CCSAP was predicated on OP’s assurances that the ANC and the community be integrally involved in the creation of the new zone that will guide any new development. The Commission recognizes that its role is defined by statute, and District agencies must give its issues and concerns “great weight.”<sup>11</sup> ANC and community input will be even more valuable, however, if it is considered during the

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<sup>8</sup> [Cozart June 3rd Letter](#), page 4, paragraph 7.5.

<sup>9</sup> See [Cozart June 3rd Letter](#), page 4, paragraph 7.5.

<sup>10</sup> ANC 3/4G Resolution on the Office of Planning’s Draft Chevy Chase Small Area Plan, May 9, 2022 ([May 9th Resolution](#)).

<sup>11</sup> [DC Code Section 1-309.10\(3\)\(A\)](#).

development stage — i.e., an earlier timeframe than providing comments after OP proposes a new zone for the entire length of upper Connecticut Avenue NW above Legation Street.

We are especially encouraged by OP’s designation of the ANC as a prime participant in the managing of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Civic Core (library, community center) project. We suggest that the Council resolution regard the ANC as a prime and early contributor to all of the related projects of the Chevy Chase Small Area Plan.

The CCSAP currently provides that “the creation of a new zone modeled from a planning effort like the CCSAP is typically drafted and prepared by OP and would be achieved through a public process and hearing before the Zoning Commission.”<sup>12</sup> We ask that the Council make clear that “a planning effort like the CCSAP” means that OP will consult with and consider the views of the ANC and the community as an integral part of its drafting and preparing the specification for a new zone — not simply after OP submits the new zone to the Zoning Commission. Among other things, we ask that the Council make clear that the ANC can be involved in drafting the new zone for upper Connecticut Avenue by adding the following paragraph to the Council’s resolution immediately before Section 3(7): “ANC 3/4G and the Chevy Chase community have provided significant assistance in developing the Small Area Plan, and their direct participation (i.e., a seat at the table) with the Office of Planning from the outset of whatever process is used in

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<sup>12</sup> [CCSAP](#), page 61.

developing and preparing any implementation measures for the Small Area Plan will be essential to the success of this undertaking. In particular, ANC 3/4G will be considered an “implementor” in Recommendation 2.1 on page 29 of the Small Area Plan to “Create a new zone along Connecticut Avenue, between Livingston and Western Avenues that incorporates the CCSAP Urban Design Guidelines, specifically those that address Building Form.”

Similarly, ANC 3/4G has been a driving force in proposing that the “Civic Core” be redeveloped to include a new Community Center, Library, and housing.<sup>13</sup> In order to ensure that the ANC continues to be integrally involved as this project moves forward, especially before a Request for Proposal is made public, it should be explicitly identified as an “implementor” in Recommendation 3.1 on page 31 of the CCSAP. We request that the Council’s resolution include the following paragraph before Section 3(7): “Because of its initiative in proposing and supporting redevelopment of the Civic Core, ANC 3/4G will be considered an “implementor” in Recommendation 3.1 on page 31 of the Small Area Plan to “Redevelop the community center and library into a multi-purpose civic core with state-of-the-art public facilities and mixed-income housing.”

We are grateful to the Council for its support throughout this planning process.

Thank you.

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<sup>13</sup> [ANC 3/4G 2020 Testimony](#).