



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

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COMMISSIONERS

3/4G-01 - Lisa R. Gore, Chair 3/4G-02 - John Higgins, Treasurer
3/4G-03 - Randy Speck, Vice 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
July 11, 2022
Zoom Meeting 7:00 – 9:50 pm
[Meeting Link](#)

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

Commissioner Randy Speck (3/4G-03), the Commission’s chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. 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). Commissioner Zeldin joined about five minutes into the meeting. Speck declared a quorum (being four commissioners present).

00:03:02 **Adoption of Agenda Zoom Meeting Procedures**

The agenda was adopted on a vote of 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. Chair Speck described for attendees the Commission’s virtual meeting procedures.

00:04:23 **Election of New Chair and Vice Chair**

Chair Speck reminded attendees that he announced at the June 27, 2022 meeting that he will not seek re-election for next January and would step down as chair at the current, July 11, 2022 meeting. Speck said that in conversations commissioners had agreed to elevating Commissioner Gore from vice chair to chair and making Speck vice chair so that he can work with Gore on the transition. Speck said that this arrangement would last until January 2023 when a new Commission will be seated and elect its officers for the 2023-2024 term.

On a motion by Speck, seconded by Gore and Commissioner Gosselin, the Commission voted 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions to elevate Gore to the chair and make Speck the vice chair. Speck then turned the meeting over to Gore, who praised Speck for his record of almost 10 years as a commissioner, most of that time as chair.

00:06:50 **Commissioner Announcements**

Chair Gore

DC Homeowner Fund – The DC Homeowner Assistance Fund offers energy assistance to DC homeowners and financial assistance to District residents trying to make housing-related payments. Eligible homeowners impacted by COVID-19 can apply for grant funding to cover mortgage payments and other housing expenses, including utility payment assistance, up to \$4,000. Applications available beginning June 22, 2022.

Washington Gas Arrearage Management Program (AMP) -- The program grants forgiveness of past due balances and provides guidance, resources and assistance to customers who are unable to pay their energy bills on time during the COVID-19 pandemic. Washington Gas created this program to assist customers by forgiving past due debt when new bills are paid. AMP assists customers by helping to:

- Lower or eliminate existing COVID-19 related past due balances
- Bring accounts current
- Help manage the budget when costs are rising
- Avoid disconnection
- Reduce financial stress

Enrollment is required.

Vice Chair Speck

ANC Elections — Petitions to be a candidate for Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner on the November 8, 2022 ballot will be available at the DC Board of Elections beginning on July 20, 2022. Any person who has resided in an ANC Single Member District (SMD) for six months is eligible to run. The boundaries for the SMDs have changed somewhat because of redistricting. Maps of the new districts are available on the Office of Planning’s [website](#). Candidates must collect a minimum of 25 signatures on their nominating petitions from duly registered voters who reside in their SMDs and return the signed petitions to the Board of Elections by August 10, 2022.

For those who are thinking about running for the ANC, Greater Greater Washington will host a Zoom [training session](#) on Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 6:00 pm. You may register for the ANC training [here](#). Also please contact me (202-669-3246, 3G03@anc.dc.gov) if you have any questions about running or serving as a commissioner.

Bingham Drive — Work is now beginning on restoration of Bingham Drive. Work on erosion and silt control began last week and should be completed this week. Once that work has been inspected, the contractor and subcontractor will be authorized to proceed with the restoration work, which is expected to take approximately 120 days. DC Water expects to approve a schedule soon and will be providing it to the Commission.

Commissioner Cadwell

Not Running for Re-election – Commissioner Cadwell made the following statement: “In January I volunteered to fill a vacant ANC seat for the Chevy Chase single member district formerly represented by Chris Fromboluti. The experience has been immensely interesting and rewarding. I have been able to work with an extraordinary group of neighbors – six other Commissioners, as well as a wide array of interested, active residents of Chevy Chase DC. The reasons I volunteered – mainly engaging in the discussion of the Small Area Plan – have advanced and will engage all of us for a long time as the Plan is implemented. Other issues, such as public safety, traffic on Connecticut Avenue, and many others will also continue to occupy the current and future Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

The work that the current ANC members devote to these issues is considerable. The expertise and attention my colleagues devote is a too-little recognized community asset. As I look ahead, my other obligations are not consistent with the level of attention my neighbors and ANC colleagues deserve, so I have reluctantly decided not to run for a new term. But I am very eager that others give this role serious consideration.”

Commissioner Gosselin

Recent Fires and Vandalism – There have been a series of arson fires and vandalism in the neighborhood since June 24. These include up to nine dumpster fires, a garage fire in an alley off Morrison Street and the shrubbery on the east side of the Chevy Chase Library. Police arrested a suspect, but the US Attorney’s Office declined to bring charges.

Commissioner Gosselin said he spoke with Douglas Klein, the prosecutor with the US Attorney's office who handles our neighborhood. Klein confirmed what was already known, that the arrest of a suspect in the arson fires was "no papered," that is, the office decided not to prosecute. Klein said that he's not permitted to say why. He provided his email and phone number and agreed to their being published but added that he could not provide more information. Klein's email is: douglas.klein@usdoj.gov. His office phone is: 202-660-2150.

When Gosselin asked Klein whether he had advice for residents, among the things he said was that "we're very happy when we have video." While Gosselin said he recognizes there are serious privacy issues with Ring and other types of video surveillance systems, he said that Connecticut Avenue businesses and nearby residents may want to consider installing cameras. Newer systems have several advantages over old ones. They notify owners when something is happening and allow them to view what's happening in real time. Some include speaker systems. And they can be set to immediately notify police. He said that the city has a rebate program to encourage purchase of such systems. Information can be found at: <https://ovsjg.dc.gov/page/private-security-camera-rebate-program> .

Join New ANC Zoning, Design and Development Committee – At its June 13, 2022 meeting, the Commission voted to establish a new standing committee of ANC commissioners and residents to examine development issues that might affect the community and advise the full Commission on how it could best handle them (see: https://anc3g.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ANC-34G-6_13_22-ZDD-standing-committee-resolution-SIGNED.pdf). The committee is to have five to seven members. The Commission will take applications from residents for members between July 11 and its Sept. 12, 2022 meeting. Gosselin encouraged residents to apply.

Commissioner Higgins

Beach Drive — The National Park Service released today its Environmental Assessment for the future of upper Beach Drive, and it is available [here](#). NPS identifies three alternatives: (1) return to the pre-pandemic use of Beach Drive by vehicles during the week and closed on weekends; (2) continuation of the use of Beach Drive as it has been since the beginning of the pandemic, which is essentially closed to vehicles; or (3) seasonal closing of Beach Drive

to vehicles in the summer, but use of Beach Drive as it was pre-pandemic for the remainder of the year.

According to the EA, “Following extensive public input, coordination with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), and internal NPS deliberation and analysis, the National Park Service has identified alternative 3: seasonal closure for recreation as the preferred alternative. This decision is a compromise for those who use the roads for recreational and other purposes and those who travel through the park for commuting and scenic pleasure driving.”

Comments on this environmental assessment may be submitted electronically at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/beachdrive> or you may mail comments by August 11, 2022, to: Attn: Upper Beach Drive Management Plan Office of the Superintendent, Rock Creek Park, 3545 Williamsburg Lane, NW Washington, DC, 20008.

00:20:14 **Community Announcements**

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

Helping MOCRS Help the Community – Residents should contact Gur-Ravantab about maintenance issues at government facilities such as parks, recreation centers, and school grounds, which are managed by District’s Department of Government Services (DGS), As an example, Commissioner Zeldin reported the green algae at the splash pads at the Lafayette-Pointer Recreation Center. Gur-Ravantab’s contact information is: emir.gur-ravantab@dc.gov 202-340-7853 .

Help Affording Internet Connection -- A good federal assistance program is the Affordable Connectivity Program, which reduces a person’s monthly internet bill by \$30 if they are below 200% of the federal poverty line or receive government assistance, including Social Security’s Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

00:25:38 **Discussion about Pedestrian Access to Chevy Chase Circle**

Commissioner Gosselin introduced the subject saying that the Chevy Chase Circle and Foundation are the visual center of the community and the link between the two Chevy Chases, one in the District and one in Maryland. He said the Circle has been undergoing a

facelift over the past several years and these efforts are ramping up with the National Park Service (NPS) rebuilding the fountain basin and plumbing and installing light and Friends of Chevy Chase Circle (FoCCC) installing new plantings. When all of this work is finished in the spring of 2023, he said residents and others will want to reach the Circle and this poses a problem because currently there are not safe crosswalks.

Gosselin said that, while key stakeholders in the process – the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Maryland State Highway Administration (MHA), NPS and FoCCC broadly agree on the need for safer crosswalks and how to achieve them, action to put them in place has been slow.

DDOT Director Everett Lott and Derek Voight, a senior member of the department’s safety team, discussed the findings of a 2018 agency study that laid out short-, medium- and long-term work needed at the Circle. Voight said that in conjunction with Maryland highway officials DDOT installed a new traffic pattern and pavement markings in 2018. He said the medium-term issues, especially the crosswalks must now be addressed. He said that longer term, stakeholders need to deal with curb and drainage issues as well as signals.

As now configured, the Circle has three travel lanes on its east and west sides to handle traffic coming in from Maryland or exiting the District to Maryland on Connecticut Avenue. It has two travel lanes on its north and south sides to handle the substantial, but more limited volume of traffic coming from or exiting to Western Avenue. In addition, there are two so-called “splitter islands,” triangular islands in the middle of Connecticut Avenue as it arrives at the Circle heading north or south. Voight said the 2018 study concluded that the safest place to position crosswalks is from the splitter islands because pedestrians would be crossing only two lanes, instead of three and because traffic volumes are lower and sight lines that let drivers see walkers and vice versa are longer.

Commissioner Higgins said he thought the proposal was unduly complicated. He said that someone standing at Saints Church near Grafton Street would have to cross Western Avenue and Connecticut Ave just to get to the splitter island and then cross the Circle traffic lanes to get to the Circle itself. Commissioner Zeldin said that what is needed are signals to stop traffic and that no other solution will be effective. Commissioner Chang asked whether consideration has been given to installing pedestrian bridges across the roadway. Chang also asked whether Dupont Circle’s design with islands and traffic lights are a possibility in this case.

Both Voight for DDOT and MHA’s Joseph Moges said that while traffic signals may be the preferred long-term solution, installing signals is a cumbersome and time-consuming process that could not be completed by the spring of next year when it is likely there will be an increase in pedestrian traffic to the Circle. Ruth Robbins, FoCCC’s president, said “We need

an interim solution. Signalization is not off the table...Perhaps it's the ideal...But we're not there yet." She said that she believes that installing crosswalks from the splitter islands is the safety measure that can be implemented most speedily.

The Commission agreed to put off action until its next meeting July 25, 2022 on a resolution urging the key agencies to act quickly to settle on and implement a safety solution.

01:02:14 **Discussion of Apartment Building Safety**

Chair Gore and Commissioner Gosselin both cited recent troubling and tragic incidents in apartment buildings further down Connecticut Avenue from Chevy Chase. They said that the Commission is looking for advice about how to address problems in this neighborhood before they become more serious. They welcomed Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Chris Geldart and Second District MPD Lt. Marlon Ollivierre.

Ollivierre said that apartment buildings in Police Service Area 201, which includes Chevy Chase, have been experiencing public safety problems ranging from smoking marijuana in the hallways and disruptive behavior to domestic disputes and other, more serious issues for several years. He said there needs to be meetings with building owners and managers to clarify their rights and obligations are and what issues and services the city should handle.

Geldart said that public safety issues are cropping up in apartment buildings throughout the city, "some a little bit more extreme and some about the same" as those commissioners described for Chevy Chase. He said that he has formed a task force that includes MPD, the DC housing authority and social service agencies. He said that some problems can be traced to "how we're doing by (housing) vouchers," but that the issues go beyond vouchers. He said "there needs to be a presence" enforcing rules in buildings, whether management or special police officer or on-site security. He said he would be glad to join commissioners in conversations with owners and managers.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Higgins about whether buildings have the resources to provide security, Geldart said that in the case of many voucher tenants, the amounts that vouchers pay is set above market rate to ensure buildings can afford security. He said that in many cases building residents pressure owner-managers into providing security.

Gore asked who is on the task force Geldart mentioned, what's its mission, does it intend to issue recommendations and, if so, when. Geldart portrayed the group as only recently formed with representatives of the major executive departments in city government and an aim to ensure that the city's voucher and other housing programs are executed in a coordinated way

so that city services are provided in tandem with housing. He talked about sharing information between agencies and expressed frustration about the inability of police and others to get even basic statistical information. Geldart shared, “The Fair Housing Act (which prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, sex, religion and other categories) came down on me very fast and very hard when I was trying to figure out, OK, how many housing vouchers do you have in this area of the city?”

02:19:37 **Vote on Grant Application to Restore Call Boxes**

The Commission heard a presentation at its July 11, 2022 meeting about an application by Historic Chevy Chase DC (HCCDC), the Chevy Chase Citizens Association (CCCA), Ch/Art, and Chevy Chase Main Street for a \$2,000 ANC grant to partially pay for refurbishing long-abandoned police and fire call boxes in the neighborhood, including using some for small art installations. Under its rules, the Commission must delay by one meeting a vote on a grant application.

The Commission voted 6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions to approve the grant. Commissioner Cadwell, who sits on the HCCDC board, recused himself.

02:22:24 **Commission Business**

- **Minutes** – On a motion by Commissioner Gosselin, the Commission unanimously approved minutes for its July 11, 2022 meeting.
- **Finances** – Commissioner Higgins made a series of motions as follows:
 - On a motion to approve a check for \$222.58 to Randy Speck for Zoom reimbursement, it voted 7-0 to approve;
 - On a motion to approve payment to Verizon for \$163.68 due August 2, 2022, it voted 7-0 to approve;
 - On a motion to approve a check for \$2,000 for Historic Chevy Chase of D.C. for its project to renovate historic police and fire call boxes, it voted 7-0 to approve;
 - On a motion to approve the ANC 3/4G quarterly report for Third Quarter Fiscal 2022, which showed 1) a beginning balance of \$26,052.95; 2) DC allotments (income) of \$14,158.80; 3) disbursements of \$1,187.74, and 4) a final balance of \$39,024.81, it voted 7-0 to approve.
- **Possible Items for the ANC’s July 11, 2022 Meeting** – Possible vote on resolution urging parties to act quickly to improve pedestrian safety at the Chevy

Chase Circle; discussion with District Bridges regarding needed improvements to Chevy Chase Main Street; discussion and possible vote on National Park Service Beach Drive Environmental Assessment,

02:49:58

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 July 25, 2022, by a vote of **7** yes, **0** no, **0** abstentions.

Handwritten signature of Lisa R. Gore in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

Lisa R. Gore, Chair

Handwritten signature of Peter Gosselin in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

Peter Gosselin, Secretary