

**ANC 3/4G Racial and Social Equity Standing Committee (RASE)  
Recommendations to ANC 3/4G  
on the Draft Chevy Chase Small Area Plan**

The ANC is working from a draft Small Area Plan (SAP) that suffers infirmities that can be addressed – but there must be time to do so. This is a once-in-several-generations moment that will define the future of Chevy Chase and it is crucial that we get this right. This is not an issue of “process” for process’ sake but rather to ensure that the goals of affordable housing are actually met – which the RASE Committee believes are not occurring with the Plan as currently drafted.

The RASE committee recommends that in order to move forward with a SAP that meets the needs and aspirations of our community, the SAP process must be extended in order to tighten the document through re-drafting and key consultations so that it presents a detailed, clear and enforceable path to the affordable housing goals it asserts it seeks to achieve. We are available for further discussion and clarification as needed, however we are highlighting below key areas that we believe must be addressed:

- The SAP process should be paused until the District’s Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act, which has majority Council support, is enacted. The SAP should then be informed by and integrate the agency resources that will be created by this initiative into its planning process, including the new Office of Social Housing Developments in the planning stages. Moving forward without this involvement will make Chevy Chase a second track development process that is out-of-step with the new forward-thinking affordable housing and racial equity policy initiatives of the District which Chevy Chase should instead embrace.
  
- The SAP does not have binding requirements and mandatory details for implementation of its various recommendations, although it could

easily do so. While other Small Area Plans regularly use binding and mandatory language, such as “shall” hundreds of times in an SAP (such as the Alexandria SAP), this SAP lacks these requirements.

It also lacks granular detail necessary to render it meaningful including when it comes to the core issue of affordable housing. This SAP visibly stands apart from other SAPs for its lack of specificity or required outcomes (such as the Walter Reed SAP). The ANC, the community, and this committee should have further opportunity to study other SAPs in order to evaluate how to implement meaningful and detailed recommendations in a binding manner and have them woven into the SAP draft.

- To ensure the neighborhood’s vision is met, the SAP should be redrafted to include specific affordable housing mandates and requirements including for family housing and related civic space and community green space. The SAP should be informed by other DC agencies to have specific funding mechanisms available for affordable housing. These are essential – and doable. As above, the SAP as written is generalized and lacking in specific detail and binding requirements.

Further, the lack of specificity provides no clear way for anyone to know whether what is designed and implemented reflects our intention and desire when it comes to affordable housing and racial equity.

- The OP should, as part of the redrafting process, offer a revised plan that includes, incorporates and responds to the hundreds of comments (646) that it received in response to the Draft Design Plan (found here: <https://publicinput.com/Report/yvuu15kqj4y> ). Those comments, many of them detailed and thoughtful, were apparently fully disregarded by the OP in the drafting of its SAP despite the

community being told that those comments were a key opportunity to inform the process. From November 2021 to January 2022, the OP was to have engaged in a Design Survey and Charrette (See “Public Participation” here: <https://publicinput.com/chevychase#4>) . In addition to disregarding the public comments, the OP did not conduct an actual charrette.

This level of community engagement, discussion and input is crucial to developing an SAP that meets the needs and aspirations of the community. This failure to include the community input matters and cannot be disregarded in entirety. The ANC should require that the process be reopened to include this input and that there be an actual charrette process held for the community and others who care about the future of affordable housing in Chevy Chase.

- Moving forward, members of the community must be involved in the design of the activities that engage the community.
- The ANC must firmly reject the injected upzoning on residential streets as without having been directly discussed with the community or previously authorized. There has been no effective community notice and input on this matter and it is out of the initiating authority of the SAP.

This residential upzoning will not provide meaningful affordable housing but will create more dense luxury apartments and will skew and increase burdens on school overcrowding, transportation, and parking and thus have a negative impact on other initiatives which must be prioritized to actually provide increased affordable housing, including family housing. This change in zoning on residential side streets was not part of the initiating Comp Plan and it has never been clearly proposed or announced to the whole of the community and

serves no public policy goals but will interfere with affordable housing goals.

- The SAP should have specific requirements for vetting RFP's and developers, prioritizing non-profit developers and those with a demonstrated track record of successful affordable housing development. The community should be involved in approving all developers and RFPs. Again, this is an opportunity for this initiative to work in sync with the Green New Deal and new Office of Social Housing Developments, rather than creating another track for development that may be at odds or out of step with this new forward-thinking public policy initiative of the District.
- The RASE Committee proposes that the ANC present specific dates for requiring that OP reopen the process, address the issues outlined here, and for the ANC and the community to review a new draft plan. Some Committee members also believe that the final dates for submission of a new SAP to the Council should occur after the upcoming elections to ensure that District residents are properly represented in this process by their chosen elected officials.

Respectfully submitted,

The ANC 3/4G Standing Committee on Racial and Social Equity