



## ANC 3/4G Racial and Social Equity Standing Committee

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**To:** Commissioners, ANC 3/4G

**From:** Members, Racial and Social Equity Standing Committee - Point of Contact, Maria Sims

**Date:** August 31, 2022

**Re:** Recommendation to the ANC on Proposed Chevy Chase DC Call Box Project from the RASE Standing Committee of the ANC

This is a notice to the ANC 3/4G01 from the Chevy Chase DC Racial and Social Equity Standing Committee (RASE) regarding how artist will design and rehabilitate call boxes located in Chevy Chase. On July 13, 2022, there was a notice sent out on the Chevy Chase listserv for artists to transform DC historic call boxes. The notice asked for artists to provide creative approaches to add beauty to the neighborhood. Mary Rowse on the Chevy Chase listserv suggested to use the first callbox restoration to celebrate Fulton Gordon.

We know that Fulton Gordon was a developer who insisted on introducing racially exclusive covenants into the deeds of property he sold to Chevy Chase DC's burgeoning community. This was a matter of choice. He did not have to write this language into the deeds. Before the US Supreme Court invalidated enforcement of these restrictive racial covenants in 1948, anyone purchasing property with a covenant could be sued for non-compliance. We also know that by 1940 (the first generation of Chevy Chase DC's modern housing development), Newlands and Gordon (and other developers in other parts of the city) were successful in driving out people of color from the neighborhood. The proposed unveiling of the call box would be at Chevy Chase Day on September 17, 2022.

Since the ANC contributed funds of \$2,000 to support the refresh of the Chevy Chase call boxes, the ANC RASE standing committee takes notice of this proposal and expresses its concern that Gordon should not in any way be honored, his contribution to developing the Chevy Chase commercial strip on Connecticut Ave between Livingston Street and Chevy Chase Circle notwithstanding. If Gordon is celebrated, RASE recommend the call-box should refer to the equally constitutive act of contributing to creating a white enclave and active role in displacing people of color.

Also, it is our recommendation that the ANC review all designs before the artist begins work. It is our hope that the Chevy Chase community will move forward from promoting or celebrating its racist past.