



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

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By Electronic Delivery

May 24, 2023

Anita Cozart
Director
DC Office of Planning
1100 4th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Director Cozart:

Thank you for having your staff meet with members of the ANC 3/4G community at our May 10, 2023 Special Meeting. It was very helpful and, as you may have heard, there is a range of opinion and understanding among residents about the text amendment process and the proposed amendments themselves. The more information we have from the Office of Planning (OP) and the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (DMPED), the better we can work with you to achieve our ANC's and the Mayor's shared goals of housing equity in Rock Creek West.

I am happy to hear that you're office will be back to our community in June to follow up with additional studies and information about the draft NC-18 and NC-19 zones. To prepare for the next meeting and improve our understanding of the issues in the proposed zones, I have the following requests:

1. Please respond in writing to the questions we submitted prior to the May 10th Special Meeting. The in-person discussion was helpful, but it would be good to have succinct written responses as the community begins its own survey/discussion of the issues.
2. In particular, and high on our list of priorities, we would like the question of the Comp Plan Land Use Category in NC-19 to be clarified. We do not understand how the MU-5A development standards can be simply deemed “moderate density residential” when the Zoning Handbook clearly designates the category as “medium density residential.” As you may have noted during the May 10th Special Meeting, the height and lot coverage in MU-5A/ NC-19 is an issue that is garnering almost universal opposition in this community, so it is critical for us to fully understand OP’s thinking on this matter and its implications. The issue could be resolved by applying MU-4 development standards to all of the upper Connecticut Avenue corridor including the proposed NC-19 zone.
3. For those questions where staff’s answer at the May 10th Special Meeting was ‘we can study that,’ please be prepared to discuss those studies at the June session. That will help the community with its own survey and discussion.
4. I was pleased to hear that OP will be providing illustrative material for the discussion. Many ANC3/4G residents are new to planning and design issues, and fear that new development would be ‘like Bethesda,’ so these design compatibility issues are important. Some of the studies that we think would be helpful:
 - An illustrative analysis/comparison of applying NC-19 vs NC-18 to the Civic Core, including massing diagrams and sections showing reasonable assumptions for civic uses on ground floors;
 - An illustrative analysis/comparison of applying NC-19 Lot Occupancy vs our proposal for 60% vs. existing in the Civic Core;
 - An illustrative massing diagrams showing maximum building envelope incorporating all relevant provisions for setbacks etc., on the East side of Connecticut Ave NC-18;
 - An illustrative massing diagram showing maximum building envelope incorporating all relevant provisions for setbacks etc., at a retained facade on the West side of Connecticut Ave NC-18;
 - An illustrative massing diagram showing maximum building envelope incorporating all relevant provisions for setbacks etc., at a landmark structure on the West side of Connecticut Ave NC-18; and
 - Wherever possible, photographic examples of real-life comparables.
5. As the discussion continues beyond the June meeting, I ask that OP and DMPED use your agency’s ArcGIS tools to give the ANC and residents a comprehensive feel for what a rezoned, built-out upper Connecticut Avenue would look like under various scenarios. This method of illustrating changes in the built environment has been used to great effect in other issues that have come before the Commission.

The ANC has repeatedly said that the community should play an integral role in the development of the new draft zone and form-based codes for the Civic Core¹. We reiterate our belief that residents have a large stake in this process and as their elected officials, we expect to have a collaborative role in working with OP as the draft text amendments are developed and before they are presented to the Zoning Commission.

Additionally, on May 8, 2023, the Commission passed a resolution² calling for improved public engagement relating to the Chevy Chase Civic Core. The recommendations contained in the resolution reflect the ANC's frustration with navigating the District's approach to implementing the Mayor's goals of redeveloping the Chevy Chase Community Center and Library site and delivering affordable housing in Rock Creek West.

The Commission has played an integral role in partnering with both the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) and the Office of Planning (OP). Throughout our partnership, the Commission has encouraged both agencies to recognize the value and need for robust community input at the earliest stages of implementation. In fact, it was our Commission's resolution and testimony in 2020 that sought to initiate the process that ultimately culminated in the Chevy Chase Small Area Plan (CCSAP)³.

The Commission remained actively involved in OP's nearly year-and-a-half long process during which the Commission submitted numerous budget and oversight testimony ⁴ adopted six resolutions⁵ related to the CCSAP, many of them calling for increased public engagement. The Commission also developed and implemented nine "Information Exchange" sessions⁶ to

¹ ANC 3/4G [Resolution](#) on the Office of Planning's Draft Chevy Chase Small Area Plan May 9, 2022.

² ANC 3/4G [Resolution](#) on Calling for Improved Public Engagement Concerning the Civic Core Project, May 8, 2022.

³ ANC 3/4G [Resolution](#) Requesting Changes to the Office of Planning's Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, February 10, 2020. 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](#).

⁴ ANC 3/4G [Testimony](#) Before the Committee of the Whole Performance Oversight Hearing for the Office of Planning, February 24, 2022. 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.

⁵ See resolutions adopted [February 22, 2021](#), [April 12, 2021](#), [April 26, 2021](#), [April 26, 2021](#), [November 8, 2021](#), and [May 9, 2021](#).

⁶ The topics covered in the nine information exchanges and links to all of the videos are available [here](#).

complement OP's CCSAP. The Commission collaborated with community partners, thought leaders, planners, development professionals, and residents to address questions that helped the community understand complex issues related to the civic core redevelopment process.

In our resolution and with this letter, we re-emphasize our numerous calls and our continued belief that reaching the civic core redevelopment goals requires extended engagement to fully identify community redevelopment preferences and additional strategies to navigate complex issues impacting redevelopment as we move forward in reimagining our civic core. We believe that such engagement as outlined above, is the most effective way to generate the kind of broad-based support necessary to produce a more positive outcome and offers the best hope for fostering a strong community consensus.

We look forward to continuing this conversation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa R. Gore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa R. Gore,
Chair, ANC 3/4G

cc: Matthew Frumin, Councilmember, Ward 3
Janeese Lewis George, Councilmember, Ward 4
ANC 3/4G Office
Bruce Sherman, ANC 3/4G-02
James L. Nash, ANC 3/4G-03
Michael Zeldin, ANC 3/4G-04
Peter Lynch, ANC 3/4G-05
Peter Gosselin, ANC 3/4G-06
Zach Ferguson, ANC 3/4G-07