



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

Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, Hawthorne
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COMMISSIONERS

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ANC 3/4G Resolution to Amend the Civic Site RFP

Background and Rationale

ANC 3/4G residents have repeatedly made clear their opposition to tall buildings in Chevy Chase generally and at the Community Center and Library site particularly – in the [2019](#) and [2023](#) ANC community surveys, which together gathered several thousand resident responses, as well as numerous Commission meetings over the years.

ANC 3/4G's December 11, 2023 [resolution](#), reflecting these resident views, expressly stated, "Given the concern about building heights, the Commission asks that DMPED (Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development) include an RFP (request for proposals) recommendation that no new building at the site be over 60 feet and a preference for proposals that concentrate height along the Connecticut Avenue side of the site to respect the scale of adjacent single-family homes."

Notwithstanding the resolution, in its [RFP](#) for the Community Center and Library site, issued on January 17, 2024, DMPED failed to incorporate the Commission's request. Instead, the RFP allows for building heights as tall as 80 feet, including mechanical or penthouse structures.

DMPED's omission is especially grievous considering it has committed to following the [OurRFP](#) process in pursuing the redevelopment of the Community Center and Library site to "ensure that the public's perspective and priorities are understood in conjunction with the District's goals when crafting and issuing the RFP for this District-owned parcel." DMPED has breached, at a minimum, the spirit of its own process.

The Commission is as mindful now as it was when it approved its December resolution that the DC Office of Planning has proposed new zoning for the Community Center and Library site that would allow buildings as tall as 80 feet. Yet, as "the ANC's [main job](#) is to be their neighborhood's official voice in advising the District government ... on matters that affect their neighborhoods," and the matter of building heights is of manifest concern to the Chevy Chase neighborhood, it behooves ANC 3/4G to reiterate its request to DMPED.

While building height is a primary concern, there are other elements of the redevelopment the Commission also wishes to note. The 2023 ANC survey validated the importance of open/green space for neighbor respondents. Some 78% mentioned it among their preferred outdoor amenities. Preserving

trees at the Community Center and Library site is critical to green space. The Commission stresses particularly the importance of safeguarding the heritage trees in the northwest corner of the property.

In addition, the Commission is concerned about the mention of hotel and retail facilities in the RFP. While inclusion of a hotel could be standard language, it was never mentioned in the prior DMPED discussions with the ANC. The ANC does not support a hotel at the site. As to retail, the Commission is not opposed to a café, but does not support other forms of retail. The redevelopment is already a complex undertaking, not to burden it with additional elements.

Resolution

The Commission requests that DMPED amend the Chevy Chase Civic Site RFP, as follows: (a) to incorporate the restriction that no building be over 60 feet in total, including mechanical or penthouse structures, with a preference for proposals that concentrate height along the Connecticut Avenue side to respect the scale of adjacent single-family homes; (b) to stress the requirement to preserve the heritage trees in the northwest corner of the property; (c) to provide as much or more open space as exists currently (excluding parking areas); (d) to strike mention of a hotel; and (e) to restrict the option of including retail to a café only.

APPROVED at a Special Public meeting, notice of which was properly given and at which a quorum of 5 members was present on March 4, 2024 by a vote of 3 “yes” (Commissioners Gosselin, Lynch, and Sherman), 2 “no” (Commissioners Gore and Nash), and 0 abstentions.

Lisa Gore, Chair



Bruce Sherman, Secretary


