

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3A



ANC 3A Public Meeting Minutes - June 20, 2023 McLean Gardens Ballroom, 3811 Porter Street NW and via Zoom

Quorum call: Commissioners Thaddeus Bradley Lewis (3A01), Judy Havemann (3A02), Hans Miller (3A03), Jeremy Del Moral (3A04) and Ann Mladinov (3A05) – all five Commissioners – were present, making a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.)

Verification of Meeting Notice: Commissioners posted the meeting notice 7 days in advance of the meeting on the ANC 3A website and local listservs in Cleveland Park, Tenleytown, Glover Park, and McLean Gardens and the Nextdoor Neighborhood e-network.

Agenda: Chair Bradley-Lewis presented the agenda and proposed one amendment, to add a vote to request purchase of a laptop for ANC 3A through OANC's Technical Support and Assistance Fund (TAF). The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed meeting agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

Resolutions Adopted

Resolution to Support Renaming Reservation 630 in Rock Creek Park after former Park Superintendent Georgia Ellard. The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed resolution. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the resolution.

Letter to DDOT about Location of Scooter Corral on Fulton Street west of Wisconsin Avenue NW. The Chair made a motion to vote on a letter to DDOT Deputy Director Sharon Kershbaum expressing support for the removal of the scooter corral in the original location on Fulton Street at the southwest corner of the intersection with Wisconsin, publication of a Notice of Intent and public comment period on a new location for the scooter corral. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Votes on Administrative Matters

Waiving extra steps in taking votes on administrative matters at the meeting. The Chair made a motion to waive requirements for discussion and seconds on motions related to the administrative matters on the approved agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the waiver.

Minutes of May 16 Public Meeting. The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed minutes. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as presented.

Approval of request for purchase of a laptop and required accessories using funds from OANC Technical Support and Assistance Fund (TAF). The Chair made a motion to vote on sending a request to the Office of ANCs for up to \$1,500 from the TAF to purchase a new laptop for use for conducting ANC 3A public meetings and other activities. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the request.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Adjournment: The Chair made a motion to vote on adjourning. The Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

FULL SUMMARY

Chair Bradley-Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. The meeting was held in “hybrid” format, virtually via Zoom and in-person at the McLean Gardens Ballroom, for the first time ANC 3A had met at that location. The Chair called the roll. Commissioners Thaddeus Bradley Lewis (3A01), Judy Havemann (3A02), Hans Miller (3A03), Jeremy Del Moral (3A04), and Ann Mladinov (3A05) were all present -- all five Commissioners – which made a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.)

The Chair asked to add one item to the agenda under “Administrative Matters,” a request to the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (OANC) for purchase of a laptop for the ANC, using funds from the Technical Support and Assistance Fund (TAF). The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the agenda with that addition.

MPD Community Report

No MPD representatives were present or on Zoom so the meeting went on without a police report.

Resolution on Renaming Area 630 of Rock Creek Park in honor of Georgia Ellard

In 2021 at the urging of ANC 3F and DC Delegate to Congress Eleanor Holmes Norton, the National Park Service (NPS) had removed the previous name for Area 630 and the trail through that portion of Rock Creek Park. In the 1940s NPS had taken administrative action to name that area after one of the three Commissioners for the District of Columbia, Melvin Hazen, after his death. NPS has now proposed to rename the area and trail after Georgia Ellard, the first woman and first Black woman to be Superintendent of Rock Creek Park. Superintendent Ellard worked her way up through the ranks of NPS in Washington, DC, from her first clerk typist job in 1955. She continues to live in the District and volunteer in the area. She participated in the ANC meeting and spoke to the other participants about her work and her appreciation for the ANC’s support for honoring her service through the proposed renaming. Councilmember Matt Frumin joined the meeting and added his thanks, support, and congratulations to Superintendent Ellard. Commissioner Hans Miller (ANC3A03) read a proposed resolution supporting renaming Area 630 for Superintendent Ellard and calling for the Mayor and NPS to work to achieve that. The Chair made a motion to vote on adopting the resolution. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the resolution.

Presentation by American University on proposed Meltzer Center/SCAN projects on main campus

Cory Peterson, American University (AU) Assistant Vice President for Community and Government Relations, Office of People and External Affairs, made a brief presentation on the proposed Alan and Amy Meltzer Center and Sports Center Annex (SCAN) at the western edge of the campus, as part of implementing the AU Campus Plan approved by the Zoning Commission in 2022 (ZC 20-31B). He shared slides showing the most recent designs for the buildings, with modifications AU had developed after consultation with residents on adjoining blocks of University Terrace to mitigate effects of lighting and sound through plantings, berms, and lighting focused downward or at reduced intensity to meet concerns of nearby residents. Mr. Peterson had also presented preliminary plans for the project at the ANC 3A public meeting on March 21, 2023. The AU plan for the project was scheduled to be the subject of a hearing before the DC Zoning Commission on July 6, 2023.

Commissioner Mladinov asked if there was a role for affected ANCs in the project. Mr. Peterson said that ANC 3D and ANC 3E had taken a position on the proposed projects. Both those ANCs are party to the AU Campus Plan. ANC 3A is an “affected ANC” but did not exist when the Campus Plan was drafted and approved, so it is not a formal party to the Campus Plan. (The Commissioners intended to vote on a request to the Zoning Commission to be made an official part to the AU Campus Plan. See “Administrative Matters.”) ANC 3A did not propose to take a position on the proposed project.

DDOT Update on Traffic Safety Matters Affecting ANC 3A

Christian Piñero, Program Analyst for Ward 3 in the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) Office of Community Engagement, gave a presentation on DDOT's "TSI 2.0" process for dealing with service requests for Traffic Safety Investigations (TSIs) submitted through the DC 311 system. In late 2021, DDOT had reduced the steps necessary for submitting a TSI request, which had previously required not only a 311 request but also a questionnaire, a petition by 75% or more of the households on the affected block(s) if the request involved traffic calming, and endorsement from a local ANC Commissioner.

Under "TSI 1.0" introduced in fall 2021, those requirements were streamlined so a 311 request could be submitted with responses to several questions as part of that process but none of the other steps were necessary (separate questionnaire, petition, or ANC endorsement). At that time, DDOT was working on TSI requests much as it does for other service requests, "first come first served." Without all the previous process steps and encouraged by ANCs and renewed emphasis on "Vision Zero" objectives, the number of TSI requests submitted to DDOT grew rapidly, as residents and ANCs filed numerous requests for traffic safety that had been difficult to launch under the former system. Ward 3 was one of the prime examples, with several hundred new TSI requests including for traffic signs, speed humps, and many other safety improvements, small and large. Soon the DDOT traffic safety engineers had a major backlog of TSI cases and agency officials realized it would have to make adjustments in order to have the time and resources to investigate and make improvements where the highest number of traffic deaths and injuries had occurred. Mr. Piñero presented several slides showing that the wards and specific locations associated with the largest number of deaths and injuries in traffic incidents had some of the lowest number of TSIs submitted in TSI 1.0, whereas wards with the highest number of TSI requests filed with DDOT were not associated with high numbers of traffic deaths and injuries.

To achieve the most impact in terms of positive improvement in safety, especially in moving the District toward "Vision Zero" goals of eliminating traffic deaths and injuries, DDOT determined that it would have to develop some form of prioritization system to allow the agency's safety experts to be able to focus resources on areas with the greatest problems and the largest potential outcomes in terms of reduced casualties. The new "TSI 2.0" system was launched on January 6, 2023, incorporating a new system for prioritization of TSI requests, and it is being applied to all TSI requests that have been submitted in this calendar year, as well as some requests that were submitted earlier. Mr. Piñero said there have been some difficulties in bringing all the previously filed requests into the new database but DDOT is trying to work through that and load older requests into the new system as possible.

Mr. Piñero presented a series of prioritization factors that DDOT is using to establish those priorities in the TSI 2.0 process. DDOT considers those factors in selecting 200 locations across the District to be investigated by safety engineers in a particular quarter of the year. The engineers examine relevant facts and options and develop recommendations, which can then be turned work orders for corrective changes to be made, if not within the same quarter than in the next quarter if possible. Mr. Piñero also noted that a "location" that is chosen for investigation may not necessarily involve just one TSI request; it could be larger than just the site of one request. DDOT can "bundle" several requests related to the same area so they can be investigated and addressed together, at the agency's discretion.

Mr. Piñero invited questions and comments. Commissioner Del Moral asked if DDOT analyzes DC data on traffic deaths and injuries by time of day, or specifically during daytime hours v. at night. He asked if at night might more likely related to excess drinking and associated risky behaviors, which could require special approaches different from what might be done to avert daytime crashes. Others also noted that the factors contributing to deaths and injuries might be different based on time of day.

Councilmember Frumin spoke in support of those points and encouraged DDOT to give close attention to areas in Ward 3 and around the District where there might not have been a death but there are many

“close calls” day to day that could lead to a fatality. CM Frumin also highlighted risks around schools as an important element in prioritizing locations for DDOT attention. Mr. Piñeiro said school safety is a factor that DDOT considers, and the agency is revamping its Safe to Schools program.

Commissioner Bradley-Lewis and several residents from McLean Gardens spoke about the series of TSI requests that were filed in their neighborhood in fall 2022 but haven’t been addressed, particularly related to traffic speed and dangerous driving. One focus was 39th Street, where the opening of City Ridge has changed traffic patterns and led to more high-speed driving. Residents had said they would appreciate additional signs or safety measures. Mr. Piñeiro said he would look into signage and marking, striping of pavement or crosswalks, and tree trimming around signs and intersections, which could improve safety without going through the longer TSI 2.0 process.

Letter to DDOT about Scooter Corral on Fulton Street west of Wisconsin Avenue NW

In April 2023 in response to a 311 request, DDOT installed a small scooter corral on the south side of Fulton Street just west of the intersection with Wisconsin Avenue, adjacent to a line of RPP parking spaces but making use of the roadway closest to the STOP sign at the intersection, where no parking was allowed. Nearby resident Erik Metzroth had been passing the intersection at the time the white poles were being installed to create the corral, so he got information about DDOT plans for the space and also took several photos of what was happening, which he shared at the ANC 3A public meeting that evening. There had been no public notice to residents or the ANCs, and no public comment period. Mr. Metzroth and other residents had spoken at the April meeting, emailed, and phoned Commissioners to share concerns about risks to safety of motorists, bicyclists and others from the placement of the scooter corral in that location.

Commissioner Mladinov summarized residents’ worries that Fulton Street is already too narrow at that point, with parking on both sides of the street, making it very difficult for vehicles trying to enter westbound Fulton from Wisconsin to proceed between the cars heading in both directions on either side of the street, if there is a vehicle driving in the opposite direction on that block of Fulton. At only 30 feet in width from curb to curb, with parking on both sides of the street, the roadway available for vehicles is only 16 feet wide or less, which equates to 8-foot wide driving lanes, several feet below the normal standard of 10 to 12 feet. As a result, vehicles back up into Wisconsin Avenue, stop in the crosswalk on Fulton Street, and create added hazards for users of that roadway by all modes of transportation. In the intervening weeks after the April meeting, DDOT had responded to concerns from residents and the ANC, who had offered suggestions of other potential locations for a scooter corral. In the past week, DDOT had offered to remove the scooter corral from the location where it had been installed on the corner at Fulton and Wisconsin and to issue an NOI for installing a corral in a different location, and DDOT asked for informal support from ANC Commissioners. DDOT had reviewed the locations on or near Fulton that were suggested by several residents and Commissioners but found problems with all but one of the locations. The location DDOT was considering as the alternative was the first RPP parking space on the south side of Fulton Street, west of Wisconsin—the space immediately adjacent to the current location of the scooter corral it had originally installed.

During the discussion after Mr. Piñeiro’s presentation, Mr. Metzroth described what had happened with the scooter corral and related actions by DDOT to date, and asked the ANC to protest DDOT’s actions in handling the matter and ask DDOT to find a different location for a scooter corral farther from the corner of Fulton and Wisconsin, such as on 38th Street south of Fulton Street, where it would not create the same problems. The Chair made a motion to approve a formal letter to DDOT to support removing the scooter corral from the current location, and asking DDOT to issue an NOI and open a public comment period if it is proposing to establish a scooter corral in another location as DDOT had proposed. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Presentation by DC Department of Buildings about Illegal Construction and Vacant Buildings

None of the members of the new DC Department of Buildings (DOB) who had planned to present a briefing appeared to be participating online or in-person. Because of the importance of the issue to many residents and Commissioners, Chair Bradley-Lewis led a brief discussion on the topic. He spoke about concerns that have been shared by residents about residential buildings in the neighborhood that are not meeting DOB regulations governing safety and maintenance of structures and yards in the District. Some nearby residents have requested inspections and enforcement for several decades, and in one case DOB inspectors have recently visited the property and issued multiple citations. Commissioner Havemann presented additional details about maintenance issues and service requests that had been submitted about two properties in her Single Member District, but the problems persist and DOB has not succeeded at achieving significant changes. Several constituents also participated in the discussion and provided additional information about the issue. The Chair suggested potential legal and regulatory approaches that could be tried and committed to paying attention to what DOB is or isn't doing, contacting DOB and other officials with legal authority over these matters, assisting in getting action on the reported problems, and ensuring that the codes are being enforced.

Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Mladinov shared information on:

- Ward 3 Councilmember Matt Frumin's "Work Day in the Ward" on Wednesday, June 21, at Point Chaud, at Hall Place and Wisconsin Avenue in Glover Park 8 am- 5 pm, with opportunities for residents to talk with CM Frumin and get information and answers throughout the day from several key District agencies and the Glover Park Main Street.

- The first round of comments on WMATA's Better Bus preliminary draft network map had closed on June 18, with numerous comments from local residents and ANC's. Based on the comments, WMATA had said it would issue a revised map in late summer or early fall, as well as proposed short-term changes in bus services in FY2025 (July 1, 2024) to begin building toward a stronger future network.

- The Council had scheduled a hearing on July 10 about proposed legislation to guide location and installation of electric charging stations around the district for electric vehicles.

- On May 24 the DC Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) had a hearing on the application for a Special Exception for the proposed 632-square foot second story addition to an accessory structure at 3617 Newark Street NW. The board members heard the testimony, discussed the concerns of neighbors as the ANC had done at its April and May meetings, and voted to approve the project on the basis that most of the concerns were not related to the size of the proposed addition that was at issue in the case, and the application met the criteria in the regulations for a Special Exception in the R-1-B zone.

Commissioner Miller announced two matters that would likely come up at future ANC 3A meetings:

- Washington Ballet had just filed a zoning application to tear down its oldest building and replace it with an updated and more spacious structure on the same site. It will be the subject of a presentation to the ANC in the coming month.

- DC Department of Parks and Recreation had been approached by a for-profit youth soccer academy group interested in installing an artificial turf field at Hearst Park, which the group would pay for, in exchange for having priority use of the field an estimated 15-20 hours a week. The group was hoping to make a presentation to the ANC at the public meeting in July and had committed to having a plan available 7 days in advance of the meeting so it could be posted for public review. In any case Commissioner Miller noted that the Commission would not be able to take a vote on the matter until at least the September meeting, to allow for public comment and discussions.

Open Forum

Abigail Demopoulos asked if the conversation about vacant properties could be extended to condos which also have problems with vacant units such as when the owner dies and for a prolonged period no one responsible for the condo building or complex is able to enter and maintain the unit, collect condo fees, or

sell the unit, especially if the owner has no heir. Commissioners Del Moral and Bradley-Lewis shared information on options under a condo agreement including placing a lien on the unit, and also provisions that allow for entering and repairing a unit in the event of a leak or threat of damage to other property.

Administrative Matters

Because the meeting was approaching the scheduled end time, the Chair made a motion to waive the requirement for discussion, deliberation, and seconds for the remaining items on the agenda. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the motion. The Commission moved through the administrative items on the agenda, with a motion and a vote on each:

a. May meeting minutes

The Chair made a motion to vote on the May minutes. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

b. May Financial Report

The Chair made a motion to waive reading the monthly Financial Report but post it on the ANC 3A website so it is available to the Commissioners and the public. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve.

c. Standard Operating Procedures for ANC 3A Committees and Task Forces

The Chair made a motion to postpone to the July public meeting the discussion on standard operating procedures (SOPs) for organizing and managing ANC committees and task forces, and instead post the draft online for review by the public along with the Commissioners, in preparation for taking them up the following month. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve postponing that item.

d. Letter asking to add ANC 3A as an official party to the American University Campus Plan

The Chair made a motion to postpone to the July public meeting the ANC's consideration of a proposed letter to the DC Zoning Commission asking it to add ANC 3A as an official party to the AU Campus Plan, which the Zoning Commission approved in 2022 before ANC 3A existed. (ANC 3D and ANC 3E were made official parties to the Campus Plan at the time it was originally approved.) The Commission voted 5-0 to approve postponing that item.

e. Resolution to request purchase of a laptop for ANC 3A through TAF

The Commission has been relying on personal electronic equipment to host and manage public meetings in a "hybrid" format since the ANC was established in January 2023, including a laptop owned by the Chair. After five months of monthly public meetings, the Commission has now shifted to a different meeting location, where the Commission has to connect to more and different devices, including a 360° camera, and also use additional cables. The personal laptop has been serviceable but it is aging and with the shift to the new location, the Commission had difficulty maintaining a reliable platform for connecting individuals trying to participate in the meeting virtually as well as individuals participating in the room. The Chair made a motion to submit an application to OANC for use of up to \$1,500 from the Technical Support and Assistance Fund (TAF) for purchase of a laptop and associated accessory items to use to support ANC activities including running ANC 3A public meetings in a "hybrid" format, using virtual technology. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the application.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Adjournment: The Chair made a motion to vote on adjourning. The Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

These minutes were approved by the Commission by a vote of 4 – 0 at the duly noticed public meeting on July 18, 2023, at which a quorum was present. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.