

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3A



ANC 3A Public Meeting Minutes – September 19, 2023 McLean Gardens Ballroom, 3811 Porter Street NW and via Zoom

Quorum call: Chair Thaddeus Bradley-Lewis (3A01), Judy Havemann (3A02), Hans Miller (3A03), and Ann Mladinov (3A05) were present, which made a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.) Jeremy Del Moral (3A04) arrived later in the meeting.

Verification of Meeting Notice: Commissioners had 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: The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed meeting agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

Resolutions Adopted

Letter to DC Historic Preservation Office supporting proposed renovation at historic home at 3550 Tilden Street NW. Commissioner Miller made a motion to vote on the proposed letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter as presented.

Letter to DC Department of Parks and Recreation urging more transparency in the process and clearer communication of standards for long-term arrangements with private parties for use of public facilities. Commissioner Havemann made a motion to vote on the proposed letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter as presented.

Votes on Administrative Matters

Minutes of July 18 Regular Public Meeting. The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed minutes. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as presented.

Minutes of September 6 Special Public Meeting. RE DDOT NOIs proposing changes in 3 Bus Stops on east side of Wisconsin. The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed minutes. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as presented.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, October 17, 2023

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 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.

The Chair called the roll. In addition to Commissioner Bradley-Lewis (3A01), Commissioners Judy Havemann (3A02), Hans Miller (3A03), and Ann Mladinov (3A05) were present, which made a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.) Commissioner Del Moral (3A04) arrived during the meeting.

Community Report from MPD Second District

MPD Second District Lieutenant Marlon Olivierre presented statistics for crimes reported to MPD in the ANC 3A area for the preceding month. There were 18 total crimes in the report, including 16 property crimes (one burglary, 6 thefts from motor vehicles, no stolen vehicles). The other two were violent crimes: one sex abuse case and a robbery at City Ridge, where a delivery driver got into a dispute with a security guard, got irritated, grabbed the security guard's phone, and drove away.

The Chair asked about getting additional information on several locations where the ANC had requested traffic enforcement (39th between Idaho Avenue and Rodman Street). Lt. Ollivierre said he would check and get back with more information.

Presentation on proposal for 5-story 23-unit apartment building at 3427 Wisconsin Avenue NW

Commissioner Miller introduced the presentation about plans for redeveloping the property which had been occupied by two free standing homes between Norton Place and Ordway Street, in ANC 3A03. In recent years, the homes were sold to a developer who had been in discussions about a condominium project on the site. A year ago, that owner had applied for upzoning the property from RA-1 to RA-2, which was granted, allowing for greater height and lot occupancy. The property was subsequently sold to a different company. The presentation of the new proposal was made by current owner ONE Street Commercial Properties, represented by Sunil Chhabra, Senior Managing Partner and Vice President for Residential, joined by DC architect Rich Markus. That company plans to build and manage the project.

The proposal is to move the two homes to the eastern edges of the property, one facing Norton Place and one facing Ordway Street, maintaining continuity with the adjoining residences. They will be mounted on new foundations and restored as single family rental residences with the current 3 or 4 bedrooms each, or maybe one more. The process of moving those homes is already underway. For the frontage along Wisconsin Avenue, the owners propose to construct a new building with 23 apartment units including 5 one-story units in the cellar level with 3 bedrooms each; 8 two-story units on floors 1 and 2 with 3 bedrooms each; 8 units on floors 3 and 4 with 3 bedrooms each; and two penthouse units set back further back with 2 bedrooms each, separated by a rooftop area that would be common space for all residents. The project is covered by IZ+ inclusionary zoning requirements, mandating that 20% of the net residential space be affordable, in this case for households with at least 60% of Area Median Income. That will mean 3 affordable units, which will be two-story with 3 bedrooms. The Office of Zoning requires those to be identified in advance. They will be inside units, with somewhat smaller square footage than some other units, but all above ground, not in the cellar.

The exterior is shown as beige brick to match the two homes, with bump outs in gray to break up the façade and create a rhythm and sense of division between units. The building would be set back from the sidewalk, with landscaped green space all around. To maximize the green space, the owners plan is for 4 parking spaces on the site. The owners have contacted Cathedral Commons across the street to arrange for additional parking spaces on a contract basis, which would be available to residents as part of their lease. Zoning regulations also require 1 bike parking space for every 3 units. The plan is for a bike room, including charging for e-bikes, on the cellar level, with a level exit to the sidewalk on the south side.

Because the properties are within the boundaries of the Cleveland Park Historic District, the project had been submitted to the DC Historic Preservation Office (HPO) for conceptual review. The Cleveland Park

Historical Society Architectural Review Committee (ARC) had also reviewed the plans. Christine Hobbs, co-chair of the ARC, participated in the ANC meeting and presented a summary of its report. She said the ARC appreciated the design of the front façade but had concerns about the windows shown on the side and back of the new building. Mr. Chhabra said that the windows shown in the renderings of the sides and back aren't what is now being planned. The windows will be larger, more in line with the surrounding residences. Mr. Markus said he was doing new drawings but they were not yet ready. Ms. Hobbs said the ARC is waiting to see the new drawings, and might have additional comments. Mr. Markus noted that specific details would be subject to further review during HPO's later permit review.

The Commissioners and other participants then had an opportunity to ask questions. Several residents complimented the project for its design and the size of the units. There were several questions about the parking arrangements, and whether the number of spaces on the site would be sufficient to serve the residents, especially families with children. The owners said the proposal meets current zoning requirements, and the Cathedral Commons parking garage is directly across the street, which is an arrangement that has worked in some other apartment developments. Mr. Chhabra said the company could potentially add one or two more parking spaces on the site, for a total of six, but that would take away green space.

HPO had asked the ANC if the project would be of interest for the Commissioners, and if so the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) would be willing to defer discussion and a vote on the conceptual review until its October 26 meeting. With the remaining questions about the windows and the applicants' commitment to provide additional drawings, Commissioner Miller observed that it would allow more time to get additional details if the HPRB would postpone its consideration of the project until the October 26 meeting, so he agreed to contact HPO and express interest in having the discussion of the project deferred to the October meeting.

Presentation on proposed renovation at historic home at 3550 Tilden Street NW (3A03)

The homeowners Dan Yates and Tobie Whitman presented the plans for renovations at their home, Springland, dating from the 1840s, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The plans do not involve changes to the front façade but would include restoring the windows on the rear and side windows and removing the side porch added in the 1890s, replacing it with a screened porch.

The project does not require zoning approval but the plans had been presented to the DC Historic Preservation Office for conceptual review, which was scheduled to be on the agenda at the Historic Preservation Review Board meeting on September 28. Applicants for this type of change are encouraged to share their plans with the ANC, which is responsible for notifying the community. The homeowners had posted the placard about the proposed changes, and had opened the home and garden as part of a tour for about 60 people, including neighbors and others, on the previous weekend. They had also shared the plans with the HPO staff, who had expressed preliminary support for the changes. The ANC had included the project in its notice to the community and had not received any comments from constituents. The Commissioners and other participants in the meeting did not raise any concerns. Commissioner Miller made a motion to send a letter to HPO in support of the project. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Letter to DPR RE community engagement on arrangements for private use of park facilities

Commissioner Miller noted that in early summer members of the community including ANC 3A had become aware of reports of a proposal to the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) by for-profit Player Progression Academy (PPA), a youth soccer training program in the region, to invest \$1 million for installing artificial turf on the field at Hearst Park in exchange for the right for PPA to use the field for its programs after school and on weekends through the fall, winter and spring. PPA had not provided a copy of its proposal to DPR or scheduled a formal presentation to the ANC, but the Commissioners had

received numerous questions and comments from residents, raising concerns about the proposal. Commissioner Miller presented a proposed letter to DPR asking about the DPR process for reviewing and refining proposals of this kind and asking for a chance for more transparency and better communications with the local ANC and the community on proposals of this kind to DPR and the agency's standards for considering long-term use of public park facilities by private organizations. Commissioner Havemann made a motion to vote on the proposed letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Commissioner Updates

The Chair reported that the Commission had announced and held an ANC 3A special public meeting by Zoom on September 6 to hear comments from residents and adopt an official position by the due date of September 8 about changes proposed by the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT). DDOT had issued two Notifications of Intent (NOIs) in August for changes affecting three existing Metrobus stops on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue: eliminate the bus stop at Macomb Street NW, and move the bus stops at Porter and Upton Streets NW from the south side of the intersection to the north side of the intersection. That would mean that the bus stop that is currently next to the Washington Ballet on the southeast corner of the intersection of Porter and Wisconsin would be relocated to be in front of The Crestview Condominiums, and the existing space available for loading as well as all but one of the two-hour parking spaces in that location would be eliminated. DDOT announced a public comment period of only 10 business days, because the proposals involved safety-related improvements on Wisconsin Avenue, which is considered a High Risk Corridor.

The Commission had received comments from many residents at The Crestview, more than a dozen of whom also participated in the meeting and shared their concerns, which included that the proposed location of the bus stop would create safety problems for people trying to exit the driveway from the apartment building, would remove the parking space in front of the building that is currently designated for short-term loading and unloading, including pick-ups and drop-offs for seniors and people with disabilities, as well as important two-hour parking spaces. The proposed location would require everyone trying to make a connection between a bus on Wisconsin Avenue and an eastbound bus on the H lines using Porter Street to cross the intersection at Porter and Wisconsin, which would introduce additional safety issues. Unlike the existing bus stop, the area in front of The Crestview also does not have any space where people waiting for a bus can sit or rest, so residents expressed concern that bus riders might lean on the fragile sidewalk railings or try to wait in the apartment vestibule, and could contribute to noise and litter, creating potential need for added maintenance and security at the apartment, at the expense of the building management and ultimately the residents. The ANC had voted 5-0 to send DDOT comments expressing opposition to the proposed relocation of the bus stop at Porter Street. The letter also supported an option advanced by some Crestview residents that if the bus stop has to be moved it should be relocated to the former Metrobus stop at the corner of Quebec Street and Wisconsin Avenue, less than a block north of the proposed location at Porter Street. The Commission was awaiting a response from DDOT. The Chair noted DDOT could take action immediately, but the Commissioners hoped DDOT would take into account the comments from the ANC and the community.

Commissioner Del Moral announced that American University is hosting a series of orientation sessions on the AU Neighborhood Partnership (one hour each) and he encouraged people to participate.

Commissioner Miller announced that the Heart Pool had expanded its hours in August, to open at 6 am, and the hours for the season had been extended to the following Thursday, especially for lap swimmers. In response to complaints from nearby residents, DPR had agreed not to allow music to be played starting at 6 am.

Commissioner Havemann spoke about her concern for residents dealing with scooters operated on the sidewalks in front of apartment buildings on Wisconsin Avenue, which create a special hazard for seniors and people with disabilities. She had spoken to DDOT's representative Christian Piñeiro about the potential for the city to post signs on the sidewalks alerting pedestrians to the possible presence of scooters and other micromobility devices, but he said DDOT could not do that.

Commissioner Del Moral agreed with the concern, and spoke about an incident he experienced on the street the previous week, where a driver came up right behind him on his skateboard and was very close to running him over. He mentioned particularly the risks around American University, where the combination of cars and fast-moving e-bikes is creating hazards for pedestrians as well as people on micromobility devices.

Chair Bradley-Lewis observed there is very little traffic enforcement on Massachusetts Avenue, the streets are not safe for bicycles or scooters and other micromobility devices, and the long-term solution is probably infrastructure change, such as separate space for different types of users.

Commissioner Mladinov reported:

- Iona Senior Services had been selected by the DC Department of Aging and Community Living to receive the grant as "lead agency" for both Ward 3 and Ward 2. (ANC 3A had adopted a letter of support in June for Iona Senior Services to continue as "lead agency" for Ward 3.)

- DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) had not yet issued a Notification of Intent proposing a new location for a scooter corral on Fulton Street at Wisconsin Avenue. DDOT had installed a scooter corral in the curbside lane at that corner in April, with white poles and scooter racks, but removed the corral after neighbors and the ANC expressed concern about the choice of that space. (No NOI was required for the initial location, because it did not remove a parking space.) DDOT has not provided any updates.

- DDOT project to install proposed a "ground mural" in the curb extension areas around the intersection of Idaho Avenue and Cathedral Avenue in her SMD, under the "Arts in the Right-of-Way" grant program. Residents had shared comments and she had shared a summary of public feedback on possible designs for the ground mural. A local artist had been selected and had shared an initial draft with DDOT for a design focused on the natural environment, trees and green, as many neighbors had recommended. DDOT had some additional comments and was hoping the work on the mural could be done by the end of September.

- WMATA had issued a summary of the comments it received on the "Better Bus Initiative" in April-June 2023 and noted the large number of comments and concerns about bus service in Ward 3. WMATA is now asking for public comments on new approaches to naming bus routes, and also announced the next draft "Visionary Network Map" of bus routes in the region, based on the previous round of comments, would be released in January, along with a set of changes proposed for the near term, including new names. Those steps had originally been proposed for late summer 2023.

- The DC Public Service Commission (PSC) held open meetings in mid-September in cases dealing with a proposed Pepco multi-year rate increase and a proposed Washington Gas rate increase. The rate cases are also related to the PSC's review of a proposed Phase 3 of Washington Gas PROJECT *pipes* for replacing all gas lines in the District, and the utility companies' Climate Action Plans, which will be the subject of further discussion and chance for public comment.

Community Announcements

The Chair moved to defer community announcements. The motion was seconded and the Commissioner voted 5-0 in favor of the motion.

Open Forum

Ms. Shannon on-line asked about asking for a traffic study. The Chair noted this is an important issue but couldn't be covered within the time frame of the evening's meeting.

Administrative Matters

The Chair made a motion to vote on the July minutes. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

The Chair made a motion to vote on the minutes of the September 6 meeting to discuss and take a position on the two DDOT Notifications of Intent issued on August 24 to move or remove three Metrobus stops on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue at Macomb, Porter and Upton Streets. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

Treasurer Del Moral gave the monthly ANC 3A financial reports for July and August. There had not been any incoming funds or outgoing expenditures from the ANC 3A bank account since the last financial report in June, leaving a continuing balance of \$5,026.64.

The Chair announced that the proposed ANC 3A budget for FY2024 was posted on the ANC 3A website, building on experience with the budget for FY2023, comments were welcome, and the Commission would be discussing it and taking a vote on the budget at the October meeting.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Adjournment: The Chair made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

These minutes were approved by the Commission by a vote of 5 - 0 at the duly noticed public meeting on October 17, 2023, at which a quorum was present. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.)