

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3A



ANC 3A Public Meeting Minutes - July 18, 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 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

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

The Commission had to postpone a vote from the June meeting on asking the DC Zoning Commission to recognize 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 Chair made a motion to vote on the letter, the motion was seconded, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Votes on Administrative Matters

Minutes of June 20 Public Meeting. The Chair made a motion to vote on the proposed minutes. The motion was second and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as presented.

ANC 3A Quarterly Financial Report for 2nd Quarter FY 2023 [no receipts or expenditures]. The Chair made a motion to vote on the quarterly report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the 2nd Quarter Financial Report as presented.

ANC 3A Quarterly Financial Report for 3rd Quarter FY 2023 [first ANC 3A receipts and expenditures]. The Chair made a motion to vote on the quarterly report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the 3rd Quarter Financial Report as presented.

Standard Operating Procedures for ANC 3A Committees and Task Forces. The Chair made a motion to vote on the quarterly report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the Standard Operating Procedures as presented.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Adjournment: The Chair made a motion to vote on adjourning. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 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. 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.)

Community Report from MPD Second District

Captain Tatjana Savoy presented the crime statistics for the year to date in the ANC, which had declined from the previous year in all but 3 categories: motor vehicle thefts (9 for the year, up by 4 from 2022), arson (one for the year), and sex abuse (up by two for the year). Within the previous 30 days, MPD had received a total of 17 reports of crime in ANC 3A.

Captain Savoy also reported that at the request of Commissioner Miller she had assigned a traffic enforcement officer to the intersection of Idaho Avenue and Quebec Street, who issued 17 notices of infraction, including violations of stop signs, speeding, lack of current registration tags, failure to use seat belts, and failure to provide a current driver’s license (a secondary offense, when the driver is cited for something else). Chair Bradley-Lewis also requested additional traffic enforcement at 39th and Rodman, which used to be a dead end but now is a pass through for City Ridge. A lot of vehicles speed southbound on 39th in that block and many drivers fail to stop at the stop sign. Captain Savoy agreed to assign a traffic officer to that location.

Residents and Commissioners had also inquired about an incident on July 8 when there was heavy police presence at 4000 Massachusetts Avenue. Captain Savoy reported that a vehicle used in several crimes in Prince George’s County was identified by county police and tracked by helicopter to the area around that apartment building at the corner of Idaho Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue. The driver left the vehicle but police established a perimeter and were able to place the individual under arrest.

Commissioner Del Moral asked about the general perception of an increase in crime, including thefts from businesses such as the local CVS stores. Captain Savoy responded that MPD had a lot of strong leads and would be making several arrests for the thefts at CVS locations in the Second District. She also reported that the crimes perpetrated by groups/“flash mobs” had dropped dramatically in the area.

Presentation of Washington Ballet Request for Zoning Relief at 3515 Wisconsin (BZA case 20970)

Representatives of Washington Ballet including Karen Shepherd, interim Managing Director, the Smith Group architects, and Paul Tummonds of Goulston & Storrs, participated in the meeting and presented the proposed project. The plan includes razing the oldest structure closest to the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Porter Street that has been its 110-year old home and headquarters, and replacing it with a contemporary two-story building with new entrance, additional studios, dressing rooms, and support facilities in the basement level. The new structure would add 1,936 square feet to the total floor area and provide improved accessibility, enlarged and updated space to bring together all offices and dance training facilities, and replace rented rehearsal spaces currently located at Cathedral Commons and 4200 Wisconsin Avenue. The Washington Ballet had applied to the DC Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) requesting a Special Exception for continued use of the property as a private school, now with up to 178 students on site at a time, a variance to allow lot occupancy of 44.6% compared to the 40% maximum permitted by right in the RA-1 zone, and a floor area ratio of 0.97 compared to 0.9 permitted in zoning.

Mr. Tummonds explained the legal tests for the special exception (conforming with the intent or integrity of the zoning) and for variances (The applicant is subject to exceptional conditions and would have practical difficulties in meeting zoning standards, and the proposal would not conflict with the zoning

objectives.) He cited recent case law in the application for a Sunrise project at Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church, indicating that non-profit organizations are subject to a lesser standard than other applicants. He also stated that the Washington Ballet buildings are not considered “historic” but are within the Cleveland Park Historic District (listed as “non-contributing”) so the proposed project would have to go through the DC Historic Preservation Office process.

The presentation also included preliminary plans for parking and traffic, which included proposal to close the curb cut on Wisconsin Avenue and instead having vehicles for pick-up and drop-off use both an entrance and exit on Porter Street. The site would also provide 7 parking spaces on-site and a rack for 10 bicycles. Mr. Tummonds said transportation consultant Wells and Associates would be working with DDOT on a Traffic Demand Management plan which would be shared with the ANC and the public in the fall, before the BZA hearing (scheduled for November 1).

The property is in Commissioner Hans Miller’s Single Member District ANC3A03. Several Commissioners and residents asked questions about the traffic plan. Commissioner Miller noted that the site is constricted, with a heritage tree by the corner of Wisconsin and Porter, and the current entrance ramp closest to that corner (which the traffic plan relies on for all pick-up and drop-off traffic) overlaps with the H2/H4 bus stop on Porter Street. Commissioner Havemann observed that the turn from northbound Wisconsin onto eastbound Porter is very tight, and requires drivers to slow. Commissioner Del Moral observed that many vehicles turn left out of the ballet property onto Porter Street and then turn left on Wisconsin, creating some traffic and safety challenges. Commissioner Mladinov asked about the parking requirements that apply under zoning for private schools, which are greater for high schools than for elementary and middle schools. The application was designed to meet the standards for private elementary and middle schools, but there is a higher standard for private high schools, proportional to the seating capacity of gymnasiums and auditorium or performing spaces. The Washington Ballet has students at elementary, middle and high school levels and the project plans include a performance area with up to 184 seats. Mr. Tummonds agreed there is a higher parking requirement for a private high school but the elementary and middle school category seemed more appropriate. Commissioner Mladinov noted that the Traffic Demand Management plans for the project would be important to the community and expressed the hope that the ANC would be included in further discussions.

Harry Martin, long-time resident on Idaho Avenue around the corner from 3515 Wisconsin Avenue, said he had supported the Washington Ballet for many years and thought the project would be important for the Ballet going forward. Chairman Bradley-Lewis noted that the ANC was not yet at the stage of deliberating on the proposed project but if residents have comments on the proposal, they would be welcome to share their comments at a later meeting when the project is on the agenda for deliberations and a vote by the Commission.

Letter to DC Zoning Commission to add ANC 3A as an official party to the AU Campus Plan

When the new American University Campus Plan was presented in 2021 and the Zoning Commission voted to approve the plan in 2022, ANC 3D and 3E (the two ANCs bordering AU at that time) were made official parties to the plan. After the District’s 2022 Redistricting, ANC 3A was established to serve areas adjoining the AU campus. Since the new ANC did not exist when the Campus Plan was adopted, however, it is not considered an official party to the plan, though it has been recognized as an affected party when AU proposed a project under the Campus Plan.

To ensure equal status for the three ANCs in the future, the Commission proposed sending a letter to the Zoning Commission requesting that ANC 3A be recognized as an official party to the AU Campus Plan. The Chair made a motion to vote on the letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Commissioner Updates

Chair Bradley-Lewis announced that Pleasance Silicki of Iona Senior Services would not be able to give the planned presentation about their services and programs, but had sent a briefing, which he shared on the screen. Iona would be asked to participate in a future ANC 3A meeting.

He also announced that DDOT was working on two Traffic Safety Investigation requests in his SMD, on Rodman Street, which had been selected as part of the DDOT TSI 2.0 system for identifying 200 TSI projects to investigate each quarter under its new prioritization process.

Commissioner Havemann reported that DDOT had fixed the sidewalks near 38th Street and Woodley Road where she had been asking for repairs, and DDOT Ward 3 Community Engagement specialist Christian Piñeiro had told her that crews would return to install sod or grass.

Commissioner Mladinov reported that DDOT had proposed a “ground mural” to be installed 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. She had sent nearby residents DDOT’s email with additional information and a request for comments on what the artists might think about for the design at that location. She encouraged residents to submit suggestions and offered to forward comments sent to her. One resident asked if the artist would be local. The DDOT proposal was to select a local artist, but “local” was not defined, so she agreed to check.

Commissioner Miller reported that a for-profit soccer training program called Progressive Players Academy (PPA) had approached DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) about the idea of paying to install artificial turf on the Hearst Field (estimated cost of \$1 million) in exchange for rights to use the soccer field after school several days a week. He said he had asked for PPA to come to an ANC meeting to present the proposal and he hoped that could happen in a future month so residents would have a chance to get information and share comments.

Commissioner Miller shared an update following up on the ANC 3A meeting in June where the Commission hosted former Rock Creek Park Superintendent Georgia Ellard and voted to support renaming Reservation 630 for her. Superintendent Ellard had called him to thank the Commission. He also had spoken to Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton’s office about actions needed to accomplish the renaming and he was scheduled to meet with Brian Joyner, Deputy Superintendent for Rock Creek Park (acting in place of former Superintendent Julia Washburn), to talk about the renaming proposal.

Community Announcements

Matthew Barclay of the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS) reported that the Mayor had appointed Pamela Smith to be interim Chief of Police. Chief Smith has experience in MPD and has worked for 25 years in law enforcement in the District and in several other cities.

Mr. Barclay also announced several activities and programs in the District, including the Mayor’s Downtown Action Plan for reviving the downtown commercial area after COVID-19; the 4-day Major League Soccer All-Star event in mid-July; an ongoing jobs campaign at dc.gov/jobs; and a call-in number 202-727-9099 to report an illegal gun or where illegal guns are hidden (or text anonymously to 504111), to be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$2,500 - \$10,000.

DC Shadow Representative Adeoye Owolewa (former Commissioner in ANC 8E) spoke about the uphill climb the District is facing in Congress, including on criminal justice issues, with an incarceration rate much higher than in most other jurisdictions. He announced a clinic on expungement scheduled for Saturday, July 22 from 10 am-1 pm with pro bono lawyers available to assist, and information on jobs and funds to support returning citizens to own and operate their own businesses.

Bob Ward of Cleveland Park Smart Growth announced that DDOT is continuing its work on proposed protected bike lanes on Connecticut Avenue, which have been the subject of resolutions in several ANCs in that area. DDOT is going through a block-by-block analysis and extending its forecasts of travel demand to 2028. He asked if the ANC would consider a letter on Connecticut Avenue bike lanes.

Chair Bradley-Lewis mentioned that ANC 3A had been contacted several months before about DDOT reconstituting an advisory group on bike lanes on Connecticut Avenue, and had sent nominations but had never heard anything further. Mr. Ward said he had not heard either but offered to inquire.

Councilmember Frumin's office posted in the Chat that he was having a "Work Day in the Ward" at Dolan Coffee in Cleveland Park July 26 from 8 am - 5 pm to meet with him and staff as well as representatives of MPD, several other District agencies, and the Cleveland Park Main Street. Residents were also invited to use the web link mattfruminward3.com to sign up for his newsletter with information on future activities.

Open Forum

A resident from 34th and Idaho commented that Wisconsin Avenue is the main corridor in ANC 3A; Connecticut Avenue is one corridor over. He noted the progress the District is making to become a bicycle-friendly city.

A resident from 39th Street in McLean Gardens reported two motorcycles that appear to have been left unused and untended for months or years. One had a fire. One has tags that expired in 2009. It had been reported to DC 311. Chair Bradley-Lewis asked him to email the information, photos, and 311 service request numbers, and he would check on the abandoned vehicle rules for motorcycles and see if DW could remove it.

Administrative Matters

a. June meeting minutes

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

b. June Financial Report

Treasurer Del Moral read the monthly June Financial Report. There was one charge of \$300 for meeting space at the National Presbyterian Church for March, April, and May, leaving a balance of \$5,026.64.

c. 2nd Quarter FY 2023 Quarterly Financial Report

Treasurer Del Moral presented the first ANC 3A Quarterly Report. He reported that the ANC was established in January and set up its bank account in March but didn't receive any funds until April, so the financial report for the 2nd Quarter of FY 2023 (January-March) showed no incoming or outgoing funds. The Chair made a motion to vote on the quarterly report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the 2nd Quarter Financial Report as presented.

d. 3rd Quarter FY 2023 Quarterly Financial Report

Treasurer Del Moral presented the first full ANC 3A Quarterly Report, covering the 3rd quarter of FY 2023 (April-June). He reported that the Commission had received its first District allotments in April and made reimbursements for approved expenditures for initial costs for the ANC 3A URL and website builder from GoDaddy, for the ANC 3A Zoom account, and for ANC 3A checks and checkbooks from PNC Bank. He reported that all outgoing checks had been verified. The Chair made a motion to vote on the quarterly report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the 3rd Quarter Financial Report as presented.

e. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for ANC 3A Committees and Task Forces

Commissioner Mladinov gave a brief summary of proposed SOPs for the ANC to establish and manage standing committees, special committees and task forces, which are provided for in the ANC bylaws. When the ANC was formed, the Commissioners researched the processes for operating committees and got recommendations that it is most effective to adopt detailed operating procedures in separate documents such as SOPs rather than in bylaws which are supposed to cover the essential guidelines for carrying out the law, not day-to-day details of how to handle day-to-day operations. The Chair emphasized that the SOPs were designed to keep flexible so they could be changed relatively easily to adjust to needs.

After reviewing the procedures followed by other nearby ANCs, the Commissioners had a draft of proposed SOPs covering establishment of committees or task forces, chairs, vice chairs, members, regular meetings which are required to be open public meetings, meeting summaries, regular reports on activities to the ANC, voting, consideration of committee recommendations, opportunities to participate for organizations and individuals who do not reside in the ANC area, and options for joint task forces with other ANCs. For example, the SOPs provide that the Chair or one co-Chair of each committee would normally be a Commissioner. If not, the Chair(s) should choose a Vice Chair who is a Commissioner. Members would be self-nominated rather than nominated by Commissioners, but Commissioners would be welcome to encourage individuals to nominate themselves. There is a suggested maximum of 15 members on each committee or 20 members on a task force, but that can be adjusted. If there are too many people interested in participating on a committee, nominees could be selected by random “lot,” with attention to balance among SMDs and parts of the ANC area. The Commission would not choose the members but would review the list. Non-residents and commercial organizations could ask to be members, and the committee members could vote on whether those participants should be voting members or not.

The Chair said there had been some an interest in having committees. He noted that the McLean Gardens Association has a Pedestrian Safety Committee which is quite active, and Commissioners Havemann and Del Moral had talked about the need for additional attention to that issue. Having a task force on pedestrian safety could allow residents and ANC members to work on that type of issue, not just in the Commission area but across the ward. Commissioner Miller said he agreed.

The Chair asked for questions. Several residents asked for clarification on non-residents or organizations participating in committees. Bob Ward noted that ANC 3C asks Commissioners to nominate members of ANC 3C committees. Commissioner Miller noted that all committees in ANC 3C have a Commissioner as a member, but ANC 3C has 8 Commissioners rather than only 5 Commissioners as in ANC 3A.

Seeing no further questions, the Chair moved to take a vote on the SOPs. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to adopt the SOPs as presented.

Next monthly public meeting: Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Adjournment: The Chair made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 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 September 19, 2023, at which a quorum was present. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.