

NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE

A Neighborhood Newsletter Published By The
Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association
And Neighbors for a Livable Community
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NEIGHBORS VOICE OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED NEW 215-UNIT HIGH RISE AT SUPERFRESH SITE

NEW STUDY CITES EASE OF BREAKING INTO CAR MODELS WITH KEYLESS ENTRY

The recurring incidence of car thefts and break-ins have been a source of frustration and anger in Spring Valley and Wesley Heights. According to a recent **CNN** article, a new German study has concluded that more than 200 car models that offer keyless entry are highly susceptible to break-ins and theft.

The study reports that vehicles can be entered by using “cheap electronic equipment” that can be purchased online at a minimal cost.

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CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF SPRING VALLEY PARK RESTORATION PROJECT BEGINS See Page 9

PIZZA PARADISO WORKSHOP
See Page 8

Wagshal's Bill Fuchs Among Residents Warning Of Hazardous Traffic Conditions; Cites Impact On His Businesses

Residents of American University (AU) Park and Spring Valley joined together at a January 24, 2019 hearing before the D.C. Zoning Commission (ZC) to voice strong opposition to the proposed construction of a new 215-unit rental apartment building on the SuperFresh site. The project, known as the Ladybird, has been proposed by Valor Construction, which has sought to win support for the project by promising that it will also include a small grocery store. Although Valor can point to non-binding letters that indicate interest from Balducci's or Mom's Organic in the site, the developer has been unable to secure a commitment from any grocer for the roughly 18,000 square feet of space that would be available for retail. The project also will include construction of four townhomes adjacent to the apartment building.

The project, if approved, would also see the loss of roughly 28,000 square feet of retail space that is now used by Spring Valley Catering owned by Wagshal's Bill Fuchs; Pitmasters Back Alley Barbecue (also owned by Fuchs); Jean Paul Hair Salon; and DeCarlo's Restaurant. Valor confirmed at a previous Zoning Commission hearing that it would not be renewing leases for these current occupants of the site.

Opposition to the project was led by the Committee for Responsible Development (CRD), an ad hoc community group consisting of residents from AU Park and Spring Valley. Three Spring Valley-based organizations also testified in opposition to the project as currently planned. These include the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association (SVWHCA);

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AU PARK, SPRING VALLEY NEIGHBORS VOICE OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED NEW 219-UNIT HIGH RISE AT SUPERFRESH SITE

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Neighbors for a Livable Community (NLC); and the Spring Valley West Homeowners Association. Additionally, 22 individual residents, including Fuchs, testified in opposition to the project. Not a single resident testified in support of the project at the January 24 hearing. However, the Zoning Commission heard from representatives of Ward 3 Vision and the Spring Valley Neighbors Association who offered brief testimony in support of the project consistent with the pro-development mission of the two groups.

Valor Alley Design Will Be Hazardous, Wagshal's Owner Testifies

In his testimony, which sparked strong interest from the Zoning Commissioners, Fuchs said he would be impacted by the new development both as a resident and as a neighborhood business owner.

"I will be losing some of my businesses," he said, "and I have trepidation about how the new development will impact my other businesses."

In addition to citing the overall density of the project, Fuchs said the alley design, which is the primary way for vehicles to access the residences and grocer at the site, would prove hazardous.

"For the last 30 years," he said, "I have been watching and working that alley every day. It is not as portrayed by the developers in their pictures. It is a round peg in a square hole. It's an important piece of land put in the wrong place."

Responding to questions from the Zoning Commissioners, Fuchs added that trucks using the alleys routinely damage the curb areas. He questioned whether trucks could use the alley, as designed, without either damaging the building or the truck. He also said that trash collection would be particularly difficult in the alley because of the developer's plan to use trash compactors.

"There has to be an angle for the truck to pick up the trash," Fuchs said. "The trash compactor will have to be in the alley. Trucks can't go parallel to the building and pick it up, as the developer suggests."

Fuchs also took issue with the developer's plans for trucks to enter the alleys off Massachusetts Avenue.

"Never has there been a right turn from Massachusetts Avenue into the alley," Fuchs said. "It won't work even for a 35-foot truck. That would be very dangerous."

CRD and the Spring Valley groups opposing the project highlighted several major problems with the design of the new 219-unit development. The residential and grocery store entrances for the building will be on Yuma Street, but parking access will be through an entrance off the alley behind the PNC Bank. The groups cited the excessive height and density of the current proposal; the adverse impacts on the neighbors,

including additional traffic – perhaps as many as 3,400 additional vehicle trips per weekday; the poorly planned alley design that will result in serious safety issues as a consequence of conflicts between cars, trucks, bicycles, and pedestrians using the narrow alleys to access parking and loading at the site; the failure of Valor to enter into a binding agreement with a full service grocer at the site; and the plan’s failure to comply with existing zoning standards.

In order to maximize the use of the site, Valor is entering into an agreement with Regency, the owners of the adjacent Spring Valley Shopping Center that currently houses Wagshal’s Deli and Market and the CVS, to transfer density from the shopping center to the new development. Additionally, under existing agreements related to AU’s purchase of the 4801 Massachusetts Avenue building (formerly known as the Burka Building when it housed professional offices and first floor retail), AU is entitled to the use of 236 of the 370 parking spaces at the site. Valor’s proposal indicates it could provide as few as 85 parking spaces for residents of the 219-unit development.

The January 24 hearing focused on a redesign of the project submitted to the Zoning Commission by Valor late last year. Valor had indicated to the Zoning Commission last June that it wanted to redesign the project to address concerns of residents. However, Valor needed the time to renegotiate the terms of its deal with Apex Real Estate which had owned the site. The new designs submitted by Valor showed that apartments had been relocated below ground in what was the parking garage. This gave the appearance that the building height had been slightly reduced when in fact the building height had been increased along the perimeters bordering single family residential homes. The new design also eliminated open spaces along 48th Street.

**“This Project Is Just Too Big For The Neighborhood,” Says CRD;
Project Better Suited For Site Near Major Metro Station, Says SVWHCA**

According to CRD, the effect of the new building proposal is to create a wall along 48th Street from the alley behind AU’s 4801 Massachusetts Avenue Building to Yuma Street. The group added that Valor’s new proposal did not result in an overall decrease of density.

“The basic flaw remains,” Shelly Repp, who has led CRD, said. “The project is just too big for the neighborhood.”

This also was the theme of testimony provided by the SVWHCA.

“This project is too big and its scale is incompatible with the surrounding low density residential neighborhoods,” Dr. Jeffrey Kraskin, SVWHCA President, said. “This project will bring development better suited at a major Metro station, like Cityline at Tenley, to the Spring Valley and AU Park residential neighborhoods that consist almost solely of single family homes.”

He also noted that the “reliance on narrow alleys for the movement of traffic and access to the residential and retail units in the new building demonstrate this site is not appropriate for the density that is being proposed.” He said the alley design does not meet any industry standards for safety.

***SPRING VALLEY-WESLEY HEIGHTS CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
NEIGHBORS FOR A LIVABLE COMMUNITY***

Testifying on behalf of the Spring Valley West Homeowners Association, Mr. Scott Parker said the only attractive aspect of the design was the inclusion of a full service grocery, but that Valor had not delivered on its promise.

“Mom’s Organic” is not a full-service grocery store, so its benefits to the existing community residents would be very limited, Parker said. “In view of the limited value of Mom’s Organic, the benefit is significantly outweighed by the negative impact of the increase in dwelling unit density. To visualize what that increase in density means, you must include 15 full blocks in AU Park around the site to get to 219 dwelling units. The addition of Ladybird would double the dwelling unit intensity in the then-existing 16 block area. If you live in a single-family home, think about the effects of doubling the dwelling unit density in your own neighborhood.”

Small Grocer Comes At Expense Of Other Valued Neighborhood Retail, NLC Says

Testifying on behalf of Neighbors for a Livable Community (NLC), Ms. Alma Gates, a former ANC 3D Commissioner, stressed that the project offered little benefit to the community. She added that Valor had failed to provide the Zoning Commission with all the information it needed to make a decision in the case.

“The Zoning Commission continues to lack major components of this case,” Ms Gates said. “What Valor promotes as ‘amenities’ to justify the out-of-character massing and density of this project are primarily to enhance its marketability. The grocer comes at the expense of a loss of other valued neighborhood retail services; and the sidewalks, promoted as a connectivity factor, are poorly designed and put public safety at risk. They are too narrow, unbuffered from the alley traffic or only exist for a portion of the alley. The proposed project will not make the neighborhood more livable as there is little offered that benefits existing community residents.”

Project Puts Residents’ Safety At Risk, Say SV Residents

In addition to Fuchs, among the 22 residents testifying in opposition to the project included Spring Valley resident Dr. Federico Mordini. He has been one of the most vocal opponents of the project at ANC 3D meetings over the last year. He was very critical of ANC 3D at its December 2018 meeting when ANC 3D formally approved a resolution in support of the project, for trying to prevent opponents from speaking at the ANC 3D meeting. Dr. Mordini led a petition drive among his neighbors in Spring Valley Court and secured 32 signatures in opposition to the project. Dr. Mordini said the additional traffic stemming from the project created a safety risk for Spring Valley families.

“This project compromises residential safety,” Dr. Mordini said. “All cars, trucks, and pedestrians will have to enter the site through the intersection of 48th, Fordham, and Massachusetts Avenues. This is already a high traffic-and high-risk area. The risk of lives should move you to reject this project.”

He added the project would result in nearly 1,000 people being added in a half-block area of the neighborhood. He also warned the project would “damage the peace and integrity” of the neighborhood.

“The project offers no benefits, but brings problems that will alter the character of the neighborhood,” he concluded.

Valor Rebutts Opposition; Says Elimination Of Existing Retail Will Eliminate Alley Dangers

Valor offered a rebuttal of opponents' testimony at a continuation of the hearing on February 6. As part of its rebuttal, Valor minimized the safety issues in the alley by saying that the elimination of existing retail at the site, including Wagshal's Spring Valley Catering would eliminate much of the truck traffic in the alley. Nevertheless, Valor acknowledged that trucks now unloading on Yuma to service the Spring Valley Shopping Center would use the alleyway to unload.

Valor also sought to downplay opponents' argument that the project was too large by showing incomplete and distorted visual images of the homes adjacent to the proposed site. ZC Chairman Anthony Hood complained that Valor's presentation did not provide him with the visual images he has been seeking for nearly a year and asked Valor to provide additional pictures of the homes surrounding the Valor site. ZC Commissioner Peter May noted that Valor's images did not include all the details of the site, including existing telephone poles, wires, and trees that would provide the ZC with the opportunity to assess the visual impact of the proposed project.

Valor also sought to justify the mass and scale of the building by comparing it to the former site of the Ski Shop in the Spring Valley Shopping Center.

Under cross examination, opponents noted that the images provided by Valor also showed that the new high-rise would exceed the height of AU's 4801 Massachusetts Avenue Building.

During its rebuttal, Valor consistently referred to the building height to be about 42 feet tall. However, when measured from the building base in the alleys fronting Massachusetts Avenue, Valor acknowledged under cross examination that the building height exceeded 60 feet tall, not including a 15 foot penthouse that would make the building nearly 75 feet high.

The ZC has set March 11 to begin deliberating the case.

**Excerpts Of Testimony In Opposition To Valor Development
From Mr. Scott Parker, Spring Valley West Homeowners Association**

"The general sense of our homeowners is that *they do want the site developed*, preferably with a townhouse-like development that would fit better with the surrounding community. The only glimmer of attraction to Valor's otherwise undesirable design and density was the proposed inclusion of a 'full service grocery store', the promised 'amenity.' Unfortunately, that's not what's been offered to us, so the glimmer is gone.

"Mom's Organic" is not a full-service grocery store, so its benefits to the existing community residents would be very limited. As a member of the opposition, you would expect me to devalue Mom's Organic, but you don't have to take my word for it. Here's how the independent Washington Consumer Checkbook characterizes Mom's Organic. In terms of overall grocery store prices, Mom's isn't given a rating, because the ratings are based on 'a complete market basket of 154 items' – the full range of products that our families buy from full service grocery stores. Mom's Organic doesn't offer enough typical items to qualify for listing as a full-service grocery store.

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“In view of the limited value of Mom’s Organic, the benefit is significantly outweighed by the negative impact of the increase in dwelling unit density. In the revised proposal there isn’t any reduction from the previous 219 dwelling units; the implied population and vehicle density increases would be the same. To visualize what that increase in density means, you must include 15 full blocks in AU Park around the site to get to 219 dwelling units. The addition of Ladybird would double the dwelling unit intensity in the then-existing 16 block area. If you live in a single-family home, think about the effects of doubling the dwelling unit density in your own neighborhood. The effects of adding 219 units at the center of these neighborhoods overshadows the limited benefits of a less-than-full-service grocery, and those limited benefits would be fully eclipsed by Wegman’s before it opens.

“There is one other still-missing aspect of the proposal that the SVW homeowners requested at the very first meeting with Valor’s representative in October 2016; *can you offer condo units, not just rentals?* The lack of any condo purchase options makes the development a high-priced alternative for empty nesters wanting to downsize.

“Why is this option so important to us? Because the after-tax cost of a 2 BR or 2 BR plus den unit would be at least \$1000 per month more than their currently owned home. Unlike a purchase, where the mortgage interest is deductible, the full price of the unit is an after-tax real cost. With comparable 2 BR ~ 1100+ square foot units at the *Avalon at Foxhall* near Ward Circle currently renting at between \$3,000 and \$3,500 per month, the down-sizing from a 3 BR home in AU Park or Spring Valley would be to both a smaller and more expensive unit. Condos do carry monthly fees, but balanced against the total lack of capital appreciation, which has ranged from 2 to 5 percent over the recent years in DC, where’s the benefit to current community residents of moving to a smaller, more expensive Ladybird unit? Once again, the current community residents get nothing of substance in return for a significant increase in density. No thanks!”

Excerpts Of Testimony In Opposition To Valor Development
From Dr. Jeffrey L. Kraskin, President, Spring Valley-Wesley Heights
Citizens Association

“The Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association Board was established in 1952, so we’ve been part of many changes in the neighborhood – some of which we have vigorously opposed; some of which we have embraced enthusiastically; some of which have been improved by our recommendations. The SVWHCA Board has met numerous times since the last hearing on this case. Our Board has examined this project closely with a goal of finding a way to support this project. We support development of the site. But, precisely because of the impact of the proposed project, especially for traffic and safety in our community, the SVWHCA Board unanimously approved a resolution directing me to come before you tonight to speak in opposition to the present plan offered by the Valor Corporation.

“First, this project is too big and its scale is incompatible with the surrounding low density residential neighborhoods. This project will bring development better suited at a major Metro station, like Cityline at Tenley, to the Spring Valley and AU Park residential neighborhoods that consist almost solely of single family homes.

“Second, the applicant cites compatibility with the 4801 Mass. Avenue Building to argue incorrectly that the building is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The 4801 Mass. Avenue building, which housed professional offices and first floor retail before being purchased by AU, was – when first built – and

is still today out of scale with other existing commercial properties along Mass. Avenue. Because its height could be measured at the time not from the operational front of the building on Mass. Avenue, but rather from a side entrance on 48th Street, it could be built as a matter of right and two stories higher than otherwise would have been allowed. Despite neighbors' objections about demolishing the Apex Theatre to build this box on Mass. Avenue, the Association could do nothing but turn its attention to the historic character of the neighboring shopping centers on both sides of Mass. Avenue. That is why these sites earned and were awarded historic designation to maintain their significance in DC's development history.

“Third, the poor design of the project will result in new traffic and pedestrian safety problems. The alley system, on which this project relies, cannot support this project. The loading docks do not comply with any industry safety practices; the sidewalks are not safe, accessible and do not conform to acceptable design standards.

“Fourth, Valor says the excessive density and scale is warranted because it will include 18,000 square feet of retail space for a grocery store. But, the site now contains roughly 40,000 square feet of retail space. Long-established neighborhood-serving businesses will be lost. Meanwhile, we do not live in a grocery store desert. There is no shortage of Giants, Safeways, and Whole Foods within two miles of this site. And as Mayor Bowser recently announced, a new Wegman's will be built soon just about a mile away.

“Fifth, Valor's refusal to share more information about its density transfer agreement means we have no clue how it may impact future land use planning for the Spring Valley Shopping Center. There is an overriding public interest in knowing what limits are being imposed on the future use of this site and the long term effect of the density transfer agreement on the shopping center.

“Sixth, AU is entitled to the use of 236 parking spaces on this site as part of a 1979 parking easement which has existed since the 4801 Mass. Avenue building was constructed. After three years of negotiations, according to Valor, there still is no agreement with AU on parking. Valor has reported that AU will have access to only 56 spaces. Until the AU agreement is finalized and included in the record, the numbers cited by Valor of how the parking spaces in the new building are to be utilized are meaningless.

“Seventh, we believe the opinions of those in our neighborhood who live closest to the site should be given special consideration in this case. The evidence of their opposition can be seen clearly from the 3-year old yard signs that STILL dot their front lawns opposing this development. 32 Spring Valley Court homeowners, who live closest in Spring Valley to the site, also have filed a petition in this case opposing the project. We are here tonight to protect their interests.

“Finally, we still want to get to 'yes' on a mixed use project at the site. But, we oppose development that is so poorly planned as this project and adversely affects the use of neighboring property – thereby failing to meet the requirements of the Design Review regulations.”

Excerpts Of Testimony In Opposition To Valor Development From Ms. Alma Gates, Neighbors for a Livable Community

“Founded in 1987 by concerned neighbors of Spring Valley and American University Park, Neighbors for a Livable Community has as its mission to promote the planning and use of commercial property adjoining residential property in Ward 3 with an emphasis on the neighborhoods of Spring Valley,

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Wesley Heights, and American University Park. Our goal is to ensure that those uses do not adversely affect the stability and serenity of the neighboring residential communities; and, it is why we continue to oppose this project in its current form.

“The Zoning Commission continues to lack major components of this case. What Valor promotes as ‘amenities’ to justify the out-of-character massing and density of this project are primarily to enhance its marketability. The grocer comes at the expense of a loss of other valued neighborhood retail services and the sidewalks, promoted as a connectivity factor, are poorly designed and put public safety at risk. They are too narrow, unbuffered from the alley traffic or only exist for a portion of the alley. The proposed project will not make the neighborhood more livable as there is little offered that benefits existing community residents.

“This is an application for Design Review, which is supposed to be a process that is shorter and less intensive than the PUD process and allow less deviation from matter of right standards. The design review application was filed with the Zoning Commission on October 26, 2016. Since then the project has had three requests by the applicant for postponement of a Public Hearing, three requests by the Applicant for deferral of Deliberations by the Zoning Commission and one revision – a total of 39 months have been spent on the Valor project. Despite all this time and delay, the initial submission and the current submission are only slightly changed.

“Currently, there remains considerable confusion and uncertainty about the workings of the alleys which frame two sides of the development. Both alleyways are 20 ft. wide and meant to carry two-way traffic and both have only partial sidewalks. The East/West (AU) alley will carry the bulk of delivery trucks for the grocery store. They may or may not be able to access the loading bay. In any event, 50-ft. wheel base trucks will have to intrude into the North/South alley to initiate their backup into the loading bay. The PNC driveway off Massachusetts Avenue, currently without a sidewalk, also draws into question pedestrian safety. It will be used by some drivers to access or leave the development parking garage as it intersects the two alleys. A HAWK signal, proposed midblock on Massachusetts Avenue will be located proximate to where the PNC Bank alley intersects Massachusetts Avenue. Its location will draw pedestrians through the alleyways to cross Massachusetts Avenue mid-block rather than at the existing traffic signals at Fordham Road and 49th Street. An in-depth study of the safety of this ANC-proposed midblock HAWK signal is needed to ensure vehicular/pedestrian conflicts will not result from its installation.

“In conclusion, this Application has been on file for over two years and before the public for over three years. Uncertainty and clarity continue to plague it. The Valor Application for Design Review is not ripe for a decision at this time.”

**PIZZA PARADISO TO SPONSOR BEER-FOOD PAIRING
WORKSHOP AT SPRING VALLEY LOCATION ON FEBRUARY 25**

Pizza Paradiso, located in the Spring Valley Shopping Center, now often referred to as Spring Valley Village, sponsors a series of classes and workshops at its establishments in the metropolitan area. Classes cover a wide variety of topics, including how to make your own pizza.

Pizza Paradiso will hold a Beer and Food Pairing Workshop on February 25 at the Spring Valley location. Each class is \$30 and includes a take away gift.

Pizza Paradiso will also host its Winter Fest on February 23 at its Georgetown location from 1 PM – 5 PM. More information is available at EATYOURPIZZA.COM/FEST

CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF SPRING VALLEY PARK RESTORATION SET TO BEGIN

The District Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) has announced that the construction phase of restoration work at the Spring Valley Park is set to begin. The Park is bounded by Fordham Road NW, Quebec Street NW, 49th Street NW, and Hillbrook Lane NW.

The installation of an orange construction fence is the first sign that work is ready to start. Staff have been working with the contractor to consider site access and how best to minimize disruption to neighboring properties.

The project is funded by DOEE and is intended to address soil erosion problems in the park caused by storm water runoff that damaged the trails and the stream channel. The goal of the project is to slow down and redirect the storm water being discharged into the park; to cover and protect the exposed sanitary sewer lines in the park; and to restore the stream to a more natural condition with improved wildlife habitat and stable banks that can safely convey storm water. The project also is intended to rehabilitate the existing walking trail to make for safer access throughout the park.

Uncontrolled storm water flowing into the park has degraded the stream and its banks over time and in some locations exposed sanitary sewer lines that pose a risk of breaking and discharging untreated sewage. Also, the unabated flow of water from run off has lowered the water table in the stream resulting in a dry gully. These repairs will help bring the stream back to its original water levels.

A hiking trail currently exists in the park, but it also is degraded and in some locations hazardous due to erosion, exposed roots, and fallen trees.

As part of the initial phase, a report was completed to explore options for redesign of the trails and stream channel.

This is an exciting project for the neighborhood with the ultimate goal of restoring the park and the stream to a healthy ecosystem and providing residents with a beautiful park to enjoy. Nevertheless, storm water management will continue to be an ongoing challenge in the park. If ongoing measures are not taken to check the run off from the neighborhood, we may be back in this situation within ten years.

Neighbors can play their part by checking where drains and downspouts release rainwater and consider installing storm water management systems, such as rain gardens, rain barrels, and permeable paving, to keep all of their storm water on their property instead of sending it to the street or directly into the park. DC government's Riversmart Homes project offers low or no cost design and installation services to all DC residents interested in doing their part to control storm water.

Information on the program is available at <https://doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-homes-overview> .

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**DDOT NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MEETING
SET FOR FEBRUARY 26**

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) will host the first of three public workshops for the Rock Creek Far West Livability Study on Tuesday, February 26, 2019 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Spring Valley and Wesley Heights are part of the area designated by DDOT as Rock Creek Far West. The meeting will be held at the Palisades Neighborhood Library, 4901 V Street NW.

The purpose of this neighborhood livability study is to enhance the community quality of life through improvements to transportation safety and connections to destinations for all modes of traffic.

At the February 26 meeting, DDOT is expected to introduce the project, share data collected from existing resources, and provide opportunities for participants to share ideas. DDOT defines livability as improvements in public space that increase safety and access for all users of the transportation system. In plain English, it refers to the traffic within our neighborhoods. These studies are intended to calm traffic and recommend improvements in the traffic infrastructure.

For more information about the study, contact Ted Van Houten, DDOT Transportation Planner, at (202) 671-4580 or by email at Theodore.vanhouten@dc.gov . You could also refer to the project web site at www.rockcreekfarwest.com

REMINDER ON CRIME PREVENTION

Amid new reports of crime in the area – even during daylight hours – Spring Valley and Wesley Heights residents are reminded to take sensible steps to guard against crime that is intended to victimize you and your neighbors. Most importantly, be aware of your surroundings in the neighborhood. Nevertheless, that does not mean that every unfamiliar person or car (Ubers, food delivery, etc.) is a threat to your property. But, **if you see anything or anybody suspicious, call 911 immediately.** The Metropolitan Police Department are best qualified to assess whether suspicious activity is a prelude to criminal behavior.

Keep your doors locked even when you are home. If you are doing home repairs, keep ladders out of sight of those who might use them to break into an unlocked window. If strangers come to your door to sell magazines or other products, ask if they have a license or better yet, call 911 and let the police determine if they have the appropriate license. Few legitimate vendors go door-to-door anymore, especially at night.

Most crime in our neighborhood occurs as a result of people not locking their car doors, leaving garage door openers in their unlocked cars, or leaving packages, briefcases, backpacks, gym bags, and other valuables – even just pocket change – in your car visible to anybody walking by. Lock your car doors when you park your car outside your homes or in your driveways. Do not leave anything of value in your car that would tempt somebody to break in – not even a gym bag or spare change. And if you have a security alarm, put it on when you leave the house.

In short, whatever you do, don't make yourself a target for vandals or thieves.

NEW STUDY CITES EASE OF BREAKING INTO CAR MODELS WITH KEYLESS ENTRY

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Although keyless entry systems require a fob to be within a certain proximity of the car to unlock it, thieves can use relay boxes to boost the fob's signal and trick the system into believing the fob is near the car.

The *CNN* article notes that car break-ins and thefts are increasing dramatically worldwide because of the ease of hacking keyless entry systems. The report recommends that owners of keyless cars store their fobs in a "metal box or shielded pouch" away from the front door. If you choose to wrap your key fob in aluminum foil, be sure there are no tears in the foil, according to the article.

You can find the article at: <https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/28/europe/keyless-car-theft-scli-gbr-intl/index.html> and a related article at <https://www.autoexpress.co.uk/car-news/105809/almost-all-keyless-car-systems-vulnerable-to-relay-attacks>.

AU PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES NEW DATE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TOWN HALL

AU President Sylvia Burwell will hold a town hall meeting for AU's neighbors on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7 PM in Constitution Hall on the East Campus. The town hall meeting is mandated by the DC Zoning Commission as part of AU's Campus Plan. The town hall was originally scheduled in January, but was cancelled due to bad weather.

The town hall will be followed by a reception at 8 PM.

AU asks that persons interested in attending RSVP to communityrelations@american.edu.

New DCPS Chancellor And Deputy Mayor Will Address Ward 3 Schools At February 11 Community Meeting

Ward 3/Wilson Feeder Education Network is sponsoring a meeting on Monday, February 11 to meet Lewis Ferebee, the new Acting Chancellor of the DC Public Schools, and Paul Kihn, the new Deputy Mayor of Education. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 PM at the Cleveland Park Library.

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Neighborhood Update is a newsletter established by the **Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association (SVWHCA)** and **Neighbors for a Livable Community (NLC)** to report news and information on issues of importance to residents of Spring Valley and Wesley Heights. You may send information appropriate for publication to Tom Smith at tmfsmith@rcn.com No portion of this newsletter may be duplicated without written permission from the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association. This newsletter is distributed electronically. If you want to be on the distribution list, send your email to tmfsmith@rcn.com . Please share this with your own personal e-mail networks.

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