

Community Liaison Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 18, 2019
American University – East Campus – Constitution Hall (Rooms 1-3)
7 p.m.

Introductions & Opening Remarks

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by Don Edwards, from Justice and Sustainability Associates, at 6:42 p.m. He explained misunderstandings about the start time of the meeting and adjusted agenda items accordingly. Chief of Staff and Counselor to the President Seth Grossman, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University, apologized for the scheduling confusion and welcomed representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs). Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relations, introduced himself.

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

Alan Pollock, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, stated a concern about the disappearance of American University's institutional memory. He asked how new AU staff will prepare for the next campus plan. He asked about the AU President's position on these issues and on concerns from neighbors adjacent to the university.

Ed Fisher responded with a willingness to work on specific issues and stated that he will be hiring a new staff person to address community relations concerns. He expressed confidence in the transfer of knowledge and communications to new staff. He stated himself as a point of contact for community concerns.

Alan Pollock asked who has been consulted about the campus plan and consistency in its implementation.

Ed Fisher responded by acknowledging the need for transparency and regular community engagement. He acknowledged the upcoming AU Planning 101 Session as an introduction to AU planning and opportunity for AU to receive input from community members.

Allan Pollock asked if a draft campus plan could be seen.

Ed Fisher replied that the campus plan was not created yet and that the university will share information as it becomes available.

Tom Smith, of the Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association, stated that fundamental disagreements, not lack of communications and transparency, were the cause of problems during the campus planning process. He raised a concern about AU enrollment numbers and its effect on quality of life in the neighborhoods. He requested follow through on promises AU made about enrollment numbers.

Jeffery Kraskin, of the Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association, asked if the Planning 101 Session was separate from the AU Neighborhood Partnership. He also asked the Planning 101 session was a working group for the campus plan.

Ed Fisher replied that the Planning 101 session is a presentation, not an entity. He explained that AU intends to convene three Planning 101 sessions in 2019 that allow Seth Grossman to explain the AU strategic plan and how it informs the AU campus planning. He added that breakout sessions during the Planning 101 events allow community input to be provided.

Jeffery Kraskin asked when the five-year strategic plan began.

Seth Grossman replied that the strategic plan began in January 2019 and is in effect until 2024.

Jeffery Kraskin commented that the next campus plan begins in 2021 and asked for clarification on the planning processes and their relation to the community.

Seth Grossman replied that an explanation of anticipated processes and timelines will be provided at the Planning 101 session

Jeffery Kraskin asked if the results of the Planning 101 session will be posted.

Ed Fisher replied that notes from the Planning 101 session will be provided and the presentation can be posted.

Phil Thomas, of Ward 3 Vision, asked when the Planning 101 session materials will be posted.

Ed Fisher responded that the materials will be posted shortly after meetings occur.

Standing Reports

Construction Projects Update

David Dower, AU Assistant Vice Present for Planning and Project Management, updated the CLC on the Low Temperature Hot Water project and on progress at the Hall of Science. This presentation can be found at: <https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/CLC-Presentation-4-18-19.pdf>.

Allan Pollock asked if the East Campus uses hot water.

David Dower replied that the East Campus does use hot water.

Chuck Elkins, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked if the inactive power plant is going to be used.

David Dower responded that, due to low emissions, the incoming technology likely will not need a power plant.

Chuck Elkins followed up by asking if the power plant is still used.

David Dower replied that no other exhaust is coming out of the power plant stacks and that the power plant no longer will be used in a year.

Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked if the power plant will be removed.

David Dower responded that AU has not yet thought that far ahead in the timeline.

Bruce Klein, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked if the parking lots were removed in the Hall of Science project.

David Dower replied that the current site of the Hall of Science was formerly parking lots.

Bruce Klein asked how many parking spots were removed.

Daniel Nichols, Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety & Transportation Programs, replied that 78 parking spots were removed.

Bruce Klein followed up by asking how those parking spots will be replaced.

David Dower replied that those parking spots were not needed according to the cap.

Student Conduct Off Campus since December 2018

Jeffrey Brown, Dean of Students, reported that since December 2018, the university received seven complaints about off-campus student behavior from four locations. The locations included three single-family homes and 3333 Wisconsin Ave. Follow up has been made regarding the complaints, including meeting with ANC's in three of the locations.

Phil Thomas asked when the meetings with ANC officials occurred.

Jeffery Brown replied that he did not know the date.

Chuck Elkins responded that a fraternity party led to complaints from neighbors and led to discussion between ANC officials and AU.

Phil Thomas asked if one of the ANC meetings being referenced was a 7th District meeting that occurred.

Chuck Elkins replied affirmatively and explained an understanding reached that the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is to inform AU of student-related incidents. He added that he hoped the AU Neighborhood Partnership would support collaborative efforts.

Tom Smith asked which neighborhoods were involved in the meeting.

Chuck Elkins responded that Wesley Heights was included. Jeffery Brown added that he did not know which other neighborhoods were involved.

Tom Smith asked why procedures have not worked before.

Chuck Elkins replied that neighbors voiced their concerns and jurisdiction issues were addressed. He stated the importance of early identification and having police reports written and provided to the university.

Tom Smith stated his thought that AU had the right and responsibility to address neighborhood issues without police involvement.

Daniel Nichols responded by AU has administrative authority only and requires student identification prior to responding to an incident. An underlying complaint needs MPD involvement and the presence of MPD in case a situation escalates.

Tom Smith raised concern about AU not being aware of where its students live.

Tom Smith commended Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students, on the system for managing off-campus student conduct.

Jeffery Brown agreed to follow up on questions about AU's procedures, role, and expectations in address neighborhood complaints before the next CLC meeting.

Alan Pollock appreciated direct action AU took to quickly resolve issues without police involvement under the former AU Assistant Vice President of External Relations & Auxiliary Services.

Chuck Elkins requested members for the Student Life & Safety Working Group of the AU Neighborhood Partnership.

William Clarkson, of the Spring Valley Citizens Association, asked for clarification on police reporting requirements. In contrast to the fraternity incident, during which the MPD was called and expected to report to the university, he asked if the police were called in situations resolved by AU Community Relations staff.

Tom Smith replied that the police were not called.

William Clarkson asked what the procedure is if the police are not called.

Chuck Elkins replied that he was informed that AU staff are instructed, if their emergency line is called, to ask if the complainant wants to call 911. Once student presence is determined, then AU can address complaints.

Jeffery Brown agreed to review relevant AU policy and provide an explanation of how the system is designed to address incoming calls and complaints before the next CLC meeting. Based on his review, he will work with Phillip Morse, Assistant Vice President of University Police Services & Emergency Management Office to determine the follow-up required.

Tom Smith asked if the university knows where its off-campus students are living and asked if off-campus students are under the same code of conduct as on-campus students.

Jeffery Brown replied that off-campus students are under the same code of conduct.

Chuck Elkins added that he thought only certain provisions applied to off-campus students and requested clarification.

Bruce Klein asked if the university recorded students' addresses.

Jeffery Brown replied that students are expected and asked every semester to provide their addresses and emergency contact information. He explained that no one enforces this expectation.

Bruce Klein asked if any disciplinary action is taken for students who do not provide address information. He also asked if students using cannabis are under the student code of conduct.

Jeffery Brown responded that if students arrested on campus are subject to the code of conduct and students found off-campus may face criminal charges depending on DC laws.

Ed Fisher agreed to provide his number and card by request and was open to being called about the issues being raised.

Jeffery Brown agreed to prepare a description of policies in the student code of conduct related to student addresses and substance use before the next CLC meeting.

Dennis Williams, of the Tenley Neighbors Association, asked what the relationship is between fraternities and the university.

Jeffery Brown responded that AU staff are in close contact with national and international organizations that are hosted by American University. He explained that AU students in these organizations often go through the university's conduct process and the organization's conduct process and policies.

Dennis Williams asked who is involved when a fraternity is causing problems. He also asked how the organization gets involved.

Jeffery Brown replied that the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Student Conduct, and relevant organizations are in regular communication. Headquarter staff from many of the organizations make yearly visits to campus as well.

Jeffery Brown agrees to provide information on fraternity oversight management before the next CLC meeting.

Bruce Klein asked how AU enforces on and off campus illegal use of cannabis in public spaces.

Jeffery Brown replied that on-campus incidents are enforced in collaboration with the AU police. Off-campus incidents are handled by MPD.

John Wheeler, of Ward 3 Vision, added that AU jurisdiction is limited to AU students.

Chuck Elkins welcomed neighbors' involvement in the AU Neighborhood Partnership in relation to student conduct concerns being raised.

Transportation Update

Daniel Nichols presented the inaugural transportation newsletter. He expected the newsletter to be published the week of April 22, presenting transportation demand management, ways to encourage alternative mode of transportation, and how the university is working to address key concerns identified by community members. **This handout of the newsletter can be found at:**

Bruce Klein asked about how the university can encourage courtesy from scooter riders, especially courtesy to pedestrians on sidewalks

Daniel Nichols agreed add a statement about courtesy to pedestrians on sidewalks in the transportation newsletter. He also recognized the pervasiveness of this problem across the country and importance of these concerns from a risk management perspective.

Diane Dragaud, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, expressed challenges about the idea of the university contracting exclusively with a single scooter company.

Dan Nichols responded that the university recognized potential unintended consequences and would review market results.

Alan Pollock asked if the increase in scooter usage is causing a decrease in bike-sharing.

Daniel Nichols replied that the benefit of scooter usage is the increase in usage of alternative modes of transportation. He added that a negative consequence is congestion sidewalks.

William Clarkson, of the Spring Valley Neighborhood Association, suggested that they contact Councilmember Mary Cheh, who is on the Committee on Transportation & the Environment, for her support on the issues mentioned.

Daniel Nichols agreed to consider the suggestion by working with Ed Fisher. He also noted efforts the university took with companies to identify specific pick-up/drop-off locations on the ride-sharing apps.

Shelly Repp, of Neighbors for Responsible Development, acknowledged improvement at Ward Circle in adherence to pedestrian lights. He also asked if actions are being taken to address the problem with drop-offs by W.B. Mason and other delivery trucks. He added a concern about buses idling on the streets.

Daniel Nichols responded by agreeing to inform delivery services, especially W.B. Mason, again of delivery expectations. He also agreed to follow up on the bus concern. He mentioned the upcoming transportation fair which shares safety information with the campus and community.

Chuck Elkins asked if the university would encourage scooters and bikes to use bike lanes. He also suggested that officers could be located at Ward Circle to encourage students' compliance to pedestrian lights.

Dan Nichols agreed to encourage bike lane usage. He replied that he will continue working on Ward Circle concerns.

New Business & Neighborhood Issues – Open Discussion

School year events/calendar updates from Ed Fisher:

AU Planning 101
Thursday, April 25, 6 – 8 p.m.
Butler Board Room

Student Move-Out
Roughly Wednesday, May 1, through Wednesday, May 8

Spring Commencement Ceremonies
Saturday, May 11: 9 – 11 a.m., 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., and 6 – 8:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 12: 10 a.m. – noon and 2:30 – 5 p.m.
Bender Arena

Washington College of Law Commencement
Sunday, May 19, 1 – 3 p.m.
Bender Arena

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation “Real Estate Games”
Thursday, June 6, 6 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Bender Arena, Jacobs Field, Reeves Field, and Tennis Courts

AU Museum Summer Exhibition Opening Reception
Saturday, June 15, 6 – 9 p.m.
AU Museum, Katzen Arts Center

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CLC Meetings for 2018-2019

Proposed 2019-2020 CLC Meeting Dates: September 17, 2019, December 10, 2019; January 7, 2020 (Town Hall); March 17, 2020

Don Edwards thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

The next meeting of the CLC will be on **June 10, 2019** in Rooms 1-3 of Constitution Hall on East Campus.

Attendees

Community:

William Clarkson, Spring Valley Neighborhood Association
Diane Dragaud, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Chuck Elkins, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Bruce Klein, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Jeffrey Kraskin, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community
Alan Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Pat Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Shelly Repp, Neighbors for Responsible Development
Tom Smith, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Phil Thomas, Ward 3 Vision
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision
Dennis Williams, Tenley Neighbors Association

American University Staff:

Jeffery Brown, Dean of Students
David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management
Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relations
Seth Grossman, Chief of Staff to the President
Daniel Nichols, Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety & Transportation Programs

Other:

Don Edwards, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC
Kayla Elson, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC
Laura Gramling, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC