

**Community Liaison Committee Meeting**  
**Monday, March 5, 2018**  
**American University – School of International Service – Abramson Family Founders Room**  
**7 p.m.**

**Introductions & Opening Remarks**

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by AU Special Counsel to the President, David Taylor, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University. He opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. by welcoming representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs).

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

**Standing Reports for the Third Quarter**

*Capital Projects Update*

David Dower, AU Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management updated the CLC on the proposed Hall of Science. He stated that the university hopes the D.C. Zoning Commission will make a decision at the March 19 meeting, following additional information filed recently by AU in response to their request.

David Dower added that construction will start after May commencement ceremonies and that the university plans to hold a pre-construction meeting with neighbors in late March or early April. Site mobilization would begin in May, followed by excavation (June 2018 – December 2018). The goal is to occupy the building in June 2020.

Chuck Elkins, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked when the discussion regarding trucking routes would take place.

David Dower replied that ultimately DDOT makes this decision, but that the university will engage interested neighbors in this conversation in the coming weeks. He added that this project will not include as much excavation activity as previous projects, and thus, fewer trucks traveling to the site.

Tom Smith of Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association asked if the university has selected a contractor for the project, to which David Dower replied yes, Whiting-Turner.

Tom Smith asked if the contractor has decided where the spoils from excavation would be taken, to which David Dower replied no.

Tom Smith asked if the trucking route conversation can take place considering this fact.

David Dower responded yes, as the university can direct the contractor to take a specific route to travel to these facilities. He added that the university has already had extensive conversations regarding the importance of complying with specified trucking routes.

#### *Student Conduct Off-Campus Since December 2017*

Michelle Espinosa, AU Associate Dean of Students, reported that since the last CLC meeting on December 5, the university has received six complaints regarding off-campus student conduct. Of these six, four were for single-family homes with one house having two complaints. She added that a report also was submitted by the management of Cathedral Commons apartments related to incidents from the previous semester. She stated that all students in these matters have been met with and neighbors updated. She asked CLC members to please pass along her name and contact information to any resident experiencing an issue with off-campus student behavior.

Tom Smith asked for additional information on a recent event on campus regarding the posting of anti-Semitic flyers.

Michelle Espinosa replied that her office has not been involved directly, but that her understanding is that AU Police are aware of and continue to monitor this situation. She added that many colleges and universities across the country are dealing with the issue of non-affiliates coming to campuses to post inflammatory material such as this.

David Taylor stated that an “alt-right” group was responsible for these posters and that they were removed promptly and, once identified, a barring notice was issued to the person responsible, a non-affiliate of the university.

Bruce Klein, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked where the house that received two complaints was located, to which Michelle Espinosa replied Massachusetts Avenue.

#### **Old Business**

##### *Neighborhood Collaborative Update*

Linda Argo, AU Assistant Vice President for External Relations and Auxiliary Services, updated the CLC on the status of the AU Neighborhood Collaborative. She stated that the university currently is reviewing the status of the Collaborative in light of recent discussions and filings with the Zoning Commission. She added that AU will decide its course of action within a short period of time and that this information will be shared via the CLC listserv.

##### *Community Liaison Committee Co-Chair*

Linda Argo stated that, considering previous conversations with the CLC regarding the possibility of a co-chair from the neighborhood, this item was placed on the meeting agenda. She invited CLC members to share any thoughts on the idea and noted that the decision should lie with the CLC.

## **New Business and Neighborhood Issues – Open Discussion**

### *Update on Johnson's Florist and Garden Center - Former Commercial Space*

Linda Argo reminded attendees that Johnson's Florist and Garden Center vacated the commercial space at 4200 Wisconsin Avenue, NW at the end of January and advised that the space is being readied for a new tenant. She said that a lease is out for review and she hopes by spring the new tenant will be announced.

Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked if the university could state what type of tenant may be moving in, to which Linda Argo replied she could not at this time.

Jane Waldmann, of the Tenleytown Historical Society, asked if the university would release Johnson's from the non-disclosure clause included in its previous lease.

Linda Argo stated that this issue was discussed at the recent Town Hall meeting with AU President Sylvia Burwell and that the university has not heard from Johnson's regarding such a request. She added that if Johnson's wishes to make such a request, they can contact the university and we would certainly be willing to discuss it with them.

Jane Waldmann asked about a recent letter to President Burwell from D.C. At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds requesting a meeting on the matter.

Linda Argo acknowledged that President Burwell received the letter and would be responding.

Troy Kravitz, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked when the new tenant would take over the old Johnson's space.

Linda Argo replied that due to the nature of lease negotiations, it could be months before a new tenant moves in.

Tom Smith asked if President Burwell's response to Councilmember Bonds could be shared on the CLC listserv, to which Linda Argo responded yes.

### *Valor Development at Former SuperFresh Site*

Linda Argo noted that this item was placed on the agenda at the request of Tom Smith and asked if he had specific questions on the topic.

Tom Smith asked for information on a density transfer from AU to Valor Development, as well as on the negotiations related to the easement on the parking spaces at the project site.

Linda Argo replied that the AU parcel at 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, and the parcel Valor is proposing to develop are subject to a 1978 declaration of easement. This was discussed with Valor some time ago and at that time AU agreed not to object to the project under certain conditions, such as: the project must be supported by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E

and a grocery store must be included in the development. Also, the development must render AU's parcel non-conforming with current zoning regulations.

Tom Smith asked if AU is transferring FAR (floor-to-area ratio) as part of the agreement.

Linda Argo replied that her previous statement covered the overarching terms of the agreement and that AU is not objecting to the project.

Tom Smith said that Valor Development has indicated that the reason they aren't willing to share information about the FAR transfer agreement is because the university does not want to release the information. He asked if AU would share information regarding this agreement.

Linda Argo replied that she would discuss the matter with AU's Office of General Counsel and see if there was additional information that could be made public.

Tom Smith asked where AU is with regards to the parking agreement.

Linda Argo replied that she does not know exactly how far along these negotiations are, but that Valor has expressed interest in a long-term lease on what are now non-exclusive rights to at least half the parking spaces currently covered under the easement.

Tom Smith asked what AU wants.

Linda Argo replied that the university is waiting to hear more from Valor. She added that there is no demand that requires the university to keep non-exclusive use of all 236 spaces.

Alma Gates, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked how the 236 spaces fits into the overall parking requirement for AU.

Linda Argo replied that those spaces are not included in the current parking requirement since the Spring Valley Building (4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW) is not part of the current campus plan.

Jeffery Kraskin, of the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association, asked if AU is using the old SuperFresh building, to which David Dower replied no.

Barbara Repp, an AU Park neighbor, stated that there is a rumor that AU is working on projects inside the space. She also asked if AU could elaborate further on the timeline for negotiations with Valor.

Linda Argo replied that she could not, as it is not an AU project.

Tom Smith asked if in the interim AU is honoring the agreement currently in place that gives the university access to 236 parking spaces, to which Linda Argo replied yes.

### *AU Parking Utilization Rates*

Tom Smith stated that AU's parking utilization rate was shown at 50 percent at the time the campus plan was approved, but that a recent report shows it at 80 percent. He added that this amounts to 500 additional vehicles, while the campus plan stated a reduction in vehicles would occur. He asked for the times and number of vehicles at the peak period.

Linda Argo replied that in 2010, AU had 2,724 parking spaces and an average utilization rate of 54 percent. She added that in the fall of 2017, AU had 2,393 parking spaces and an average utilization rate of 73 percent. She stated that the target for transportation demand management (TDM) programs is 70 – 75 percent utilization and that AU is well within that range. She said that the university has instituted a variety of TDM measures to reduce the number of vehicular trips to campus but there are some things beyond AU's control including where people live, the price of gasoline, and Metro reliability.

Linda Argo continued that comparing numbers from 2010 to 2017 does not work due to the number of changes in the parking inventory over that time.

Tom Smith replied that a presentation on AU's efforts would be helpful.

Linda Argo stated that a more robust report can be included as part of the next quarterly CLC meeting.

### *AU Enrollment Update*

Linda Argo stated that Tom Smith requested a breakdown of full-time undergraduates (presented at the December CLC meeting) by class. This information can be viewed at: <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Fall-2017-Enrollment-by-Class.pdf>.

She added that the university now lists transfer students separately as many do not fall neatly into sophomore or junior designations, for example, until more information is available on the credits that are transferable.

Tom Smith asked if this information can be shared and if AU is meeting its housing requirements based on these numbers.

Linda Argo replied yes to both questions.

Tom Smith asked if the university is required to have the capacity to house 100 percent of freshmen and sophomores on campus, to which Linda Argo replied yes and that AU is meeting that requirement.

Troy Kravitz stated that it would be useful to see freshmen numbers from four years ago as well in order to see the attrition rates.

## **Good of the Order**

### *CLC Meetings for 2018-2019*

Andrew Huff, AU Director of Community Relations, alerted attendees to the upcoming CLC meetings dates (June 7, 2018; September 17, 2018; December 10, 2018; January 7, 2019 [Town Hall]; and March 13, 2019). He asked attendees to advise him if any known conflicts exist.

### *AU Special Events Open to the Community*

Andrew Huff referred attendees to material in their meeting packets related to several special events open to the community. This included the AU Arts spring calendar, the annual Campus Beautification Day event, and an upcoming documentary film screening on U Street.

Chuck Elkins asked if the university could provide information on the Good Neighbor parking policy as part of the presentation at the next CLC meeting.

Tom Smith asked if the parking report presented at the December CLC meeting could be recirculated, to which Linda Argo replied yes.

David Taylor then thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

The next meeting of the CLC will be on June 7, 2018 in the Abramson Family Founders room at the School for International Service.

## **Attendees**

### *Community:*

Judy Chesser, Tenley Neighbors Association  
Chuck Elkins, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D  
Alma Gates, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D  
Harry Gates, Neighbor  
Judy Harrison, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute  
Bruce Klein, Fort Gaines Citizens Association  
Troy Kravitz, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D  
Jeffrey Kraskin, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association  
Hunt LaCascia, Fort Gaines Citizens Association  
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community  
Barbara Repp, Neighbor  
Tom Smith, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association  
Ben Tessler, Westover Place  
Jane Waldmann, Tenleytown Historical Society  
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision  
Betsy White, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

### *American University Staff:*

Linda Argo, Assistant Vice President for External Relations & Auxiliary Services  
David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management  
Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students  
Andrew Huff, Director of Community Relations  
David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the President

*Other:*

Don Edwards, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC  
Stephanie Kline, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC