

Community Liaison Committee Meeting
Monday, September 17, 2018
American University – East Campus – Constitution Hall (Rooms 1 &2)
7 p.m.

Introductions and Opening Remarks

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened at 7:05 p.m. by David Taylor, Special Counsel to the AU President, and chair of the CLC. He welcomed neighbors, representatives of neighborhood organizations, and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs).

He then turned the meeting over to Don Edwards of Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC, who facilitated the meeting on behalf of American University.

Standing Reports

2017-2018 Annual Report on Traffic & Parking Performance

Dan Nichols, AU Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs, presented the annual report on traffic and parking performance. This presentation can be found at: <https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Good-Neighbor-Policy-Citation-Report-2018-09-17-18.pdf>.

Dan Nichols advised that the overall number of Good Neighbor parking tickets issued this past year was down by 575 tickets. He attributed this drop to an increase in compliance with the policy, largely due to a recent restructuring of the fine structure to a tiered system. First offenders now receive a \$200 ticket and second offenders, a \$250 ticket.

Tom Smith, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked if the Washington College of Law was included in last year's total, to which Dan Nichols replied yes.

Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked why the first ticket was so expensive.

Dan Nichols replied that the intent ultimately is to bring offenders into compliance and that the AU Zoning Order required a tiered fine structure. He added that this past year resulted in \$169,000 in fine potential, but as some tickets remain outstanding, could not comment on how much has been collected.

Dennis Paul asked the cost of a campus parking permit.

Dan Nichols replied \$126 per month for faculty and staff and \$529 per semester for students. He added that the U*Pass program, part of AU's extensive Traffic Demand Management (TDM) program, has reduced demand for student parking permits.

Tom Smith asked how the university handles parking for students who live in the neighborhood.

Dan Nichols responded that if they can prove their address and park only near their home, they will not be ticketed.

Stephen Gardner, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked if tickets are written by administrative personnel or by AU Police officers.

Dan Nichols replied that student workers issue the tickets and that additional students were hired for these jobs to cover the Washington College of Law and Spring Valley Building.

Tom Smith asked if the university is having any parking issues with participants in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI).

Dan Nichols stated that there has been push-back in the past, but participants are contractually obligated to abide by the Good Neighbor parking policy.

Tom Smith asked about the number of tickets issued on 48th Street, 49th Street, and Fordham Road and if these numbers declined from last year.

Dan Nichols responded that 15 tickets were issued on 48th Street, 0 on 49th Street, and 1 on Fordham Road.

Jeffery Kraskin, of the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association, stated that it appeared that more vehicles than usual were parking on Rockwood Parkway.

Dan Nichols replied that he had not received this information from parking staff, but that this is a heavily patrolled area. He added that these may be D.C. Water workers from the project under way on Rockwood Parkway.

Capital Projects Update

David Dower, AU Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management, provided an update on capital projects under way on campus, including the Hall of Science and upgrades to the existing WAMU radio tower. This presentation can be found at: <https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-09-17-18.pdf>.

Troy Kravitz, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked if upgrades to the WAMU tower would result in any additional lighting, to which David Dower replied no.

Jeffery Kraskin asked what type of equipment would be added to the tower, to which David Dower responded broadcast equipment.

Shelly Repp, of Citizens for Responsible Development, asked if the tower had been turned over to WAMU, to which David Dower replied yes.

David Taylor added that the work involves upgrades to the existing tower due to outdated technology for five stations including WAMU, WPFW, and WTOP.

Hunt LaCascia, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked if there were any other stations using the tower.

David Taylor replied that there may be potential for additional tenants in the future, but for now there are five stations using the tower.

Dennis Paul asked if the tower would be lit up.

David Dower replied no, other than the existing beacon on top, and that it will be no taller than the existing tower.

Dennis Paul asked about the timeline for this work.

David Dower responded that once under way this spring, the work will take approximately three months to complete.

Tom Smith asked if the university was open to adding 5G to the tower.

David Taylor replied that he would take this request back to WAMU for consideration.

Susan Kimmel, of Ward 3 Vision, asked where the tower is located.

David Dower stated that it is located on the south side of the main campus near the Child Development Center and Jacobs Field.

Student Conduct Off-Campus – Summer & Welcome Week

Andrew Huff, AU Director of Community Relations, reported that between May 14 and August 26 (end of Welcome Week), the university received three complaints about off-campus student behavior. One complaint was related to debris left behind at a single-family home after move-out. Two reports involved complaints from tenants at 3333 Wisconsin, and Alban Towers. There were no complaints received during Welcome Week. There also was a more recent complaint about disruptive behavior in an apartment in McLean Gardens.

Andrew Huff advised that he continues to work closely with AU Associate Dean of Students Michelle Espinosa in communication with building managers and tenants at these locations and will meet with several in the coming weeks.

Preliminary Report on Fall 2018 Enrollment & Student Housing

Sharon Alston, AU Vice Provost of Undergraduate Enrollment, updated the CLC with a preliminary report on enrollment and housing. This information can be found at:

Sharon Alston reported that as of the first day of classes (August 27), the university's enrollment consisted of 12,010 total. She described the breakdown as follows:

6,929 undergraduate students
2,566 graduate students
1,444 law students
1,071 other (part-time, non-degree, etc.)

Sharon Alston stated that as of August 27, enrollment on the main campus totaled 10,566.

Tom Smith asked how these figures compare to the university's projections in the 2011 campus plan.

Sharon Alston replied that compared to last year, there was a two-percent increase in undergraduate enrollment and an eight-percent increase in graduate enrollment. She added that enrollment at the Washington College of Law remained around where it was last year.

Tom Smith asked if AU could provide the numbers projected in the 2011 campus plan as well.

Andrew Huff said that this information will be circulated and reminded attendees that the university remains below the overall enrollment cap imposed by the Zoning Commission.

Tom Smith asked what percentage of applicants were accepted this year.

Sharon Alston replied that the admit rate was 31 percent this year. She added that housing capacity is at 68 percent.

New Business & Neighborhood Issues

Update on Former Johnson's Commercial Space

Andrew Huff reported that lease negotiations are under way with a potential tenant at the former Johnson's commercial space on Wisconsin Avenue. He added that the potential tenant is a neighborhood-serving business and that once the lease is finalized, this information will be shared with the CLC.

University Avenue Buffer Update

Andrew Huff stated that the university has been working with neighbors and ANC members on a five-year plan for the University Avenue buffer per the Zoning Order for the new Hall of Science building. A site visit and follow-up meeting were held, and a plan agreed upon. The first plantings will take place this fall after neighbors and the university select locations for the first set of plantings in early October.

AU Strategic Plan Update

Andrew Huff reported that the university is into the final two years of former President Neil Kerwin's strategic plan and that work began on President Burwell's strategic plan last summer with three basic questions – What distinguishes AU? What should change? What should stay the same? Further campus discussions are taking place this fall with a goal of completing and unveiling the plan at the end of the calendar year for implementation in 2019. He added that the strategic plan is the driver for the next campus plan and will help to set priorities moving forward.

Claire Craik, of Westover Place Homeowners Corporation, asked if there will be an opportunity for neighbors to weigh in on the plan.

David Taylor replied that he would recommend to the President's Chief of Staff that a session be held with neighbors.

Jeffery Kraskin asked why the strategic plan extends only five years.

David Taylor responded that with the rapid changes in the higher education field, ten years is a very long time.

Dennis Paul asked if the plan will consider future university facilities.

David Taylor stated that the plan will help determine where the university will go moving forward, which also will help to inform future capital campaigns and the campus plan.

Shelly Repp asked if the current strategic plan is available online, to which David Taylor replied yes.

*Note: the current AU strategic plan can be found at: <https://www.american.edu/about/strategic-plan/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=2903475>.

Neighborhood Partnership Update

Claire Craik, the interim Neighborhood Co-Chair of the AU Neighborhood Partnership (AUNP), reported that neighbors and the university continue their efforts as the AUNP takes shape. She added that a steering committee and working groups were being formed and that over the next several months there would be more information to share.

Jeffery Kraskin asked how the AUNP is different from what was referred to previously as the Neighborhood Collaborative.

Claire Craik responded that changing the name to "Partnership" implies more than simple collaboration and that the steering committee is working now to finalize the group's charter.

Tom Smith asked who was involved in the AUNP.

Claire Craik replied that many in attendance were participants, including ANC Commissioners and representatives of neighborhood associations. She added that all neighborhood groups were invited, including the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association when the effort was originally getting under way.

Tom Smith asked about the relationship between the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) and the Partnership.

Claire Craik replied that they are separate entities and that the Partnership will do a “deeper dive” into issues of mutual concern and operate through consensus-based decision making. She said that the Partnership will share information with the CLC, as well as relay information from the CLC back to the Partnership.

Tom Smith asked how the neighborhood groups that are members of the CLC have been contacted.

Claire Craik responded that the Partnership is being developed in a very deliberative way and that the university and neighborhood are close to having a mechanism in place for a cooperative approach to issues that takes a deep dive into the issues. She added that one goal is to have a less antagonistic approach to the upcoming campus plan than what took place in 2011.

Jeffery Kraskin asked how the Partnership will be involved in the planning process for the next campus plan.

Claire Craik stated that through the various working groups, efforts will be made to address concerns related to adverse impacts.

Jeffery Kraskin asked if the Partnership will be the vehicle for developing the next campus plan.

David Taylor said that the Partnership will be a part of that process.

Jeffery Kraskin asked if there will be limitations on who is involved in the development of the next campus plan, to which David Taylor replied no.

Tom Smith asked what groups are involved currently in the Partnership.

William Clarkson, of the Spring Valley Neighborhood Association, stated that this information was included in a recent filing with the Zoning Commission.

Claire Craik responded that currently the Partnership consists of Westover Place Homeowners Corporation, Fort Gaines Citizens Association, Spring Valley Neighborhood Association, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E, and Ward 3 Vision. She added that proximity to the AU campus is an important criterion.

Tom Smith asked about the inclusion of Greenbriar apartment building, Sutton Place, and Sutton Towers in the Partnership.

Claire Craik replied that there will be opportunities for participation through working groups and that the CLC also provides a useful venue for campus planning discussions.

Tom Smith said that he believes everyone who is a member of the CLC should also be involved in the Partnership.

Troy Kravitz said that the CLC is too big and includes almost every group in Ward 3.

Tom Smith asked why Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F was not included.

William Clarkson stated that the past record has great bearing on the conversation.

Dan Nichols said that this has to be a linear discussion and that it was determined previously that something else was needed other than the CLC.

Jeffery Kraskin said that it has more to do with effective means of operation. He mentioned the issue of smoking off-campus from several years ago as an example.

Dan Nichols asked Jeffery Kraskin if he agrees that something other than the CLC is needed, to which he replied yes.

Tom Smith stated that the agreement that created the Neighborhood Collaborative was related to housing capacity available on the AU campus and that he worked with AU to provide flexibility by allowing apartments under master lease at the Berkshire apartments to be counted towards the required 67 percent housing availability.

Don Edwards asked attendees if they felt any progress was being made on this matter and said that there is a level of intractability with this issue.

Jeffery Kraskin asked if AU wanted to be released from the previous "agreement" that was made. If so, he requested a letter stating as much.

Troy Kravitz asked Jeffery Kraskin what he meant by "agreement?"

Jeffery Kraskin said that the Partnership has not been discussed with the CLC and that there has been no invitation or outreach to many organizations.

Tom Smith stated that the Partnership should be inclusive and asked for information on the relationship between the CLC and the Partnership. He asked how will the CLC operate going forward.

Shelly Repp stated that there needs to be additional involvement outside of the CLC. He also asked about the relationship between the Partnership and CLC.

Don Edwards stated that several questions have been asked and that AU would respond. He added that the current co-chairs of the Neighborhood Partnership (Claire Craik and Andrew Huff) can also help to answer questions.

Good of the Order

Andrew Huff reminded attendees of the upcoming CLC meetings, which will take place on December 10, 2018; January 7, 2019 (town hall and reception); and March 13, 2019.

He also referred them to their meeting packets for information on several upcoming campus events open to the community.

Don Edwards adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Attendees

Community:

Taylor Berlin, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Claire Craik, Westover Place Homes Corporation
Diane Dragaud, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Stephen Gardner, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Susan Kimmel, Ward 3 Vision
Jeffrey Kraskin, Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Troy Kravitz, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Hunt LaCascia, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community
Shelly Repp, Citizens for Responsible Development
Tom Smith, Neighbors for a Livable Community

American University Staff:

Sharon Alston, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Enrollment
David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management
Andrew Huff, Director of Community Relations
Dan Nichols, Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs
David Taylor, Special Counsel to the President

Other:

Don Edwards, Justice & Sustainability Associates
Laura Gramling, Justice & Sustainability Associates