

Community Liaison Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 24, 2013
American University – School of International Service – Founders Room
7:00 p.m.

Introduction

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by AU Vice President of Campus Life Gail Hanson, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University. She opened the meeting at 7 p.m. by welcoming representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs). She also noted that the meeting marked the first anniversary of the creation of the CLC.

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

Gail Hanson then noted that Matthew Frumin, from Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E, participated in the closing program of AU Welcome Week and spoke to students about the District and DC history. She offered her appreciation for his participation and stated that it was a very popular part of the event.

Preliminary Report on Fall 2013 Enrollment

Greg Grauman, AU Director of Admissions, presented a preliminary report on AU's enrollment for fall 2013. He advised that Saturday, September 28 is the official census date and that at that time, updated data will be collected.

Tom Smith, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D; Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association (SVWNA), asked if the data would be broken down by first and second year students.

Gail Hanson advised that this information will be provided in the next several weeks and available on the CLC website.

Jeffrey Kraskin, of the SVWHNA, asked if graduate student data is also included as related to the enrollment cap, to which Gail Hanson responded yes.

The enrollment cap under the Campus plan is 13,600. Gail Hanson indicated that we will report on the percentage of undergraduates in university housing as soon as the fall enrollment figures are firm.

Traffic & Parking: Review of 2012-2013 Performance

Dan Nichols, AU Executive Director of University Safety Programs, provided an update on the number and location of parking tickets issued in the last year as part of AU's Good Neighbor policy. This information will be posted on the CLC website.

He stated that 45th Street and Rockwood Parkway have been the biggest problems in the last year. He continued that the Good Neighbor policy is now written into all contracts with AU and that on site contractors are also expected to adhere to the policy.

Judy Chesser, from the Tenley Neighbors Association, asked what the grounds were for having a ticket waived.

Dan Nichols responded that several factors are taken into consideration; appeals are considered on a case by case basis. Most waivers are for “tickets issued in error” – that is tickets issued to parkers whose destination is not AU but a local residence or business.

Jeffrey Kraskin asked if additional information could be provided on the streets listed as “other,” to which Dan Nichols responded yes.

Tom Smith asked how AU determines who will enforce specific locations – AU Public Safety or Washington College of Law?

Dan Nichols stated that AU does not publicize the boundaries within which parking enforcement takes place to prevent people from simply parking beyond these boundaries.

Walter Labitsky, Director of Facilities at the Washington College of Law, advised that the boundary between the law school and main campus enforcement is 45th Street.

Kent Slowinski, from Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3D, said that the 4300 block of Garfield Street, NW was an issue as it is not currently zoned for residential parking.

Dan Nichols asked him to call AU Public Safety for assistance in addressing parking problems in this area.

Beth Marcus, from the Sutton Place Condominium Association, stated that vehicles exiting the School for International Service (SIS) parking garage are doing so illegally – turning left or going straight down New Mexico Avenue - and creating a dangerous situation.

Dan Nichols replied that AU Public Safety continues to monitor this situation, but that the signage and configuration of the intersection are the responsibility of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT).

Linda Argo, AU Assistant Vice President for External Relations & Auxiliary Services, advised that AU has met with DDOT on several occasions about the issues at this intersection and that beyond improvements to the signal cycle timing, no other action has been taken by the District.

Nan Wells, from ANC 3D, stated that the ANC could possibly pass a resolution in support of these improvements in an effort to get action from DDOT.

Tom Smith asked if DDOT still requires AU to submit data on the SIS parking garage traffic, to which Linda Argo replied that AU has two annual reports and submitted both to DDOT and ANC 3D and that this requirement has been met.

Jacobs Field Sound Update

David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the President, reported that a recent test of a newly installed microphone compressor was performed for Bob Herzstein by members of the AU Athletics Department. It was successful in satisfying Mr. Herzstein's concerns about amplified sound on the field during athletic competitions; additional testing will take place throughout the field hockey season.

Construction Update & Preview of East Campus Planning

David Dower, AU Assistant Vice President for Facilities Development & Real Estate, updated the CLC on recently completed construction projects and other capital projects underway. This presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-09-24-13.pdf>.

He briefly reviewed the newly opened Cassell Hall and Nebraska Hall addition, as well as the on-going demolition at the Tenley Campus as part of the Washington College of Law development. He advised that tours of Cassell Hall will take place on October 18 and that any interested community members are welcome to attend.

Regarding East Campus, he stated that Skanska has been hired as the construction manager. Their building technique is unique and mitigates construction impact by fabricating building pieces off site. He advised that a pre-construction meeting for the East Campus project will take place in the spring, well ahead of ground breaking, with significant community outreach prior.

David Fehrmann, from the Westover Place Homeowners Association, asked if it is AU's intention to build all of the buildings shown on the slide in the two year period

David Dower responded that the priority is to build the three residential structures and buffer buildings.

David Fehrmann referred to an earlier discussion about adding to the plant buffer between the project site and Westover with early plantings.

David Dower stated that once the logistics of the construction plan have been confirmed, he can assess what is possible in fulfilling this landscaping request.

Joe Wisniewski, from Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked about the net loss in parking spaces in building East Campus. Linda Argo advised that in the District's

Zoning Order, it states that AU will build 150 underground parking spaces and 250 surface parking spaces on the East Campus. She went on to say that it was always clear that there would be a net loss of some parking spaces.

Tom Smith asked about the need to move forward with design when the project has already been through Further Processing with the Zoning Commission.

David Dower replied that the AU team and architects are now in the structural design phase, focusing primarily on internal building systems. He added that what the Zoning Commission approved is what is going to be built.

Nan Wells asked exactly how many parking spaces will be lost.

The Nebraska lot currently has 900 spaces. AU will build 250 spaces on a new surface lot on East Campus and an additional 150 spaces underground, resulting in a net loss of approximately 500 spaces.

Dan Nichols added that additional parking spaces will be a part of the Tenley Campus redevelopment and that this will help decrease the number of lost spaces overall.

Beth Marcus asked where people will park during the construction process.

Dan Nichols replied that the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study currently underway will help AU in determining ways to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles traveling to and from campus. He also added that only 53% of the parking spaces in the Nebraska Avenue lot are utilized on a regular basis.

Nan Wells asked if AU could consider looking into lowering the cost of parking permits.

Dan Nichols responded that the TDM study is looking at this, but that AU wants to be careful as lowering the cost too much may encourage more people to drive. Likewise, raising the cost too high may encourage people to park in the neighborhoods around campus.

Jeffery Kraskin recommended that AU meet with neighbors about the East Campus prior to the required pre-construction meeting.

Linda Argo replied that while the Zoning Order requires a pre-construction meeting at least 90 days before construction begins, AU will be working closely with the residents of Westover as the project moves forward.

Westover Condominium Incident Update

Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students, described a recent incident at Westover Condominiums involving an AU student. She then deferred to Dan Nichols who stated that the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) has an open criminal investigation into

the matter and that AU Public Safety does not comment on other law enforcement agency's investigations. He then introduced two sergeants from MPD's Second District who provided an update on the incident.

MPD advised that the investigation continues and that alcohol was involved. The sergeant stated that a warrant is being sought for the student's arrest.

Dan Nichols stated that a Westover resident went for a walk and came back to discover an AU student in the house. The resident was able to identify the student and later called MPD and AU Public Safety.

Nan Wells asked what the offence is. MPD responded "unlawful entry," which is a misdemeanor and punishable by up to six months in jail.

Kyle Pitsor, from the Westover Place Homeowners Association, asked if entering the private property of Westover Condominiums was also a criminal act.

MPD responded that this could be a separate charge of "trespassing."

Kyle Pitsor asked if the MPD investigation also involved determining the identities of those who brought the student onto Westover property.

MPD advised that the investigation only involves one person at this point.

Kent Slowinski stated that there have been problems in the past with AU students using Battery-Kimbell Park after dark.

Dan Nichols replied that AU Public Safety is aware of the issue and has been working with the U.S. Park Police who have jurisdiction over the park.

Tom Smith asked if the Westover incident is being investigated as a hazing incident, to which MPD replied no.

Michelle Espinosa said that she learned about the incident on Saturday afternoon and immediately sent an email to the student requesting a meeting about the incident. This meeting has been scheduled. She also stated that the AU Conduct Code provides for adjudicating a case separately from the MPD investigation. The student does not appear to be involved with a Greek organization as a member or perspective member.

Gail Hanson added that any violation of law is a violation of the AU Conduct Code; other charges may apply if a student engaged in other prohibited conduct.

David Fehrmann stated that early reports were that the student was driven in by others to find a home to sleep in at around 11:30am Saturday. He continued that the student may be a victim as well as a perpetrator and that the incident could have ended very badly. He also stated that he wanted the investigation to also focus on the individuals who drove the

student into Westover. [Added note: this account of the incident has not been corroborated through investigation.]

Michelle Espinosa replied that AU also wants to know how the event transpired and if other participants are identified, they will also be interviewed for possible conduct charges. She requested that any neighbors with additional information contact MPD, as they are leading the investigation.

David Fehrmann said that Westover residents would be interested in knowing of any sanctions leveled against the student and suggested that publicizing such information could act as a deterrent to other students.

Michelle Espinosa responded that the outcomes of conduct cases are protected by privacy laws.

Student Conduct: Summary of Incidents since June 2013 Meeting

Michele Espinosa reported that since June 2013, her office has received 13 complaints related to student conduct at 6 single family residences.

She indicated that club sports and student organizations with three or more individuals living together are asked to register their addresses with AU Campus Life. This has hastened our ability to identify student occupants of problem properties. This year, most complaints have involved either and members of an athletics team or registered student group.

Regarding the 13 complaints since June, she reported that all of the students involved have been contacted and three of the incidents resulted in conduct charges. For incidents involving Greek organizations, alumni chapter advisors and national chapter offices are also notified and engaged. For athletic teams, coaches and the Athletic Director are also notified and engaged.

She also stated that she is in greater contact with property owners, and they are often helpful in handling matters related to student behavior.

Alan Pollock, from the Ft. Gaines Citizens Association, asked if any of the recent incidents occurred in the Ft. Gaines neighborhood, including Springdale Street.

Michelle Espinosa replied that none of the addresses on the current list are on Springdale Street.

Tom Smith advised that he received a call regarding a fraternity house at 4931 MacArthur Blvd. related to parties and parking issues. He was unsure if these were AU students or students from another university.

Michelle Espinosa stated that she will look into the address, but has received no complaints to date. She continued that MPD and AU Public Safety have taken a proactive approach with fraternity houses and have been visiting them ahead of any complaints to ensure they are aware of the District's disorderly conduct and noise ordinances.

Kent Slowinski asked if AU would share with ANC Commissioners a list of student houses and addresses.

Michelle Espinosa replied that any problem properties should be reported to AU.

Progress on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Study

Dan Nichols reported that work continues on AU's TDM study by Nelson\Nygaard and that since the special CLC meeting on the topic, no additional suggestions have been sent via the TDM email address (autdm@american.edu).

He also stated that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) remains very interested in the study and that focus groups are now underway with the campus community to determine how students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors travel to and from campus. A campus-wide survey will also be distributed very shortly. The study is set to be completed by the end of the semester.

Judy Chesser asked if the law school will be included, to which Dan Nichols responded yes.

Tom Smith stated that it is his hope that the report will be shared with the CLC.

Tom Quinn, from Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E, cited a recent Sierra Club study which ranks AU 9th out of 170 colleges and universities. He continued that there are opportunities for AU to do more in regards to bicycle infrastructure and transportation planning. He stated that these issues should be kept in mind especially as related to East Campus.

Dan Nichols replied that Nelson\Nygaard is looking at these issues.

Tom Quinn asked if the report would be issued in time to incorporate recommendations into East Campus planning, to which Dan Nichols responded yes.

Joe Wisniewski asked how comments sent to the TDM email address would be incorporated into the study.

Dan Nichols responded that all the information would be included as an addendum to the focus groups and that neighbors are encouraged to continue to send in thoughts and feedback to autdm@american.edu.

Jeffery Kraskin stated that if conversations are held with other organizations like WMATA as part of the study, AU should also include the community.

Mediator Recommendations

Hisham Khalid, from the AU Office of General Counsel, announced that a pool of potential mediators has been identified. He advised that the information is available on the CLC website at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/CLC-Mediator-Pool-Recommendations-09-24-13.pdf>. He also passed out packets with the mediators' profiles and stated that this is simply a starting point and that the list can be changed or modified at a later time if needed.

Gail Hanson thanked Bob Herzstein and Bill Krebs for working on this with Mr. Khalid.

Jeffery Kraskin asked what to do if there is an issue with someone on the list.

Hisham Khalid responded that he can speak with him, Bob Herzstein, or Bill Krebs.

Bob Herzstein added that the pool is simply a starting point and that the CLC can use others if necessary.

David Fehrmann asked if mediation is needed, if those who have been selected are used on a rotating basis.

Hisham Khalid replied that mediators would be selected by mutual agreement.

Status of Aramark's Liquor License Application

Linda Argo reported that AU's food service provider, Aramark, has applied for a catering liquor license with the District's Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA). She stated that at a recent hearing, ABRA asked Aramark for additional information on their choice of a catering license. This information has been provided and a decision from ABRA is forthcoming. [Note: On October 1, 2013, ABRA issued Aramark a Class C Caterer's license.]

Judy Chesser asked if alcohol can be served outdoors on the AU campus.

Linda Argo replied that Aramark and all vendors must follow AU's policy for serving alcohol.

Gail Hanson stated that after the last CLC meeting, AU's alcohol policy was reviewed and discussed in detail and that AU does not allow alcohol service in outdoor campus locations.

Good of the Order

Beth Marcus reported on her experience as a participant in the new Neighborhood Audit program, where residents aged 60 and older in the 20016 zip code can audit AU classes. She advised that she is enjoying it very much and that the program is a big asset to the community.

Gail Hanson acknowledged Matt Frumin from Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E and thanked him for his participation in AU Welcome Week.

Tom Smith announced that upcoming hearings on the District's zoning code rewrite will be held soon, with campus plan related issues being discussed on November 4. Additional information can be found at <http://dcoz.dc.gov/news/2013/news091713.shtm>.

Andrew Huff, AU Director of Community Relations, announced a Neighborhood Fall Festival on October 26 from 12pm-4pm on the Quad. He advised there will be food, music, games, a moon bounce, petting zoo and pony rides. All are welcome to attend.

Gail Hanson announced that the next meeting of the CLC will be held on December 3 and will be followed by a town hall with AU President Neil Kerwin and a holiday reception.

Attendees

Community:

Judy Chesser, Tenley Neighbors Association
David Fehrmann, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Mary Ellen Fehrmann, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Matthew Frumin, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E
Bob Herzstein, Neighbors for a Livable Community
Jeffrey Kraskin, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Maria Kress, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Beth Marcus, Sutton Place Condominium Association
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community; Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Kyle Pitsor, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Alan Pollock, Ft. Gaines Citizens Association
Tom Quinn, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E
Kent Slowinski, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Tom Smith, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D; Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Jane Waldmann, Tenleytown Historical Society
Nan Wells, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision

American University Staff:

Linda Argo, Assistant Vice President for External Relations & Auxiliary Services

David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Facilities Development & Real Estate
Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students
Greg Grauman, Director of Admissions
Gail Hanson, Vice President of Campus Life
Andrew Huff, Director of Community Relations
Hisham Khalid, Office of the General Counsel
Walter Labitzky, Washington College of Law
Dan Nichols, Executive Director of University Safety Programs
David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the President

American University Students:

Rory Slatko, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Kathryn Tinker, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E
Joe Wisniewski, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D