

**Community Liaison Committee
Special Campus Plan Meeting
Thursday, August 6, 2020
Meeting Held Virtually Over RingCentral
6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.**

Introductions & Opening Remarks

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by Don Edwards, from Justice and Sustainability Associates, at 6:31 p.m. He welcomed representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs).

New Business & Neighborhood Issues

Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relations, gave an update on the effects of COVID-19 on American University and the 2021 Campus Plan, including a framework related to enrollment and potential development sites. This presentation can be found at <https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-presentation-august-6-2020-draft.pdf>

Don Edwards opened up the floor for questions and comments.

Tom Smith, of the Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association, noted that AU's presentation had the same material as the June CLC meeting and asked for clarification if changes were made to the 2021 Campus Plan framework.

Ed Fisher affirmed that no significant changes have been made to the 2021 Campus Plan framework.

Tom asked if the 2,000-student enrollment cap is interpreted by AU as a cap on the Washington College of Law (WCL) or the Tenley Campus.

Ed replied that the interpretation under the existing campus plan is that the enrollment cap is applied to the Washington College of Law itself. He stated that AU is exploring the option to allow non-WCL students to take classes on Tenley Campus and be included under the 2,000-enrollment cap.

Tom asked for clarification on the secondary housing sites.

Ed replied that AU is looking to add 500 beds to campus via sites 2 and 4. The secondary housing sites are included in the 2021 Campus Plan as possibilities in case there is an issue with AU's master leases.

Tom questioned if the secondary housing sites could still come online as part of this 2021 Campus Plan.

Ed replied that AU would state clearly in the plan the desire to first build sites 2 and 4 to achieve 500 new beds. He stated that the secondary sites may be needed if there is an issue with AU's master leases off campus.

Tom asked how many parking spaces AU is planning to eliminate on the main campus.

Ed replied that he did not believe AU is eliminating any parking on the main campus.

Tom asked for a list of the people participating in the Working Group meetings.

Troy Kravitz, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, replied that there is a record of those who participated in the Working Group meetings.

Tom replied he was interested in knowing the members for the purposes of transparency. He expressed concern about this campus plan cycle moving much faster than the previous cycles. He added his concern about continuing the campus plan process during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Troy stated he assumed that the breakdown of parking locations and spaces would be in the 2021 Campus plan.

Ed replied that Troy's statement is correct.

Troy asked whether AU's Business School students take classes at Washington College of Law right now.

Ed replied currently that they cannot, per the Zoning Order.

Troy clarified that buildings proposed for the 2021 Campus Plan that will actually go through a further processing before the Zoning Commission. He added that if a building is approved by the Campus Plan, it does not necessarily mean that it will be built.

Jerry Gallucci, of Westover Place Homeowners Association, stated he thinks the AU Neighborhood Partnership has worked well and has been as inclusive as people have wanted to make it. He urged AU to use the Partnership for continued dialogue, stating that, as a Westover homeowner who was in the last campus plan process, this process has gone much smoother. He added that any building proposed in this plan except for site 12 is much further from neighbors than what AU did in 2010 with East Campus.

Dennis Williams, of the Tenleytown Neighborhood Association, questioned how many students on AU live off-campus. He recalled that AU's enrollment was at 12,581 as of Fall 2019.

Ed Fisher replied that AU has 4,152 beds on campus and 4,117 students on campus, the vast majority of which are undergraduate. He noted that the students off-campus would be reflected in the difference of 12,581 subtracted by 4,117. He further noted that off-campus could mean anywhere in the DMV area.

Dennis Williams replied that his interest in the issue is for the people in the surrounding AU neighborhoods. He noted that one question that has emerged is the effect of students coming back to the community as a result of COVID-19.

Jonathan McHugh, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E, clarified that there were not 8,000 students living in the neighborhoods near AU, but that there is much more nuance to the numbers than how the numbers are being stated.

Shelly Repp, of Neighbors for Responsible Development, asked, with respect to the fall semester, what AU is doing to protect the students and the neighbors from COVID-19, particularly with students coming from COVID-19 hot spots as school begins.

Ed replied that any student coming back from the 27 hot-spot states are expected to quarantine for two weeks. He explained that AU expects the majority of students to stay at home and that students who are returning to the AU area but not living on-campus will be mostly upperclassmen. He stated all students will have to take health and safety training and that AU will be testing the small number of students who live on campus. He added that students who feel sick also can get tested through AU.

William Clarkson, of the Spring Valley Neighborhood Association, thanked AU for holding this meeting at the request of several neighborhood associations. He stated it is important to note that some neighborhood members have been hostile when approached about joining the AU Neighborhood Partnership.

Dennis Williams stated that he appreciated the nuance that Jonathan mentioned, and clarified his request for relatively gross numbers, if available. He also questioned whether AU should be testing the students who are not living off-campus.

Troy stated that, expanding upon transparency with the Partnership, the groups have been very transparent thus far, with summaries and agendas all listed on the Campus Planning website.

Benjamin Tessler, of Westover Place Homeowners Association, stated that he had concerns about noise and the poor wooded buffer between Westover and AU right now. He explained that some buildings were damaged in the last process and also questioned how solid the priority listing for AU's possible residential sites was.

Ed replied that AU's priorities are a health and wellness space for students, which will be a portion of the campus behind Mary Graydon Center to be built in conjunction with housing on sites 2 and 4. He added that AU also wants to continue the master-leasing program at the Frequency. He further stated that AU learned a lot from the last campus plan when dealing with further processing and construction.

John Wheeler, of Ward 3 Vision, stated that students add a lot of vibrancy to the neighborhood and have revitalized Tenleytown. He stated that, in terms of COVID-19, the DC Government has strict protocols on all travelers and AU students should not be singled out.

Jerry thanked Ben for mentioning the noise issue and added that he thinks AU is responsible with turning off the lights in East Campus. He noted that noise is an issue of discussion with AU for a while. He explained that, while the air handlers are under the DC-wide noise limit, they are still noticeable, and

Westover Place Homeowners Association has considered taking up the issue with the Zoning Commission.

Dennis Williams stated that his main point was AU should take responsibility for their students.

Chuck Elkins, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, spoke on the relation between the Partnership and the CLC. He stated that the Partnership was made up of community members and clarified that, if the Steering Committee consensus reached in June, then meant the Steering Committee approved the 2021 Campus Plan framework as it was written.

Troy stated that, although ANC members who were part of the Partnership approved of the Campus Plan, the ANC as an organization is not bound to the said plan.

Shelly stated that AU should take responsibility for its students in terms of testing. With respect to the secondary sites, he asked if there was anyone who has been opposed to the master-leasing at the Frequency. He added that if it is truly unopposed, then there is no reason for the secondary residential options. He noted a possibility for under-enrollment given the possibility of free college programs for students at public universities.

Wendy Martino, Alban Towers resident, stated that she agreed with the points Dennis William raised about students living off-campus.

Troy stated that a lot of focus had been on enrollment and emphasized that the Partnership has focused on objectionable impacts caused by students rather than the hard number on enrollment. He expressed an interest in insulating the concerns of the community up through the enrollment cap. He asked if the enrollment projections are required for the Zoning Commission, and if so, are they binding.

Ed stated the enrollment projections were not required or binding.

Bruce Klein, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked if AU's shuttle buses are running.

Ed replied that the shuttle was not open for guests and visitors. Ed stated it would only be available to AU students, staff, and faculty in a limited capacity. He agreed to confirm this information.

Bruce asked if the campus was available to neighbors.

Ed replied at this time the campus is closed.

Chuck expressed concern over a statement circulated by Neighbors for a Livable Community, which stated AU would increase its undergraduate enrollment by about 60 percent, and requested the calculation be double checked.

Ed stated AU does not envision any significant increase in their undergraduate enrollment.

Tom asked if the 2021 Campus Plan had plans for taking existing dorms off-service.

Ed stated that some beds in the quadruplex dorms would be replaced in site 6 if that building went ahead. He explained that roughly 60 beds could be lost in that scenario.

Troy asked for Tom to clear up the numbers in the newsletter listing to state the 67 percent housing requirement for undergraduates as still in place.

Tom Smith stated he stood by the numbers in the newsletter and added that AU has a history and a pattern of exceeding their enrollment numbers and not meeting their housing requirements. He further stated that a reason why East Campus was proposed was because AU had exceeded their undergraduate enrollment numbers and referenced the existence of evidence of three cycles of campus planning in which AU has fudged their numbers.

Good of the Order

Don thanked the group for following the meeting design and welcomed feedback on the process and called the group attention to next meetings. He adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

Proposed 2020 CLC Meeting Dates: September 15, 2020; December 1, 2020

Meeting Chat:

From Jonathan McHugh to Everyone: 07:25 p.m.: Thanks Dennis, agree with your point.

From Troy Kravitz to Everyone: 07:59 p.m.: To be clear, adding 4,200 undergraduates ("roughly 60 percent increase in undergraduate enrollment") would require building 2,800 new beds on campus. There is nothing remotely close to that included in the Campus Plan framework. Cloaking bald-faced assertions in numbers does not give them credibility whatsoever.

From Bruce Klein [to Kayla Elson (JSA), intended as public question: 08:03 p.m.
Is the Shuttle running now? Is the campus available to neighbors?

Meeting Participants:

Community Members:

Natalie Ambrose, Wesley Heights Neighbor
William Clarkson, Spring Valley Neighborhood Association
Tony Ciccone, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Chuck Elkins, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Jerry Gallucci, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Esther Garcia, neighbor
Alma Gates, neighbor

Teresa Guzman, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Dr. Jeffery Kraskin, Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Troy Kravitz, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
Bruce Klein, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Hunt La Cascia, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Tony Long, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Wendy Martino, Alban Towers Resident
Jonathan McHugh, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E
Joan Morgulec, neighbor
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Liveable Community
Elizabeth Pemmerl, Spring Valley neighbor
Shelly Repp, Neighbors for Responsible Development
Doug Saunders, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Tom Smith, Spring Valley-Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Benjamin Tessler, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Kani Xulam, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision
Betsy White, Wesley Heights
Dennis Williams, Tenleytown Neighborhood Association

AU Participants:

Maria Barry, Director of Community Relations
Stacie Burgess, Director of Public Affairs
Jeff Brown, Dean of Students
David Dower, Assistant Vice President of Planning
Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relations
Seth Grossman, Chief of Staff
Charles LeGette, Assistant Director of Events
Peter Starr, Acting Provost
Sherry Rutherford, Requity Real Estate

Other:

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