

Community Liaison Committee Meeting
Monday, March 2, 2015
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 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 then acknowledged the recent passing of Bob Herzstein, a long time AU neighbor and asked Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, to say a few words about Bob. Tom Smith, of ANC 3D and the Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association, did the same.

Bob Herzstein's obituaries in the New York Times and Washington Post can be viewed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/18/us/politics/robert-e-herzstein-who-foiled-nixon-dies-at-83.html> and http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/robert-herzstein-lawyer-who-helped-open-access-to-nixon-papers-dies-at-83/2015/02/19/dac144e6-b7ae-11e4-9423-f3d0a1ec335c_story.html respectively.

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

Janet Heiss, the Ward 3 representative on the District's Commission on Aging, spoke briefly about her work and offered to be of assistance to anyone who may need resources related to aging in the District.

Construction Update

Washington College of Law

David Dower, AU's Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management, updated the CLC on progress at the Washington College of Law at Tenley. His presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-03-02-15.pdf>.

He added that representatives from AU attended the February meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E and provided a similar project update.

Tom Smith asked if any decisions have been made about future uses at the current Washington College of Law at 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW.

David Dower responded that this is being considered now and that academic and administrative uses are most likely. There will be a better sense of direction in the fall, and planning will begin at that time.

Tom Smith added that several businesses and residents are interested in future uses of the building.

Betsy White, a neighbor, advised that the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) continues to express great interest in space at 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW.

David Dower responded that he is aware of this interest and met recently with the OLLI board to discuss their request.

John Wheeler, of Ward 3 Vision, asked for additional information on the connection to the Yuma wing in the new Washington College of Law at Tenley.

David Dower described the connection as a vestibule on the first floor with stairs to the Yuma wing.

Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked if there will be a landscaping plan for the new campus.

David Dower responded that a robust landscaping plan is a part of the project and that the campus will be heavily landscaped, much like AU's main campus.

East Campus

David Dower updated the CLC on progress at East Campus. His presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-03-02-15.pdf>.

He reported that AU recently secured approval from the District's Zoning Commission for a two-level, underground garage. He continued that the approval also prohibits charter buses and motor coaches from entering the East Campus, with the exception of AU-owned and operated shuttles.

David Fehrmann, of Westover Place Homeowners Association, asked if the existing curb cuts on Nebraska Avenue will be expanded or if they can accommodate shuttles entering and exiting the site.

David Dower replied that the curb cuts are adequate; there is no plan to expand them.

Elaine Vaudreuil, of Sutton Place Condominiums, asked if AU shuttles will use the underground garage, to which David Dower replied that they will not.

David Dower stated that AU will attend the March meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D to seek support for extended work hours for the East Campus project to include additional hours on weekdays and modified Saturday hours. He continued that AU held a community meeting in early February to begin a dialogue on extended hours and also met recently with the Westover Place Board of Directors.

Linda Argo, AU Assistant Vice President for External Relations and Auxiliary Services, specified that the proposed hours are 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

on Saturdays. She added that even these are abbreviated from the allowable construction hours in the District and that work on the East Campus project will not need to extend until 6 p.m. every weekday and that the contractor will not need to work every Saturday.

Tom Smith asked why the proposal for Saturday hours is different from weekday hours.

Linda Argo replied that the proposed Saturday hours are in deference to the project's most adjacent neighbors. She stated that most workers will stop working at 4 p.m. anyway.

John Wheeler asked if there was any more pile driving to be done, to which David Dower responded no.

Alma Gates, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked if Saturday hours were needed for additional flexibility as stated at the February community meeting.

David Dower reiterated that AU does not need to work every Saturday, but rather needs the flexibility to work some Saturdays to make up lost time, all contingent upon weather and on an as-needed basis.

Jeffrey Kraskin, of the Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association, asked how the proposed change in work hours will affect traffic.

David Dower answered that there have been no major traffic impacts at the Washington College of Law or East Campus projects to date. With the upcoming increase in manpower, there also will be a major decrease in truck traffic. The use of an on-site concrete batch plant, which was also utilized at the Washington College of Law project, will take approximately 1,800 trucks trips off of the road.

Tom Smith stated that he has concerns about the impact of extended weekday hours on rush hour traffic.

Dennis Paul asked how Westover Place residents feel about the proposal.

Larry Joseph, of the Westover Place Homeowners Association, said that it is a complicated matter and that Saturday work hours are not a trivial matter.

Tom Smith asked what the appropriate forum is to continue the discussion on extended work hours at East Campus.

Gail Hanson replied that there was a recent community meeting, a meeting with the Westover Board of Directors, the Community Liaison Committee, and the upcoming ANC meeting.

Larry Joseph stated that Westover Place wants the project completed as soon as possible. He added that while there is a cost associated with extended hours, the sooner the project is done, the better for the neighborhood.

Tom Smith recommended that AU revisit the transportation study from the most recent campus plan.

Elaine Vaudreuil asked what routes the traffic that leaves the site will take.

David Dower replied that deliveries and construction traffic are limited to District-approved trucking routes but that workers who park on the site will take various routes.

Chuck Elkins, a neighbor asked about the tagging of trucks entering the East Campus site and stated that some of the trucks are not tagged.

David Dower replied that the flagman is responsible for enforcing this and the contractor understands AU's expectations related to truck tagging.

Linda Argo added that AU has reemphasized the importance of tagging trucks with the project contractor and that excavation will only last for a few more weeks. She continued that the fact that the trucks are following approved routes is most important and that there have been no recent complaints about trucks on Foxhall Road. Several drivers were removed from the project early on for using Foxhall Road.

Jeffrey Kraskin asked if there are still established truck routes once excavation is completed, to which David Dower replied yes, the routes are for the entirety of the project.

Student Conduct in the Community

Michelle Espinosa, AU Associate Dean of Students, updated the CLC on the most recent data related to student conduct referrals for student behavior off campus.

She reported that since December, there were ten complaints regarding student conduct off campus. Five were for single-family homes and five for apartments. She added that there has been an increase in reports at the Avalon apartments; four of the five apartment complaints were from the Avalon and one from the Greenbrier.

She continued that as is AU's protocol, all students at these properties have been identified and met with. Eight have been referred to Student Conduct since December, including the students residing at 4700 Tilden Street, NW.

Work continues with the management of the Avalon, where AU students currently make up 70 percent of occupants. The Avalon now provides contact information to AU for students who cause disturbances.

Tom Smith asked about past complaints regarding 4700 Tilden Street, NW and what happened to cause confusion about the number of complaints AU received about the property.

Michelle Espinosa replied that a report was filed in December, 2014, and a meeting was held with the students, but the report was not entered into the data system. This caused a second

complaint to appear to be the first, however, the students were met with right away after AU received the first complaint.

Tom Smith asked about the best protocol for reporting issues with off-campus properties.

Michelle Espinosa replied that calling AU Public Safety (885-2527) and the Metropolitan Police Department (911) is helpful. The online reporting form for neighbors at <https://american-advocate.symplicity.com/neighbor/> is also a good resource for neighbors. Sending information to Andrew Huff, AU's Director of Community Relations, is also appropriate. The preferred method is to use the online reporting form and email dos@american.edu, which ensures that several people will see the complaint.

Chuck Elkins asked about progress on requiring students who reside off campus to register their addresses with AU.

Michelle Espinosa responded that AU is looking at the possibility of requiring this information when students register for classes each semester. However, approval has not been granted to block a student's registration for failure to do so.

Gail Hanson added that student organizations and group houses already are required to register their addresses with the university.

Chuck Elkins asked if there has been any benefit as a result of the off-campus orientation provided to students living in the neighborhood.

Michelle Espinosa stated that by the end of the year, she believes there will be an overall decline in reports and that this could partially be a result of the new orientation.

Gail Hanson added that an e-newsletter goes out regularly to these students as well, with information related to trash, snow removal, etc.

Chuck Elkins asked about repeat offenders and what might happen to students living off campus who generate multiple complaints.

Michelle Espinosa replied that the student conduct process takes prior violations into account; sanctions generally become more severe for repeated violations.

Old Business

Additional Measures to Address Truck Unloading at Katzen Arts Center

Andrew Huff, AU Director of Community Relations, reviewed with the CLC the steps taken to date to prevent illegal loading and unloading on Massachusetts Avenue in front of the Katzen Arts Center. These include: updating and adding parking signage; communication to Katzen staff and management, facilities staff, and AU Public Safety; and adding specific language to all

contracts for use of Katzen. MPD as well as the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) also will be contacted for continued assistance.

Tom Smith asked why AU Public Safety can't play a bigger role regarding large scale events.

Dennis Paul stated that the Katzen loading dock may be inadequate, forcing some deliveries to be made from the street.

Andrew Huff replied that delivery trucks have no problem accessing the Katzen loading dock. Deliveries like oversized pieces of art, if they do have issues, can apply through DDOT to reserve the parking meters farther down Massachusetts Avenue. He added that additional communication is being drafted that will go out to all vendors who service Katzen reminding them of the parking restriction and this location.

Pedestrian Safety – New Ward Circle Streetlight

Andrew Huff reported that, working with ANC 3D Commissioner Spence Spencer, DDOT has agreed to add a streetlight to the crosswalk across Massachusetts Avenue between the East Campus site and Ward Circle.

The specific location of the street light can be viewed at:

<http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Ward-Circle-Streetlight-03-02-15.pdf>

This issue was brought up at the December Town Hall meeting with AU President Neil Kerwin, where neighbors raised concerns about poor lighting and difficulties for both drivers and pedestrians alike in navigating the intersection. DDOT estimates one to two months before the light is installed

New Business

Proposed CLC Meeting Dates

Gail Hanson reviewed the proposed dates for future CLC meetings and asked if there were any concerns with the dates. The proposed dates are:

Thursday, September 17, 2015
Tuesday, December 1, 2015
Thursday, March 3, 2016
Tuesday, June 7, 2016

Jeffrey Kraskin stated that June 7 is during Ramadan, which lasts from June 6 – July 5.

Tom Smith stated that the December CLC meeting is difficult because the meeting is coupled with the Town Hall with President Kerwin. He recommended holding these meetings separate from each other. Gail Hanson affirmed that AU will consider this revision.

Communication on Playing Field Activities

Dennis Paul requested that in light of the recent passing of Bob Herzstein, he and Tom Smith now receive AU's regular email updates on activity on Jacobs Field. Andrew Huff agreed.

University Avenue Gate

Andrew Huff advised that a neighbor recently reported that the University Avenue gate, which allows neighbors access to the AU campus, had malfunctioned. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that the spring mechanism that automatically closes the gate was broken. Repairs have been made, and the gate is again secure.

Good of the Order

Highlights of AU Programs Open to the Community

Andrew Huff announced several upcoming events open to AU neighbors including the March 14 "dive-in" movie, the *Books That Shaped America* series at the AU library, and the March 28 Neighborhood Afternoon at the Theatre.

He also described briefly the upcoming conference of the International Town Gown Association, which will be held at George Washington University in June. AU is a member of the association and a sponsor of this year's conference.

Invitation to the AU Off-Campus Housing Fair for Students

Gail Hanson invited neighbors to participate in the March 18 off-campus housing fair for students. More than 50 rental properties will be represented as well as the District's Office of the Tenant Advocate. She advised that neighbors or ANC representatives who would like a table should contact her directly at gsher@american.edu.

Tom Smith asked Gail Hanson when the university begins planning for student orientations and how members of the CLC might be able to participate. He also asked that this item be placed on the agenda for the next CLC meeting.

Gail Hanson replied that planning is already under way for this summer and that she would confer with the Associate Dean in charge of student orientations to inquire about an appropriate role for CLC members.

Tom Smith stated that the Mount Vernon campus of George Washington University has a program which provides routine interactions between residents and homesick students who are away from home for the first time. He asked if the CLC might be able to develop something similar. He added that it is time for the CLC to move on from campus plan issues and to deliberate in a more proactive manner.

The next meeting of the Community Liaison Committee will take place on Tuesday, June 2, 2015.

Attendees

Community:

Chuck Elkins, Neighbor

David Fehrmann, Westover Place Homeowners Association

Alma Gates, ANC 3D

Janet Heisse, Neighbor; DC Commission on Aging

Larry Joseph, Westover Place Homeowners Association

Barbara Kline, Neighbor

Jeffrey Kraskin, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association

Bill Krebs, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association

Elaine Marshall, Greenbrier Condominiums

Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community

Roshini Ponnampuram, Fort Gaines Citizens Association

Tom Smith, ANC 3D; Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association

John Timmer, Embassy Park

Elaine Vaudreuil, Sutton Place Condominiums

Jane Waldmann, Tenleytown Historical Society

John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision

Val Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision

Betsy White, Neighbor

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

Gail Hanson, Vice President of Campus Life

Andrew Huff, Director of Community Relations

Hisham Khalid, Office of the General Counsel

Dan Nichols, Executive Director of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs