

AU Community Liaison Committee Meeting
Tuesday, December 1, 2015
American University – School of International Service – Abramson Family Founders Room
7 p.m.

Introductions & Opening Remarks

The meeting of the AU Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by Vice President of Campus Life Gail Hanson, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University. She 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.

Progress Reports & Outcomes on Issues Raised at Special Meetings

A New Tool for Student Conduct Complaint Management

Chuck Elkins, a Wesley Heights neighbor, presented an online tool which he developed to guide neighbors to report complaints effectively related to student conduct in the neighborhood. He worked closely with Gail Hanson and Michelle Espinosa, AU Associate Dean of Students, over the last several months to develop the presentation, which can be viewed at:

<http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/A-Neighbor-s-Guide-to-Relations-with-University-Students-in-the-Neighborhood-12-01-15.pdf>.

Chuck Elkins stated that cases of students being disruptive in the neighborhood are rare and that American University does a good job in working to ensure that these incidences never happen in the first place. While infrequent, he added that having this information distributed widely will be helpful in assisting neighbors who may not know where to turn if and when an incident occurs.

The presentation is available currently on the websites of Wesley Heights Neighbors (<http://www.wesleyheightsneighbors.org/>), Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D (<http://www.anc3d.org/>), as well as the Next Door list serve. It will be added to additional sites in the future.

Juliet Six, of the Tenleytown Neighbors Association, advised that she also is President of the D.C. Federation of Civic Associations and would suggest to the group that the presentation be posted on their website as well.

Beth Marcus, of Sutton Place Condominiums, asked how trash and yard maintenance issues fit into the reporting protocol.

Chuck Elkins replied that these issues also are included and recommended neighbors contact AU to help determine if responsibility for yard maintenance falls on the property owner or student tenants.

Gail Hanson added that AU enlists the assistance of landlords whenever possible when addressing these issues.

Linda Argo, AU's Assistant Vice President for External Relations & Auxiliary Services, stated that Andrew Huff, AU's Director of Community Relations, also works closely with several District of Columbia agencies on enforcement of problem properties, when necessary.

Gail Hanson thanked Chuck Elkins for his work and collaboration on this important issue.

Shuttle Bus Restrictions on Residential Streets

Gail Hanson reported a complaint about a standard AU shuttle bus driving on a residential street in Spring Valley. In previous years, there were similar complaints regarding AU shuttles using neighborhood streets as a cut-through, but the issue has since been resolved.

She continued that during AU's All-American Weekend in October, the Friends of the AU Library organized a neighborhood tour for parents of students. Due to a mechanical problem with the smaller shuttle scheduled to transport parents, AU Shuttle Services substituted a standard shuttle in its place. Upon receipt of the complaint about seeing this bus on residential streets, AU investigated the matter and responded.

Andrew Huff stated that the prohibition against operating standard AU shuttle buses on residential streets has been communicated formally to Shuttle Services. He added that this is not a regular occurrence and this incident was not indicative of routine shuttle operations.

Gail Hanson asked CLC members to inform the university if they see the standard AU shuttles on residential streets. It is our intention to avoid such occurrences.

Mitigating the Effects of Off Campus Smoking on Rockwood Parkway

Gail Hanson described a recent meeting with four Spring Valley neighbors concerned about AU students, faculty, and staff smoking at the university's Fletcher Gate on Rockwood Parkway, since implementation of the Smoke Free Campus policy. She stated that mainly south campus residents go to this location to smoke and usually stand at the gate, approximately 25 yards off of Nebraska Avenue. In response to neighbors' concerns, AU agreed to examine alternatives for mitigating the effects of smokers on a residential street and address additional concerns about safety, noise, and litter.

Because many individuals and departments across campus participated in AU's decision to go smoke-free, a number of people had to be engaged to identify solutions for the complaint. Now that the consultations have been completed, AU is developing specifications for a smoking shelter on its campus near the Fletcher Gate.

David Dower, AU's Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management, said that a bus-like shelter placed just inside the gate on Rockwood Parkway would be screened from the

street by the mature row of bushes located there. The shelter would provide seating for smokers, helping to keep them off of Rockwood Parkway. The structure could be built by early spring.

Gail Hanson added that the shelter also will have proper receptacles to control litter.

Michael Ralston, of the Greenbrier Condominiums, stated that this is a good idea and that many other places offer similar structures.

Nan Wells, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, stated that her main concern is student safety, as many students, wearing dark clothing, sit on the curb at the Fletcher Gate to smoke. She added that they are exposed to the elements as well. She added that this idea sounds good and that it is an important issue to address.

David Dower stated that there already is a natural walkway that will take smokers to and from the proposed location in safe manner and that the location is shielded from residences and Rockwood Parkway by mature, natural vegetation.

Nan Wells asked if any other locations would be added, to which David Dower responded “No.”

Gail Hanson said that smoking cessation information also could be displayed at this location.

Bill Krebs, of the Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association, asked if there will be similar shelters provided on East Campus.

Gail Hanson replied that while there are no plans at this time, it is an issue the university will keep a close eye on moving forward.

No Right Turn on Rockwood Parkway at Fletcher Gate

Dan Nichols, AU’s Executive Director of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs, advised the CLC that AU is in the process of updating all campus signage. As a part of this process, the “no right turn” sign at the Fletcher Gate exit has been repositioned and is more visible now to vehicles.

AU Police Assistance in Addressing University Avenue Automobile Break-ins

Gail Hanson stated that Dennis Paul, a neighbor on University Avenue, recently described an issue on his street with vehicular break-ins. He asked if AU Public Safety could take an active role in helping to stem these occurrences.

Phil Morse, AU’s Executive Director of University Police & Emergency Management, said that whenever Public Safety vehicles travel between AU properties and in the neighborhood, officers keep their eyes out for any suspicious activity. They will continue to assist in any situation where they are able.

Nan Wells asked if such a commitment extends AU's police authority off campus, to which Phil Morse responded, "No."

Nan Wells asked if the Consortium of Universities is considering a request for an expansion of university police authority into the neighborhood.

Phil Morse responded that there is no request for expanded authority but that the Consortium has been working on updated regulations for campus police departments which would align administrative regulations with current practices. He added that the current regulations are 20 years old.

Nan Wells asked when this proposal will be introduced.

Phil Morse stated that Ward 5 Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie, chair of the DC Council's Committee on the Judiciary, eventually would hold a hearing on any proposed changes. He added that information on the proposed changes has been shared with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D as well as in a private meeting with Commissioner Wells several weeks prior. He stated that he would be happy to present once again at ANC 3D, if requested to do so.

Juliet Six asked if AU will begin collecting license plate numbers for students at the Washington College of Law.

Dan Nichols responded that AU will continue to abide by the Campus Plan requirement for parking enforcement as part of the Good Neighbor policy. He added that recently purchased software will be used which has the ability to match license plate numbers to AU students, faculty, and staff. This will assist greatly in the accuracy of parking enforcement.

Alan Pollock, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked if this would also include out-of-state tags, to which Dan Nichols replied, "Yes."

New Business

Residence Hall Alcohol Policy – Pilot Program

Gail Hanson stated that during past conversations with the community regarding off-campus student conduct, some neighbors inquired why AU students were not permitted to drink on campus to keep them from doing so in the neighborhood. At that time, the majority of on-campus residents were under the age of 21. However, with new residence halls, more upper classmen are expected to remain in campus housing, and new residence halls have a higher degree of privacy and offer an environment more akin to apartment living.

Because of these changing conditions, students asked the university recently to amend current policy to allow drinking in residence halls under certain circumstances for students 21 and older. The effort to explore this proposal has been led by Chris Moody, AU's Assistant Vice President of Housing & Dining Programs.

Chris Moody introduced himself and stated that his office went through a process last spring that produced plans for a pilot program that would allow students living on campus who are 21 or older to consume alcohol within their living units. There are restrictions associated with the pilot including no kegs, no drinking games, no alcohol delivery, and all students within a living unit must be of legal age for even one student to consume alcohol. He added that the pilot will be monitored closely for complaints related to underage drinking, noise, and disorderly conduct and evaluated fully before an official policy change is made.

Alan Pollock asked how AU would monitor visitors who might be underage.

Chris Moody responded that a change in guest/visitor policy also is under review and that visitors to these living units will be required to show age identification.

Betsy White, a Wesley Heights neighbor, asked about other students in the residence hall who may not be of legal drinking age who try to take advantage of the pilot.

Chris Moody responded that these students would be in violation of the AU Conduct Code.

Gail Hanson added that it is now a violation for any underage AU student to be in the presence of alcohol in a residence hall room and that this policy remains in place.

Chris Moody said that AU also will offer substance free communities for students who do not wish to be exposed to alcohol consumption in any way.

Chuck Elkins stated that this was a great first step and asked if there could be larger rooms on campus that could accommodate student parties where alcohol is served.

Gail Hanson replied that, under current policy, if event participants are of legal drinking age, they may reserve a room for an event and serve alcohol. She added that graduate students do this, most often for networking receptions.

Dan Nichols stated that in these cases there must be licensed and insured staff serving the alcohol.

Bill Krebs asked if 21-year old students will be clustered in the residence halls.

Gail Hanson replied that older students migrate naturally to more apartment-like student housing – generally Cassell and Nebraska Halls.

Michael Ralston stated that the pilot program is a good idea and will enable AU to reach students quickly should something go wrong.

Names for East Campus Residence Halls

Chris Moody advised that the three residence halls at East Campus will adopt the building names from the Tenley Campus – Constitution Hall (facing Nebraska Avenue), Congressional Hall (facing New Mexico Avenue), and Federal Hall (center of campus).

Spring Valley Building Occupancy & Uses (4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW)

Linda Argo announced that the former Washington College of Law at 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, now will be known as the Spring Valley Building. She added that with work concluding at the new WCL at Tenley, David Dower and his team have been working on the repurposing of the building, primarily for administrative use, but also for classrooms.

Linda Argo listed the AU offices and departments relocating to 4801 Massachusetts Avenue:

School of Education
School of Professional and Extended Studies
School of Public Administration Justice Programs, MSOD and KEY Executive Education
School of International Service Institute on Disability and Public Policy
Kogod School of Business (42nd Street offices)
University Registrar
Office of Enrollment
Sponsored Programs
Graduate Studies and Research
University Library Archives, Special Collections and Technical Support
Information Technology
Mailroom
Controller, Contracts and Procurement
Planning and Project Management
Grants Accounting
Student Accounts
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)
International Accelerator Program

She added that the building has 10 tiered and 15 non-tiered classrooms that will be used for upper level classes (level 300 and above) only and that a transportation study is under way to determine the shuttle routes and frequency for the building.

A special meeting will be held in the spring, when we know more about the build out of the space and class schedule. The building will be vacated after the first of the year and the renovation complete by late summer 2016.

Betsy White stated that she is a member of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and that she is looking forward to having space in the building. She asked if OLLI has been factored into the use of classrooms. David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the AU President, responded, “Yes.” David

Dower added that work on the building will be almost entirely interior, with the exception of work on the skylights and some repointing.

Scheduled Reports

Fall 2015 Enrollment & Student Housing Capacity

Linda Argo said that the Zoning Order affecting the AU campus plan has conditions for an enrollment cap and the amount of housing we are required to provide, primarily to full-time undergraduate students.

Her presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Fall-2015-Enrollment-Housing-Update-12-01-15.pdf>.

Linda Argo explained that there is an overall student cap of 13,600, which includes law students, and a separate law school cap of 2,000. She reported that AU is well within the cap for WCL and overall student enrollment. She added that AU currently has beds for 85 percent of freshmen and sophomores, as required by the campus plan.

As the Zoning Order is written, housing must be made available for 62 percent of full-time undergraduates, with 59 percent of housing on campus. As of December 1, AU is able to house 58 percent of full-time undergraduates on campus and 61 percent of all full-time undergraduates in housing on campus and leased by AU. A first-year class that exceeded the enrollment target contributed to the small shortfall in housing percentages. Completion of 590 new beds at East Campus should enable full compliance moving forward.

Chuck Elkins asked if there are any consequences for missing the housing percentage targets by one percent.

Linda Argo replied that AU is committed to complying with the Zoning Order and mitigating objectionable impacts in the neighborhood. She also stated that AU is prepared to explain these figures to the Zoning Commission, if necessary.

Construction Update

Washington College of Law

David Dower 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-12-01-15.pdf>.

He stated that move-in is under way and will be complete by the time classes start on January 11. A ribbon cutting is scheduled for February 12 and is open to the public.

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-12-01-15.pdf>.

He said that in approximately two weeks, work on at 4th floor of Congressional will be complete and that construction of the underground garage is complete and being fitted out with electrical and mechanical.

Over the next six months, the prefabricated façade elements will be complete and the above-ground structure for all buildings under way. Above-ground work will conclude mid-February with interior work beginning as soon as the roof has been built. Façade installation will begin mid-January and continue through May, as will interior fit-out of all buildings.

Claire Craik, of the Westover Place Homeowners Association, asked how many more Saturdays AU will work.

David Dower responded that every Saturday until the end of the project will be utilized, but that once the facades go up, work will move inside and less impactful to Westover residents.

Michael Ralston asked if the project is on track for fall completion.

David Dower replied that good progress is being made, but that weather is always an unforeseen factor.

New Science Building

David Dower stated that, due to growth in the sciences, a new science building is being proposed for the AU campus. This presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-12-01-15.pdf>.

David Dower said that the existing Campus Plan shows an expansion and renovation of the Beeghly building. However, a recent feasibility study has determined that it will be more effective and practical to construct a new building to accommodate technical requirements related to current science buildings (specific regulations for mechanical equipment, humidity control, etc.).

The proposed science building will be lower in height with less gross floor area than the building that was approved as part of the Campus Plan process. The new building would also be no taller than the current Beeghly Building and would be 500 feet from the AU property line, bringing it further into campus.

The project currently is in design and will go to further processing with the Zoning Commission in early 2016. Because the building differs from what was approved previously, a campus plan amendment will be necessary.

The existing Beeghly could later be repurposed for offices, classrooms, or student housing. AU will be presenting to the ANC and Zoning Commission in the new year with more specifics.

Student Conduct Off-Campus

Michelle Espinosa, AU's Associate Dean of Students, presented updated information on student conduct in the neighborhood. Her presentation can be viewed at <http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Off-Campus-Student-Conduct-Update-12-01-15.pdf>.

She began by reviewing the CLC protocols and strategies for addressing conduct in the neighborhood, as well as the complaint management flow chart that has been shared in the past.

She stated that the number of reports received is well below this time last year and that complaints related to single-family homes also have decreased. She continued that the number of complaints from apartments also has dropped dramatically, likely because of outreach to the Avalon apartments last year.

So far this year, there have been five single-family homes with more than one report for off-campus misconduct.

Betsy White asked what the difference is between a "report received" and a "complainant."

Michelle Espinosa explained that there may be a single complainant who has made several reports. She stated that the most common concern is noise, followed by alcohol use.

Beth Marcus asked if there have been any issues with marijuana use since the District decriminalized it.

Michelle Espinosa responded that none has been reported yet, but that a situation in the Avalon apartments did come up recently. She reiterated that marijuana use is not permitted on campus and that AU students are required to abide by D.C. law as part of the Student Conduct Code.

Michael Ralston said that the numbers show that AU is doing a good job in this area.

Dan Nichols stated that the work Chuck Elkins did to help guide neighbor complaints is a great example of how a neighbor can work collaboratively with the university and that this is exactly what the CLC is all about. He again thanked Chuck for his efforts.

Gail Hanson agreed, saying that Chuck's approach will reach people that AU does not.

Bill Krebs asked if there is any news to report on the recent knife robbery on 4800 block of Massachusetts Avenue.

Phil Morse responded that two AU students exited a shuttle and were followed to the Starbucks where a white male pulled out a knife and robbed them. No injuries were sustained and the victims immediately reported the incident to MPD and AU Public Safety.

Juliet Six asked how neighbors can receive information when these kinds of incidents occur.

Phil Morse suggested that she signs up for DC Alerts (<http://hsema.dc.gov/page/alertdc>) or follow AU Public Safety on Twitter, where this type of information, as well as safety tips, are posted regularly (<https://twitter.com/AUPublicSafety>).

John Wheeler, of Ward 3 Vision, said that signing up for the Tenleytown list serve is another way to receive this type of information.

Leigh Catherine Miles, of the Tenleytown, DC blog, added that MPD's 2nd District also has a list serve that disseminates information on crime in the area.

Good of the Order

Gail Hanson reminded CLC members that AU winter commencement will take place on December 16, and that there will be an increase in pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the area as a result.

David Taylor added that the ceremony will begin at 1 p.m. and that guests will mainly use the Katzen Arts Center garage.

Save the Dates: CLC Meetings & Town Hall Reception for 2016

Gail Hanson reviewed the dates for upcoming CLC meetings and reminded attendees about the January 13 town hall with President Kerwin and new year's reception that follows. This is the first year that these events have been decoupled from the December CLC meeting, as requested by attendees last year.

AU Special Events Open to the Community

Andrew Huff directed attendees to their meeting packets for several upcoming events and activities that may be of interest to the community, including the ongoing *Books that Shaped America* series, and men and women's basketball schedules.

Open Discussion

Beth Marcus thanked AU staff members for a successful community audit program. She has taken two classes to date and believes the program is a great asset to the neighborhood.

Gail Hanson then thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

The next meeting of the CLC will be on March 3, 2016 in the Abramson Family Founders Room at the School for International Service. *[Following the meeting, we were able to make arrangements for the March AU CLC Meeting to convene at the new Washington College of Law at Tenley Circle. The meeting will include a tour of the new facility for participants. Details will accompany the meeting notice in February.]*

Attendees

Community:

Claire Craik, Westover Place Homeowners Association
Chuck Elkins, Wesley Heights neighbor
Bill Krebs, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association
Beth Marcus, Sutton Place Condominiums
Jonathan McHugh, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E
Leigh Catherine Miles, Tenleytown resident, Tenleytown DC blog
Alan Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Roshini Ponnampuruma, Fort Gaines Citizens Association
Michael Ralston, Greenbrier Condominiums
Juliet Six, Tenleytown Neighbors Association
Jane Waldmann, Tenleytown Historical Society
Nan Wells, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision
Betsy White, Wesley Heights 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
Chris Moody, Assistant Vice President for Housing & Dining Programs
Phil Morse, Executive Director, University Police & Emergency Management
Dan Nichols, Executive Director of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs
David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the President