

ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

APRIL 4, 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

Energy efficiency, Windows in old homes workshop – Saturday April 9, 1-3pm Pioneer Room, St Martins Church 1908 N Capitol st NW

Spring Beautification Day – Sat, April 23, 10am – Meet at Q st & North Cap

Eckington Civic Association Meeting – Monday May 2

Historic Designation Community Forum – Monday May 9

RIA – PorchFest, April 16

- 4th st NE – Eastern (border to MD) – helps foster new business, help maintain business along corridor through classes, façade improvements. Largely volunteer-based. Porchfest will have live performances, free zip car rides.

1. PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS.

SPRING BEAUTIFICATION –

- ECA & ANC Commissioner Pinkney collaborating. Holding meeting on April 23rd at 10am, planting trees and flowers in lot at corner of North Capitol & Q st NE. Hope to have another planting in May, working w/ ANC Commissioner Lewis on that one.

RANDY – HAD ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP LAST SATURDAY

- Committee is doing oral history workshop. Lana (treasurer) is on committee, can talk to anyone who wants to help. We have many people who have been in the neighborhood for many years, will start with longer residents, and chronicle history of Eckington.
- **Reminder: Need to pay dues to be voting member of ECA.**
- Upcoming events: see above

VERNON –

- Working w/ Edgewood to put together 5k race on MBT. Register online
- Also holding exercise classes along trail in May & June – starting 6:30pm.

2. REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.

Commissioners Lewis and Pinkney unable to attend

3. TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS

Cene Ketcham, Extension Arborist, Casey Trees

- Casey Trees background: Since 2002, mission to restore, enhance, and protect tree canopy of nation's capital. Most visible – through planting trees (up to 22,000+), have programs for homeowners to big community tree planting events. If you're interested in planting, know plot of land, part of school, it's easy and affordable.
 - Affordable –
 - for homeowners: tree rebate – if you buy and plant a tree, if it gets to 15' high, get \$50 back; have list of 43-44 large shade trees, get \$100 back, also work w/ river shed program - \$50 copay per tree (includes arborist consultation, planting).
 - If large parcel and interested in community tree planting, cost is basically breakfast & lunch for volunteers.
 - If you don't qualify for riverfront program, still get rebate? Yes. Also have another program through Pepco. Can do a lot with a small footprint.
 - Research and analysis department, advocacy, especially around development (major threat to DC's trees).
 - Education classes & events, many volunteer opportunities – very popular. Also tree inventoring in parks throughout the summer. Also do fun events – canopy awards, etc.
- How to protect & enhance canopy in Eckington.
 - Know your Canopy.
 - Eckington is 11% canopy (DC overall, 36% with goal of 40% by 2045).
 - Know who has jurisdiction. Want to get a street tree planted? Go to 311 – or email your arborist. If you see a hazardous tree, empty tree box, etc., call 311.
 - Yard trees – property owners are in charge.
 - Parks, schools – department of general services are in charge.
 - Protect what you have.
 - The most valuable tree you have is one that's already been in the ground. Use good practices – don't volcano mulch; water young trees; become involved. If development coming up, say you want to see trees or canopy replacement for loses.
 - Attend advocates classes.
 - Plant new stuff.

UPCOMING CLASSES & EVENTS

- Evasives control class – April 17
- Tree advocate meeting – May 12 – Urban design for tree preservation
- Park inventories coming up on April 29 (Arbor Day) – Meridian Hill Park.
- Youth Employment Program – Application opened April 1 for HS students doing tree maintenance - \$11.50/hr.

CASEYTREES.ORG

4. DC CITIZEN FAIR ELECTION PROGRAM

Shelley Vinyard - Will present next month; not able to attend

5. REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR ZONING VARIANCE 412 V STREET NE

Beth N Davis, BD Contractor Services

(Please see documents provided by applicant)

- Randy: Background – presented to ANC, ANC sent back to ECA
- Beth Davis – company working w/ Mr. Fraser. Abandoned building at corner of V & 5th street. Want to take over building, which takes up 100% of lot, applying for change of use, needs to go through zoning and so applying for parking variance. Have found that the organization, which will only be in use in the evenings, will not impact neighborhood in that area.
 - That area is heavily populated by school traffic during the day. Space is 75% vacant at night, so hundreds of spaces available in evening, most not used when Mr. Botsford would be using parking.
- Fraser Botsford – All parking during the day is for drivers of school buses. They inundate neighborhood; would love to work w/ ANC, ECA to get city to buy parking lot behind building to use for bus parking.
 - 501c7 private club. Been around for years – Southwest, then NoMa (would still be there, but sold property to Skansko).
 - Have two letters of endorsements,
 - One from Council member David Grosso (reads letter).
 - Second letter – from Tony Goodman, single member ANC for NoMa, writing to express support and note that they are excellent neighbors. No noise, trash, etc. complaints since they opened. Also worked w/ neighbors to keep block cleaner than before.
 - Want to come to the neighborhood, continue to be good neighbors.
- Beth – wants to highlight concerns about non-residents taking up resident parking. As you can see, where residents park is not where club would be taking up parking. Actually a barrier down 4th st – areas in front/abutting area don't have people parking.
- Fraser: Tell club members not to park in front of houses, instead to park in industrial areas. Many members travel by metro or carpooling.
- Questions
 - Have you looked at future development that may be coming into area that you may be impacting?
 - Fraser – if we were a few blocks away, maybe. But that's an industrial area. Also working w/ Rosario school.
 - Other concerns about additional development – worried that giving variances now may be bad for future organizations.
 - For this building, would have to require 12 spaces – larger developments would have to offer hundred.
 - Any use of building would require 12 spaces or a variance.
 - Building that was there previously had a lot of illegal parking. Now, much less illegal parking because of improvements being made.
 - How would your use of space change illegal parking?
 - Currently space is vacant, which invites illegal activity.
 - Fraser: Our building is the only one in area that hasn't had curbs taken out to turn into parking.
 - Sean – lives behind where you are – clarify barrier.
 - Beth – not a physical barrier, but a distinct change between industrial and residential.

- Hours of operation?
 - 9-2 Fridays – Saturdays.
- 1000 – 1500 members, average 50-75/night, DC metropolitan area (split between DC, MD, VA). Capacity is 225.
- How many people drive?
 - At that time of night, no one parking there.
 - When I get home, I want to be able to park in front of house.
 - We tell them, don't park in front of house, and we enforce it. If someone parks in front of your house, let us know and we'll make them move.
- Q: If we give variance – what promise of what will happen a few years down the road? We're giving you everything, what are you doing for the community?
 - A - In previous site on M st, was vacant space. The ANC was concerned when we moved in, protested zoning. After a year they came back and gave us a list of things they wanted us to do, we complied with everything (maintain outside of building, do planting, clean up sidewalks, don't let noise from club leave building after hours. Was a voluntary agreement between us and ANCs.
- How long were you there?
 - Buzzard Point – 15 years, NoMa 4 years.
- Q: Did you purchase building?
 - A; Leading for 8 years
- Q: If grant variance, does it carry to future tenants?
 - A: Does not carry over – new tenant would have to go through zoning to change of use.
- Q: Have you made any attempt to find parking in area?
 - A: Was working with school to see if we could park at night, didn't work out, but even if it had worked out, would have to get variance.
 - A: Not a possibility of having parking on space- building takes up 100% of space. To operate any business that requires building, would have to get variance. Lot is set up – looks like 10 parking spaces in front, but legally there is not. Has spoken to DDOT about leasing space in front, but cannot do anything until we get past this hurdle. Curb cut is considered public space, so cannot be used in this application – cannot rent until you have variance for no parking. If they can get approval for public space parking, would get as many as 20 spaces.
- Q So your goal is to get public parking on 4th to alley
 - Yes, until points when it becomes residential. Don't want our people parking in front of alley.
- What is enforcement?
 - You. If someone parks in front of your home, give us a call and we'll tell them to move.
- Special events – run through you or somewhere else?
 - Everything goes through us.
- Q – Used to live in SW, had no idea you where there. Moved to NoMa 8 years ago. Didn't know you had moved to NoMa until saw on agenda for neighborhood meetings. Never knew that you were there – saw flag or something, but never had noise problems, never saw anything worthy of complaints. You were good neighbors, expect you will be good neighbors here.

- Q – Variance is good for them. Metropolitan apartments have 262 units w/ little parking, most residents do park after 8:30 hour, want people to keep in mind – if you have event, you still have tenants that will be parking at those hours. Other apartments building also nearby. Catch 22 – members will be trying to find parking along w/ tenants also moving into neighborhood.
- Q – If we vote no, what happens?
 - We can be there as a matter of right. We want to be there as right, want approval because don't want to be adversarial relationship. Zoning can take your vote under advisement, but don't have to pay any attention. Would rather start as good neighbors, want to do everything we can to be good neighbors.
 - A – Explains zoning – apply for variance, DDOT does review, ANC votes based on ECA, based on size of property they may still give variance even w/ our no vote given that building occupies 100% of space and parking study gives strong support. Could grant without permission.
- Q – To alleviate concerns, would it be helpful if there was itemized education plan – map of where parking is, etc.
 - Do communicate w/ members via web,
- Want more detail about how they will educate neighbors.
 - Happy to do that, but zoning hearing is in 1.5 weeks – have taken 6+ months to get on ANC agenda.
 - At Buzzard Point site, had to educate members to not park in front of Pepco, instead park elsewhere. Educated people about where they could park. When baseball game people parked in front of Pepco, told people not to park there. Did best to manage parking.
- Want written agreement.
 - Have board of directors, continuance of leadership if Fraser leaves. Have painted graffiti off, would like to paint whole building.
- Q – Not inherently against organization. As resident – want to be clear that this will not impact residents.
 - Happy to write up conditions, but will need answer today. But happy to come back, develop mutual list we can sign off on. All the things you want us to do, we want to do.
 - Could you vote in favor pending agreement?
 - Could we vote on letting ECA Board to sign off on agreement?
 - Would need not just leadership of board and 2-3 residents to volunteer time to come to agreement.
 - Quorum is 10 voting members.
- Randy – would have preferred that this was not so up to the deadline
- Q – Not sure of voluntary agreement b/c no way to enforce it. You can have agreement, if they don't follow it, it means nothing. We should either trust them or don't.

MOTION: I MOTION TO VOTE YES. SECONDED.

- **Yes: 11**
- **No: 2**
- **Abstentions: 0**
- Randy: want to make clear, want to find other parking so people don't park on street.
- How do you enforce out of state plates?

- Can look at any available option to improve parking conditions. Could look at metro parking garage after hours, will post detailed “how to walk from metro station to building”
- Can park at bank and walk across – Sun Trust bank.

6. ECKINGTON YARDS PUD

Update on negotiations with JBG Boundary Companies.

- Brian w/ JBG, joined by John from Boundary Companies
- Giving update since Feb. Have hearing w/ zoning commission on May 12, giving update, getting feedback. In May, asking for support.
- Plan level – changes in response to feedback from ECA and R st residents.
 - Shares new plans for building.
 - Shared plan w/ Gale (formerly Trilogy) –
 - Share loading docks - eliminates having to add more curb cuts to Eckington Place & Harry Thomas Way – not good for pedestrians. Second reason – dedicated agreed to eliminate all retail loading from public alley, only loading off alley be residential only.
 - Connectivity: Project felt isolated. Challenged because surrounding land is privately owned. Added pathway through buildings, with plan for future connection if Cubesmart land is ever available – people will be able to go straight into plaza area.
 - Parking: agreeing to tap into parking spaces at Gale – was built w/ 1 space per 1 unit, but many spaces (over 200) aren’t used. SO while we think we have enough on-site parking, also putting in place physical connection and agreement with ownership that if we need spaces, are able to use it.
 - Q: Occupancy rate at Gale? 92%
 - Changes on R st
 - Plan move – moved entrance to parking garage for eastern side of project closer to Harry Thomas Way – was made a while ago, was somewhat easier to accommodate.
 - Able to work w/ architects to come up with solution to move loading closer to Harry Thomas Way. Not ideal for maintenance, but was important for R St residents.
 - Have pushed building back 2’ on ground floor to make alleyway 22’, to make big enough for 2-way traffic.
 - Also designed loading dock so truck can come in, close garage door – so trash pickup can be internal.
 - Massing – had 7 story building on property line. Worked w/ R st neighbors to set back building to allow sunlight during winter solstice, at least through every level except bottom. After losing density, pushing building back, now accomplished that. Will send updated drawings to R st.

- Agreed to construction management agreement – governs everything from construction hours to having mandatory representation on site, will be governing document for construction – addresses noise, cleanliness, worker parking, will stage all onsite on west side, certain truck movements.
- Community Benefits
 - Still working w/ commissioner Lewis on affordable housing commitment – have made significant progress but still working. It is significantly above/beyond what is required, and what any other PUD has done in this area. That value is very significant.
 - Committing to require selves on at least 10,000 sq.‘ to drop rents at least \$10/sq. ft. below market to get retail that you want – could be as much as 50% discount.
 - Commitment to being LED certified at least Silver Level, maybe Gold (still studying).
 - Increased commitment toward new signage - \$20,000
 - \$25,000 donation to Eckington/NoMa park – primarily for design/planning – could dedicate to something on planning – open to hearing that. Could go toward planning for connection to Harry Thomas Way.
 - MBT trail - \$25,000 toward safety enhancements on trail
 - Urban garden – either on site (probably on rooftop) or off-site but within block or two of project site. Would have to work out logistics.
 - Participate in “adopt the block” for 6 years (3 sessions) – not just on site, but around site – or maybe elsewhere in community.
 - Enhance or install Capital bikeshare station (\$50,000) – new station at NoMa park unless DDOT/Bikeshare says too close to Eckington Place, in which case expand that one
 - At least \$20,000 to design, produce public art in public right-of-way, adjacent to site or nearby. Could be public process
 - Still willing and have made offer to provide dedicated meeting space in building, at least as big as current ECA space, ECA could give input into space
 - Community involvement in retailing curation. Crafting language to give community a lot of feedback into types or even specific retailers – devil in details so don’t get forced to do something that results in vacant storefront, want to see how to target merchants w/out requiring it.
 - Total: Over \$4 million. Large package for scope of project, also fantastic opportunity for Eckington. Retail would be good for neighborhood.
- Traffic: Part of any PUD requires thorough traffic study w/ DDOT – looks at critical traffic points (includes Wendy’s site). Make suggestions that JBG/Boundary pays for – includes existing, planned, future development.
 - Don’t know exactly what they will ask for, but will ask for improvements on Eckington place, intersection of Yards site and further south (maybe Dave Thomas circle).
- Questions
 - Reduced rent for retail – for life of project?
 - For initial lease term – usually 5-10 years with extensions. Committing to do long-term would be hard to do, but at least for initial term for people to move into space.

- o Is there going to be study of connectivity to Union Market?
 - Has come up quite a bit. There was a study that NoMa commissioned w/ District, got a large amount of funding for parks, looked at connectivity of MBT, Union Market. Looked at different options. In near term, need to make connection from west side of NY ave better, so use existing overpass where Amtrak goes over FL Ave, make more pedestrian friendly with wider sidewalks. FL ave on line to get major work – probably FY 2019 – Dave Thomas Circle to Trinidad will be redone, could include expanding sidewalk to accommodate bicycles. Lots of options, connection from Harry Thomas to MBT will help. Not as good as direct connection, but better than what exists.
- o \$25k for safety improvements to MBT – used term “more”?
 - \$25k is line item. Haven’t been involved in safety studies, would prefer to give \$ to DDOT or NoMa (whoever best agency is) with earmark for safety considerations.
 - Other developments have also earmarked \$, want to make sure not duplicative – Kepler (other side of tracks) have \$10k in CBA. Just for safety.
 - Randy – did talk to Galin Brooks of MBT, don’t think it’s unduplicated. In the news that there’s been some unfortunate incidents, so important for safety measures go up into Eckington, not just in open area around FL Ave.
 - North of R? Yes.
 - Call boxes & security cameras.
- o On affordable housing – can you share current proposal?
 - Presented Comm Lewis a few different options to increase total amount – more toward workforce (80% AMI), or heavily weighted toward 50% AMI. Have a couple of levers, a value, she’s the one who wanted to talk about it, have asked to negotiate w/ her and expect it will be presented to ECA.
- o Timeline for Feb?
 - Construction – 2nd Quarter 2017.
- o Traffic study – is that going to be done by our next meeting in May?
 - Will you have DDOT recs by vote? They give their report 10 days in advance of zoning. If any specific things related to traffic improvements, should discuss ahead of time.
 - Traffic – only so much we can do. If there’s issues we can control, we need to discuss now. Otherwise if DDOT, they tell us what we have to do. In the meantime, we need to talk now about anything else.
- o Will residents be eligible for residential parking?
 - No – in CBA
- o For donation to NoMa park – asked about suggestion for funds. Child-friendly aspects of park. How would the group feel about child-friendly space for park?
 - Mike – disagrees – wants \$ for something other than NoMa park. Hard to earmark for something because they’re so early in planning. NoMa will be fine

doing park w/out \$25k. Could go to movies or other programs. Think it's too early, they have their own process for intake of ideas.

- Have you talked to schools – Langley of McKinley?
 - Have not talked to them – except McKinley tech about “maker space” about programs, opportunity for synergies, but nothing has come of space. Would like to do something w/ schools, but will require their engagement also.
- What about Harry Thomas Sr Park? Lots of deferred maintenance and upkeep
- Do you sometimes give money for things city should pay for? Like fixing sidewalks? Is it preferable to pay for something city wouldn't otherwise do?
 - Certain things city may not do for a long time even if they're supposed to.
 - Collected input on CBA, but not a lot of fully grown trees in Eckington, so along Harry Thomas Way, lined with mid-level trees pushing sidewalks up. Could work w/ Casey Trees to put down pervious surface that are not going to get messed up by trees – would be ADA compliant, better for pedestrians.
 - DDOT has materials – UFA has been doing experimental installations – “flexi pave” – smooth continuous surface – Rhode Island Ave by Logan Circle to see examples. DDOT is better at accounting for tree spaces when doing sidewalk maintenance.
- Emory Shelter could use improvement – and they've been good neighbors.
- Possible connection to R & 2nd – if redeveloped – what is best way to start process if land comes over. Can come to you, but if someone else is owner. How can we ensure that new owner is welcome to making alteration to structure to make that happen?
 - As part of PUD, can make sure plans say space meant for future connection, so if open to R st, has to be open to the public. That would run (as with everything in CBA) with land records so any future owner would have to abide.
- Will circulate CBA that encapsulates everything.
- Randy reviews process
 - Negotiating w/ Comm Lewis, will present to ANC in 2nd week of May
 - Board will meet w/ JBG and Lewis in near future
 - With 50 Fl Ave, residents didn't know what was going on. Appreciates that JBG & Boundary have worked w/ neighbors.