

# ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETING

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

MEETING MINUTES - MONDAY, JULY 10, 2017

Katrina Velazquez chairing for Vernon Preston.

## Committee Reports

- Beautification/CS - Clean-up & Tree-Care

Katrina: ECA will be hosting a community clean-up on August 5th. For those interested, this will include a 1 hour instruction on tree care from Casey Trees prior to a 1 hour cleanup.

- Planning & Development- FP Community Benefits

Katrina: ECA will be negotiating a community benefits agreement with Folger Pratt for the proposed development at 3rd and R street. If anyone is interested in joining a committee to work on this, please reach out to Katrina. She will also be sending around some information to reach out to interested people.

Sylvia: The development at 50 Florida ave (the old ice house) has taken over 18 months to start because of unforeseen issues with the foundation. They are reporting the project will be done in 2018. It will have 182 condos. The community benefits agreement for this project included a historic heritage trail for Eckington. There will be 10 plaques/signs at various historic sites around the neighborhood. Sylvia has also proposed wrought iron tree boxes with landscaping for the Unit blocks of Q Street, Quincy Place, and R street. Sylvia reminded the group that only 'planned unit developments' (PUDs) come with community benefits agreements.

- Outreach

Lyndzi: The Outreach Committee is working on a new neighbor news letter. This will provide information about the ECA, trash pickup, bus lines, and generally help them feel more part of community. The Outreach Committee is also going to start re-engaging old rosters of ECA members to bring back some of those members who may no longer be coming.

Block party: The Outreach Committee is open to suggestions for this years' block party. They have not yet decided when or where the block party should be held and would like recommendations about what has and has not worked in the past, so please reach out to Lyndzi or Katrina if you have ideas or want to be involved. Sylvia informed the group that we have had block parties before. Closing an entire block can be expensive. In the past the committee took donations (approximately \$1600). They had a moon bounce, DJ, clown, and facepainting. For food, they went to costco and cooked hot dogs, hamburgers, fish, etc... The ECA then sold tables to local vendors for 35\$. There were lots of ideas for this years' block party, including:

- Jim who owns a music studio in the neighborhood offered to contact local bands.
- Adam Duffy noted that there are lots of opportunities for local business and new businesses to engage.
- Food trucks?
- Contact DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities ([dcarts.dc.gov](http://dcarts.dc.gov))?

- Contact local (Eckington) artists?
- There should be some free food items to encourage everyone to come.
- Engage local breweries and distilleries? If we use Harry Thomas Rec Center we probably cannot have alcohol.
- Table for DC Government health and human services agencies.

Please contact Katrina or Lyndzi if you have other ideas or would like to help.

NoMa Bid: Galin Brooks from the NoMa Business District (NoMa BID) introduced NoMa BID. NoMa BID works on improving NoMa as a neighborhood to 'Live, Work, and Play', specifically they have been obtaining grants to build parks and improve public spaces (examples are the NoMa/Eckington Greens, and the dog park/children's play area at 3rd and L NE. NoMa is defined for purposes of the BID as approximately R Street to the North, Union Station to the South, North Capitol to the West, and 3rd Street NE to the East.

The NoMa BID has been working for 2 years on improving the Metro Branch Trail. The trail is 5.5 miles today and will be 8 miles. There are still issues, including safety and crime. There was a study done in 2015 in partnership with MPD and DDOT as well as other stakeholders. The study produced 30 action items (safety, access, and technical improvements like lights and mile markers). There is another study currently under way to improve 'way finding' and identity. This will help direct foot and bike traffic to the trail with will in turn also augment security (more eyes on). This will help pedestrians and bikers feel more comfortable, safer, and to know their surroundings better. The NoMa BID is meeting this Thursday (13 July) at Wonder Garden on 1st NE if anyone wants to join. They will also be passing around a flyer and an online survey.

Q: Is NoMa BID working on access to union market from MBT? Yes, the current plan is for a ramp that will connect the trail near Q Street up to the north side of NY Ave bridge.

Q: Are there any updates on NoMa/Eckington Greens? No updates. Stacy West is the director and there should be another community meeting soon. Updates are posted on the NoMa Parks Foundation website (<http://www.nomaparks.org>).

#### Discussion on R & North Capitol Liquor Store

Bryan: Bryan authored a letter that was sent to numerous DC Government Agencies and elected officials. There are a number of people who appear to be hanging out by store every day engaging in nefarious activities, to include drugs, open drinking, and prostitution. The situation is getting worse and effects the whole triangle and is producing large amounts of trash and nuisance. Willy, who owns the flea market cleans up every day, but it is still a problem. There needs to be a whole of government, long term solution to the problem. These problems were not created quickly and will not be solved easily.

Street lights have been out on Lincoln Road, which has abetted the issues.

Sylvia: Sylvia agreed that this issue will not go away over night and that we need a long-term solution that involves more than police intervention. Next week, there is a meeting with our local police commander and at least 5 DC Government agencies to discuss the way forward. Sylvia has attempted to engage DCRA and ABRA, but in years past things haven't worked. Super Liquor's ABC license is expiring soon and the community will have the opportunity to weigh in on changes.

There were many ideas, to include input on what has worked at a liquor store on Rhode Island (they stopped selling 'singles'). A member noted that the liquor store on Rhode Island received city grants when they agreed not to sell singles.

Police: MPD reported that there have been 128 arrests around North Capitol and Lincoln Road between Florida and R Streets since June 1st. These arrests have included felonies,

firearms, drugs, and overdoses. MPD referred to many of the arrests as 'quality of life arrests'. Many of these arrests are the same people and they are generally released very quickly. The store could issue a 'barring notice' to individuals, which the police could enforce. Lyndzi from Yang's Market noted they are aware of this and have used it.

There is a current heroin epidemic going on and much of it is laced with fentanyl, which is causing major problems and overdoses. MPD reminded us all that sleeping on the sidewalk and loitering are not crimes in DC, but they are working on the open drinking and drug use/sales.

MPD updated us that again, violent crime, burglary, and car theft are all down. Repeated his PSA: DON'T LEAVE STUFF IN YOUR CAR. Things in plain view in your car encourage break ins.

Q: What can we do to help MPD? Continue to report the issues. Call 911 when you see things happening. Report vacant homes. As an example, MPD just made an arrest at a vacant house on the 1700 block of Lincoln Road, but there was no 'vacant' sign. The neighborhood should make DCRA aware of vacant homes (DCRA can secure them).

MPD reminded the audience that if you call 911, someone has to come, so please use the resource when you see someone. Simple police presence can help a lot.

Q: What can we do as the ECA? We can start by engaging the owner of Super Liquor and working with her to make changes that will help her and residents. We can write letters to the Mayor's office, DPR, DCRA, etc... The ECA could provide form letters for residents and write an Op Ed about the issues and lack of response from the City. We can also invite these representatives to the ECA meetings to discuss our concerns.

Q: How do we find out what ABRA cited Super Liquors for? ABRA posts these things on their website: <https://abra.dc.gov>; How to file a complaint: <https://abra.dc.gov/service/filing-complaint-abra>

Comment: Two years ago when Super Liquor's license was up for renewal, Eckington attempted to update the agreement but the outcome was not very public. ECA will work to ensure the next negotiation with Super Liquors is a more open process.

## ANC5E Commissioner Updates

ANC5E03 Hannah Powell: Last month there was a discussion about handicapped transportation issues (wheelchair access was blocked due to lamp posts). Hanna is working on this and has also submitted the request for curb cuts on some sidewalks in Eckington that currently do not have them.

Carlos Rosario Adult Education Center (514 V St NE): Hannah wanted to highlight the adult public charter school in Eckington. The lottery is next month (August). You must be 18 or over and have no secondary education (associates degree or higher) to attend. They have opportunities for non-English speakers as well. They have programs for English language, GED, and computer literacy that are free to DC residents. They also have three career training academies: Nursing, IT Tech, and Culinary School. <https://www.carlosrosario.org/on-campus/sonia-gutierrez-campus/>

Lastly, Hannah wanted to know if there was interest in setting up an informational session with AARP and the free services they offer to elderly DC residents, to include legal issues like wills, guardianship, and probate.

ANC5E04 Sylvia Pinkney: Sylvia passed around pictures of the new building going in at 72 Florida Ave NE. The owner currently intends to shrink the curb cut on Florida Ave from 60 feet to 24 feet, which would mean the larger trucks have to enter from Q Street. This will be open 24 hours and will be a 1500-unit storage site. The building is being built 'by right', so as of now the community has no leverage, but if they request a curb cut on Q, we may have an opportunity to negotiate.

Sylvia will be sending around her community update soon. This will include information about DPW's intention to begin ticketing owners whose trash cans are left on public property. Sylvia is also planning to have some of the allies resurfaced.

Comprehensive plan: Office of Planning is going to send their draft back out for comments and will probably give 30 to 60 days for community input before finalizing it and sending it to the council for approval. Website for information: <https://plandc.dc.gov>

Virtual Circle (Dave Thomas Circle): The environmental impact report is in progress. Sylvia will keep us informed and DDOT will come back to the community for more engagement.

**There is no August meeting. The next meeting is on September 11th.**