

ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

OCTOBER 3, 2016

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE: 31

1. PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **RANDY OPENS MEETING AND WELCOMES EVERYONE. ROOM INTRODUCTIONS.**
- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
 - NoMa Parks identified landscape architect. Having Community Conversation – Oct 25th 6:30-8:30 at Hyatt, seeking community input. Let Randy know if you want to be involved.
- **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
 - **SAFETY** – Ruben: Had meeting with MPD at park. Had a good conversation about 5th district's approach to community policing. Will share notes.
 - If you see anything suspicious or unsafe, call 911 for any issues. DC Gov needs input and notification in order to solve problems.
 - Thinking about bringing back block captains – for safety, beautification, etc.
 - If you want to get involved with any of that, let Ruben know.
 - **OUTREACH** – Mike – membership in committee is up to 3 people, would love more hands on deck. Discussing basic outreach now (yard signs announcing meetings); asking people for phone numbers for elderly neighbors to create phone tree.
 - **BEAUTIFICATION** – Terry – had call with Comm Pinkney, maybe Comm Lewis also. Trying to plan 1-2 fall cleanups before end of the year, and maybe also do a planting. Also trying to stay on top of NoMa Parks conversation to have plenty of ECA people in the room.
 - **EVENTS** – Adam (in absentia)
 - 1. Thank you everyone for attending Art All Night especially the volunteers we got from our neighborhood. Eckington was the biggest group of volunteers represented!
 - 2. Now that we've wrapped up Art All Night we can start planning some additional activities for the Fall/Early winter so I will be emailing those who were interested in the committee this week to set up a time to meet as a group.
 - 3. Please feel free to email me with any programming suggestions that you'd like to see over the next year.
- **NATALIE – ARTIST COLLECTIVE – DOING A SOUND-BASED COMMUNITY ART PROJECT IN BLOOMINGDALE & ECKINGTON.**
 - Creating audio mix of sounds and voices of community, creating a listening party & mix to hand out. Also making "library of sounds" available. Have fliers to call in with playful prompts. Oct 8 & 15th, conducting sound walks (1pm & 11am respectively). Gives people recorders to walk through neighborhood & record sounds.
 - Vernon asked if they're working with McKinley – yes, doing sound walk with art class this week. But also wanted to make general opportunities available.
- **CELIA – RHODE ISLAND AVE MAIN STREET.**
 - Just had fall fest this past Saturday. Rainy and cloudy but still good.
 - Looking for 2 new board members. Would love to have someone from this end of RIA, and this end of the neighborhood. This end doesn't get the love we deserve.
 - RIA Main Street runs from North Capitol St to Mt Rainier. Some activity on this end (e.g., Hands on Drums), but this end is underrepresented on board.
 - To be on board, do not have to live on Rhode Island Ave.

- Some initiatives, like getting new bus lines, lobbied actively on behalf of that and were successful. Also getting more streetlights.
- Q – Any plans for underpass under railroad?
 - Talking about that, need more input.
- Comment – About 5 years ago, space under the bridge, and along street – pushing for streetlights, but businesses were resistant b/c too costly.

Q – Underpass – traffic moves quickly, so if there were some barrier, railing for sidewalk would give a feeling of more safety.
- Comment – Underpass – Look at what NoMa’s doing w/ their underpasses, ask for money in future CBAs.
 - Board is working w/ DPW, others to ID priorities.
- Q – Bus line –
 - Additional bus line added, another G bus, was only going to be rush hour, and got enough consensus from community to get mayor & city council to get a bus added.
 - *Note from ECA: I believe this is referring to the proposed “G9” bus route. Read more here: <http://bloomingtonneighborhood.blogspot.com/2016/05/ward-5-cm-mcduffie-new-g9-bus-route.html>. Unclear if the budget for this has been fully approved.*

3. REQUEST FOR SUPPORT - BZA CASE NO. 19302

232 S St NE - conversion to 3 units

See attached report from the Office of Planning.

- Alex Wilson – Land Use Lawyer here on behalf of developer.
 - Have BZA application in process, hearing on Nov 16. Asking for support and input on project.
 - Asking for relief to convert property from single family to 3 condo units.
 - Doing addition on rear, 3rd story w/ setback. Not changing front of building, an only going 5.5’ past next door house (which developer also owns) further back.
 - Also bumping out on side, back, top.
 - 3 on-site parking spaces.
 - Q – 1500 units coming in, taking away from SFH that could be ready w/ COO for basement unit. Neighborhood doesn’t have many single family homes.
 - Comment – Agreement – person on 3rd street lived through renovations nearby, these renovations do nothing for us as single family home owner. Does nothing for comps – developers are buying homes at cheaper price, selling condos for way more money. Not attractive, not cohesive to neighborhood. Doesn’t fit in.
 - Answer – trying to make it fit in by keeping the front the same. Understand your concerns, but here because of BZA application – have steps we need to fulfil. They do allow conversion to 3-unit condos as long as it doesn’t affect light and air.
 - Comment – but they do, they tower over us, next door condos can peer into house from above. Everything that is being built up, towers over us.
 - Q – Are you asking for anything else?
 - Asking for a vote of support
 - Q – How high is popup?
 - An extra floor – 10-12’?
 - Does it have a rooftop deck?
 - No. Was considering one but got feedback that it wasn’t.
 - Comment- many people in Eckington like it because of the single family homes. Is there even demand?
 - Q – Have you calculated how much green space you’re losing? Affects rain runoff – have you calculated how much has been lost?
 - Don’t have that off the top of my head.
 - Q – Spent a lot of \$ on green space on parks, one of the nice things about corner lots is the green space.
 - Comment – can look into other ways to create green space if that is a concern.

- o Q – Said the developer owns adjoining property. Asking for an exemption for length – pop-back?
 - A – Yes, that is part of criteria.
- o Q – Then that sets up the adjoining property to also pop back, pushes this back to 3rd house.
 - A – Do understand that, but not allowed to do that as a matter of right. Zoning commission looking at – by right, can't go more than 10' back beyond adjacent neighbor.
 - Comment – concern was for 3rd property, how they may be squished between houses.
 - Q – Is there a plan to take 2nd house that was bought, combine them?
 - No
 - Q – What is plan for house next door?
 - Not sure, but cannot make into 3 units by zoning, no plan to define.
 - Q – Some of what we're hearing from you is different from what he told ANC5E – said he wasn't buying house next door (in June), said he would be living in property, wait and see what happens. What he hopefully heard at ANC meeting in June, what folks are trying to bring up here, is this is a single family home street. 1 apt building is a complete eye sore, converted a SFH to a 7-unit apartment. You're asking BZA for several exceptions – how many feet of setback, other thing is, why do we need to go to a 3-unit condo building. You can do 2 units by right. But a request for an exception for 3 units is unusual. Why should DC zoning policy make an exception to grant 3 condo units?
 - Can't say what zoning was thinking.
 - Q – I know there are things that are possible if you get BZA to sign off. You need to demonstrate why you're doing this.
 - Understand what you're saying. We're here to get community feedback. Cannot speak for developer, he thinks it's a better project to do 3 units, is my answer. I will take feedback back to developer.
 - Q – Looks similar to building across the street (brick & siding) – will look very ad hoc. Definitely concern about number of units, materials/look of it – could be much more cohesive. I think we would have to get definite plans on second unit. If I were a developer, I would do the same thing on the next house – at least do 2 units. Almost have to know both before approving either.
 - Q – as a neighbor, not a great track record to say, “Not going to buy this,” and then you buy it. Domino effect of bumping out and up. Not a lot of trust. And get that people have to work late, but this has been on the books for month – to not show up and talk to people. And house has been vacant a long time, think that vacancy tax has been paid – I don't know, but doubt it's the case. Not a lot of good will, haven't talked to people on the street. A pretty big deficit to ask for approval and not have a record of doing what he needs to do.
 - Q – And only added to agenda after many of us contacted zoning board opposing.
 - Q – and to say that you're going to show up, and not show up and send someone else in his place – not sign he's going to be a good neighbor.
 - He's not going to be the neighbor – he's going to sell it and move on.
 - Q – Would he deviate and do something the community wants, be more receptive to community.
 - I will take back any and all comments and discuss with him.
 - Q – You said there isn't a roof deck, but it has one on here?
 - Shouldn't – we're definitely not asking for one. Designs may be from old architect.
 - Q – Where is current plan?
 - o This is the current plan. Just ignore the roof.
 - Architect – roof penthouse was removed. There's a roof access door – shows a picture on last day, glass door lays flat on roof and lifts up, and you walk out.
 - Q – Is that allowable?
 - o Yes, as far as we know. Is allowable, not asking for relief.
 - Penthouse was removed – was mechanical for HVAC, but put HVAC inside.
 - Q – Can you address materials that will be used for additions?

- What has been proposed so far is siding. I had never discussed with owner whether to use brick.
 - o We can take that back to him – materials.
 - Q – Looking at plans for front, bump out, not consistent, and an eye sore, and taking up greenspace, I don't see how this could blend in with style of neighborhood.
 - Q – It looks like there are 3 parking places. Is there room for trash cans and so forth?
 - Yes, we will ensure there's space for trash.
 - Q – Have you all looked at infrastructure issues, in terms of brown outs? Have you talked with Pepco and other utilities about how to mitigate?
 - Not part of job with BZA process – happens down the road with permits.
 - Mike – think that Office of Planning would look into utilities – maybe bring up with them.
 - Randy explains voting: to vote, have to pay dues and live in community.
 - Q – Would you want a vote now? You could come back before Nov meeting?
 - Q – It is vital that developer show up –tell a group of individuals one thing, and then say something else at BZA meeting. Community finds out that what's approved is not what they agreed to. Vital that developer comes and talks with neighbors.
- o Randy: Developer has asked for special exception to convert to 3 units.
 - **MOVE TO VOTE: I WILL MAKE A MOTION TO VOTE OPPOSE THE PROJECT AS IT STANDS**
 - Seconded.
 - Vote to oppose of project: 22
 - Vote in opposition of motion: 0
 - Abstention: 0

3. QUESTIONS FOR ANC CANDIDATES

Back of Agenda has map, and Eckington is ANC5EO3 or 5EO4. ANC goes a little beyond Eckington's boundaries, but two districts pretty much align.

- COMMISSIONER LEWIS is out of the country and gave regrets.
- COMMISSIONER PINKNEY could not be here and gave regrets.
- MARY FARMER ALLEN was here, could not stay for the rest of the conversation
- MIKE AIELLO – 5EO3
- HANNAH POWELL – 5EO3
- If candidates would like to introduce themselves and why they're running, feel free to do that.

INTRODUCTIONS

- MIKE AIELLO – Live on R St, president of condo association. I'm running for the ANC because I'm interested in everything that goes on here. Worked with last developer, JBG, to develop a good community benefits agreement and local issues. We have other developments that I think I can do well with. I think it can help our neighborhood in working with ANC commissioners surrounding us – many projects are around us but not in our district. For example, the MRP developments come here, we can work with their commissioners. The Union Market developers are close by. And work with 5EO4. We don't think of ourselves as 2 neighborhoods –we just have 2 commissioners.

- HANNAH POWELL – Live on 4th St, have been in Eckington for a little over 2 years, before that lived in Truxton Circle. When I looked to buy a new house, only looked in Eckington. Neighborhood has great reputation, everyone I know who lives here loves it. No question that this is where I wanted to be. I'm excited about the opportunity to potentially serve the community. Mike and I are on the same page about a lot of things. Many developments coming in – Eckington Yards, Elevation, MRP proposal with northern half of Pepco Park – at least 1500 units. On the other half, on northern side of Eckington, big Rhode Island Ave development at Foreman Mills, another 1500 units. Many people coming in, creating transportation, safety, parking issues. I hope I can support the community by supporting what's going on, representing community needs. For me, I think I just want to be a good neighbor, to be responsive, someone folks can reach out to. There's a lot of issues going on, a lot of change I hope I can help by serving the community in this capacity.
- Randy – goal, create list of questions to post online and present to candidates.
- Comm Pinkney is opposed by Mary Farmer Allen.
- Comm Lewis is opposed by Hannah and Mike.
- Q – For Hannah – do you have experience with community involvement so far?
 - Hannah: Have been involved with ECA, with neighbors. Just left a career with federal gov, so have 9 years of experience working in bureaucracy – coalition building, understanding how organizations work, and knowing who the decision maker is. In the community, been involved with neighbors, ECA, and church on Capitol Hill.
- Randy – may also be an opportunity for us to agree/disagree on issues for candidates.
- Questions
 - Want to know more about asphalt factory and trucks that come through frequently. Was nearly assaulted by driver when I asked him to not come down street that has sign “no trucks allowed.” From Fort Meyer.
 - Hannah: It's a concern – I live on 4th St. Trucks are supposed to be on 5th St, but they come down 4th as well, even with signs. This has been a community issue before, folks have raised it before. We need to continue pressure – reach out to police department, interact directly with Ft Meyer. Don't know of plans for site to go away, but would like them to uphold obligations about that traffic.
 - Mike: Would add, there might be a solution with portable cameras. Other than red light cameras, they put up some experimental cameras for giving tickets if a car doesn't stop for pedestrian in crosswalk, similar illegal activity. I think one was for trucks in a non-truck zone, so can ask whomever runs those.
 - Also on Ft Meyer – what are the permits that they have for their air pollution? Do they exceed them? Hard to find the data, tried to get some staffers to help me find that and was not successful. I think they're emitting sulphur dioxide – it's pretty nasty.
- Questions from survey
 - Why are you running for office?
 - What obligations do you have on your time, will you be able to stay until end of meetings?

- o What.... (get list from Randy)
- o What are your plans for conducting outreach – whether SMD meetings or ECA meetings, what outreach activities do you have in mind?
- o What experience do you have working with youth in the neighborhood?
- o What plans do you have for outreach to kids – after school and in the summer?
- o Traffic – especially people who cut through neighborhood – 2nd street can have enormous backups as well as Dave Thomas Circle, also safety, people running stop signs. Also issue on Rhode Island Ave, U St (hard to get out of driveway into street because so much traffic). Would be great to have a stop sign, speed bump, something to slow down traffic. Some neighborhoods have “do not enter” at certain times – only local traffic 7-10am. Other places have used large planters to restrict the flow of traffic enough so no one from out of town would want to go; by Kipp created artificial median to make people slow down.
 - Restated question: What is your plan or vision for transportation issues – bus system, cyclists, cars, people coming in, fed ex trucks, parking. A lot of things happening in Eckington for many reasons, so what is their vision to promote a better flow of traffic, promote safety, less cut-through.
 - If we pose a smaller number of questions that are open-ended, rather than really specific questions.
- o We all know there’s a lot of pressure on all sides of Eckington with regard to development. I don’t want to reopen what might be a sore wound, but what do the candidates think about historic designation. If you do support it in concept, what could we do differently next time around? Could it be an option for Eckington in the future? Could we do it better?
- o MBT Trail – how to make it safer?
 - Ruben mentioned – MPD has bike patrols, motorcycle, is a point of emphasis; and have developers putting in call boxes and increased lighting.
 - Hannah: have seen a lot more MPD presence on the trail.
 - Ruben: Let MPD know if you see things going on that shouldn’t be – call, text, email – let them know so they can devote resources.
 - Also undercover police in cars.
- o Whoever is elected, connect with REI – they are right on MBT trail, will bring in additional traffic for sports-minded individuals. Look at what they’ve done with Wundergarten – sure they’ll want to meet all the bikers on this side of town.
- Question for protocol – what is plan with questions?
 - o If candidates respond, we will distribute responses.
 - o Mike notes – he and Hannah have responses on GGW blog.
- Thank you both for being here, stepping up.
- For Development w/ Bike Lobby – what’s current status?
 - o Still have the doors that close at 9pm, but looking into many options.
 - o Sterling from Gearing Up said that having doors may be uncomfortable, may be a barrier for people, may limit access – better to continue trail.

- Going to zoning?
 - Have an information session with ANC
 - Have to go through change of use – changing from office building to residential.
- o Also going to close part of trail during construction.
- o Randy – since they’re not in Eckington but use trail, we may have more leverage if we take a supportive/positive role – to work productively with them.
- Question – sign for lease for Folger Pratt ?? – have they talked to you about what their plan is?
 - o Vernon reached out and didn’t hear back. Want them to take care of space, make sure people can see around z-curve.

4. REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM MAYOR’S OFFICE

- Traffic flow and people driving through local areas – MP has motor carrier unit, not a big unit, but has been effective at 13th & Franklin. If you get community signatures, DDOT will do traffic calming (e.g., plateau speed bump). Can give Randy info to disseminate. Comm Quinn is working on this on 1st street. DDOT has come out, listening to community concerns. Fort Meyers – every company that has trucks in DC is supposed to have trucks stay on a certain route based on their permits – may be a matter of enforcement and communication between agencies, can bring agencies out to ECA meeting to discuss process more.
- Mayor Bowser opened Woodbridge Library – 18th & Rhode Island Ave – “Gem of Ward 5” – beautiful library. We got a lot of flak on the listservs for appearance on RIA side because it looks like a spaceship, but once you go inside, - you can’t judge a book by its cover – has a 360 view of the whole city, lots of kids programs, pajama story time, community events can be held there. Stop by Woodridge Library.
- DC’s 311. Mayor Bowser implemented new street lights plan. If you see a light out, go up to light poll, text 32311 “streetlights” – get reply asking for address or unit block, and street lamp poll – has ID number – within 48 hours, someone from DDOT will come out and fix the streetlight. We’ll be out using the app as well and tweeting - Mayors Office of Community Relations & Services
- Mayor’s community newsletter – can sign up for weekly emails.
- Questions
 - o Who is in charge of twitter page? I tweet often to mayor, have not gotten response in 3 years.
 - “Murialbowser” – comms
 - @DCmocrs – mayor’s reps
 - o Truck routes – what agency has authority and how can we engage them in changing truck routes? Especially R St, FedEx trucks go flying down.
 - May be worth revisiting community agreement.
 - Caveat: If your truck route’s drop-off or pick-up location is within 3 blocks, they can use whatever street they want until they get to major carrier street (e.g.,

- RIA). You really want to talk to DCRA – they and DDOT work in partnership. DCRA issues permit. DDOT gives consultation. Hear this issue from everywhere.
- o Wendy's/ Dave Thomas Circle- is there any way for city to buy out property and turn into public space?
 - City Administrator office in talks for land swap with Wendy's – no further update. Reps from DDOT have brought it to the attention.
 - Would include traffic mitigation?
 - o Yes. Influx of population has tremendously increased – projected to reach 800,000 residents by 2020. City is now looking at certain issues involving traffic, looking at what the can do.
 - Randy – 2 options – conservative one to better accommodate traffic, 2nd to purchase Wendy's. Is mayor Bowser in favor of more aggressive?
 - o Hasn't spoken on this issue, but is aware it's a concern. Hasn't come out for or against, but do believe the city will do something.
 - Mike: That's something that we as a neighborhood along with other neighbors, can either push the option we want, or push for some option quicker. Intersection affects a lot of areas, we're not the only ones who don't like the circle. We can ask developers for help too – they have a lot of sway.

NEXT ECA MEETING: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

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