

ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

1. PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING ON AN ECA COMMITTEE, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Randy welcomes & opens meeting, everyone introduces themselves

Mike (chair of Outreach Committee) notes he's recording meeting

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR AN ECA OFFICER POSITION, ELECTIONS ARE IN DECEMBER. CHECK THE BYLAWS FOR THE DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

Reports

- Randy: Elections will be the first meeting in December. Four officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary.
 - If you're interested in being an officer, start thinking about it, check the bylaws for duties of officers.
- Committee Reports
 - Public Safety – Ruben
 - Community safety meeting – next Tuesday, 6pm, Harry Thomas Playground. Will have rep from MPD to join as well.
 - Planning – Shelley & Ned
 - If you're interested in joining, would love the help. We've already started looking at proposals coming before ECA tonight.
 - Outreach & membership – Michael
 - Brainstorming about ways to get the word out about what's happening w/ ECA, what agenda is, etc. Throwing around ideas. If you have ideas about how to spread the word about ECA. Considering doing phone tree for older residents, block captains involved, yard signs, recording meetings for people who miss the meetings, survey of community & why people participate. Looking for more participants.
 - Beautification committee – Terry
 - Met, shared what's been done in past, looking ahead to what's going to be done.
 - Water the trees on your block.
 - Events – Adam
 - Art All Night – coming up
 - Event in July – house hop, donations for children's hospital. Last house was Rachel's, who has one act play – sept 17th & 23rd – coming up.
 - Art all night: North Capitol Main Street – Sept 24th. Really tremendous evening, great show of community energy. Has been well-appreciated and attended.

- Event is on longer stretch of North Cap – Pub & People to 7DL (below Uncle Chips) – drum studio, using empty lot at FI & North Cap.
- Will stop amplified noise after 12-12:30.
- Looking for volunteers

2. REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.

- Comm Pinkney: ANC District is 5EO4 – Starts Rhode Island Ave NE, to NY Ave NE, then North Cap NE to 2nd and Eckington Place
- Comm Lewis: Rhode Island/4th, 5th, 2nd, to Elevation Gateway apartments; has the Gale, Harry Thomas Way
- Comm Pinkney
 - No ANC meeting in last 2 months.
 - Having block meetings every Saturday to bring people out who don't come out to regular meetings – has worked very well. People have expressed many issues they've had.
 - Harry Thomas – had overgrowth cut back. Had policeman's logbook put into place so people on duty sign in, walk the area, come back to building and sign out.
 - New camera – corner of Lincoln Rd & Randolph Place – good spot to focus on areas that need attention
 - Rodent abatement – October. Last for the year.
 - If you want abatement in your front yard also, let Comm Pinkney know.
 - Parking: Near old People's building – noticed parking lot going up – appears to be attached to building. Attached to see if public could park there – it's only for people who work in the building.
 - McMillan – HPRB approved McMillan's updated plans for park, playground, rec center. There is another meeting coming up b/c commission on fine arts has to approve the park and the rec center also. That's on the 15th of Sept. Was told at McMillan advisory group meeting – they will start working at the site between Nov & Dec. One more appeal hasn't come up yet.
 - Not going to get into crime because being recorded.
 - One big issue – groups of people standing around at strategic places throughout community. 5D (police) have been moving people along – that's really all they can do. But they've been trying to move people along.
 - Today – policeman were in front of home; assume it was related to what happened on T st, but not sure.
 - Questions?
 - Dealing w/ developer doing illegal construction – had 2 stop-work orders – they're trying to do popup & back – permits are only for interior alterations. Has been structural damage to house. Stop work orders say they can't continue work until they attend hearing. Is hearing public?
 - Comm Pinkney: Most hearings are public.
 - Neighbor on other side has been in touch.
 - Comm Lewis: Dealing with something similar, hearing is not public.
 - If there's an issue w/ damage ot our house, DCRA won't touch it – that will be handled in civil court
 - R st Resident: 2 issues

or work in DC. Expectation, will come up pretty soon – may be on first agenda following recess.

- Ned: Where is the contributory negligence on cyclist stand?
 - Passed at last council meeting before recess, will come up again on leg meeting agenda Tuesday, expects it to pass, will go to Mayor for signature.
 - Contributory negligence: If you contribute to an accident at all, it's almost a total bar to financial recovery. Essentially, if there's an accident and pedestrian or cyclist has been at fault, is bar to recovery. Most jurisdictions don't use contrib negligence – most have “comparative negligence” – have different variations. We're doing modified comparative fault (has some issues w/ it), fully expect it to pass on Tuesday. If you're at fault, it won't be complete bar to recovery.
- What committee do you chair?
 - Judiciary, and sit on transportation and finance.
 - How is budget allocated?
 - Councilmember McDuffie – deserves a larger conversation. Not split by ward.
- Comm Pinkney – wants to go back to parking on R St –
 - Issue started w/ people from out of town parking on alley, people were complaining about tags from out of town. People from next block saw cars in your alley, started parking in our alley. People were upset about out-of-town tags, DDOT said it's not a street, it's an alley, so they stopped the parking. RPP on streets extended until midnight – keep flow of out of town cars every 2 hours. And have parking bumps and stopped large trucks from going down R st. FedEx – settlement w/ community, says trucks can come down R st.

3. METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

Galin Brooks, Planning and Economic Development Director, NOMA BID

Michael Alvino, Bicycle Program Specialist, DDOT

- Galin: MBT is an awesome resource, so we'll focus on it some more. In Spring 2015, started process to look at MBT, especially in terms of safety & access. Have had some crime, poor lighting, poor access. Spring 2015 – MBT Safety & Access study. Did long community process, got 900 responses to survey. Also did trail walks & community workshops. Produced study w/ 30 action items: safety, access, identity. Did study in partnership w/ DDOT & MBT.
 - Lighting, call boxes, cameras, trail rangers (WaBa),
 - Access: Opportunities to make more access points
 - Identity: Signage, art installation, draw more eyes onto trail and make it more known. A lot of people who live near the trail didn't know it existed. The more people who use it, the more comfortable and safe it will be.
- Initial buy-in
 - Mile-markers on quarter-mile intervals – allows better responsiveness when you call 911. Michael working w/ responders to make sure they can quickly find person.
 - PUD – Eckington Yards – includes funding for security infrastructure on trail - \$25k, will bring more cameras, hopefully come call boxes.

- o MRP – further up trail submitting call box also. Often if there is an incident, often phones are stolen, don't have many options for getting help – call boxes are great option.
- o Park planning for Pepco site off of Harry Thomas Way – also been a deal struck to smooth out R st “z” curve. B/c of trade w/ developer who purchased parcel, will allow that part of trail to be smoothed out – had been ID'd as place of insecurity and many incidents. Will lead to better sight lines, fewer incidents.
- o Installed “meeting point” sign – M st – idea is that if you don't want to ride on trail on your own, go to meeting point, ride in a group.
- o Installed a bunch of murals along MBT – part of big mural festival in May. 4 currently, will rotate every year. Part of Commission on Fine Arts program – part of WMATA fine art (?) program.
- Michael: Bigger infrastructure pieces. Rely on partnership w/ BIDs, Civic Associations, to help make trail the best it can be. The study has action item lists – Galin mentioned some low-hanging fruit that we've been doing. Some things in there that we've been working on are lighting. Lights were solar lights – stringing hard wire, making fixes, working on making permanent solution – currently designing. Mile markers every 1/10 mile.
 - o This spring, went to Office of Unified Communications, trained 120 911 call takers on Met Branch trail – people weren't aware signs had been installed. Put GIS layer in call system, let them know about resources, common issues, so hopefully when you call 911, responses will be quicker and more accurate.
 - o Want to complete trail up to Silver Spring. Currently in design portion to fill in gap between Brookland in Takoma; plan to finish design between Brookland & Fort Totten this fall, get contractor on board and hopefully break ground in 2017. Next section – Ft Totten to Takoma – hope to have prelim design done later this year. Final design later, break ground in 2018. Hope for greater use of trail, fewer safety incidences.
 - o NY Ave Trail: Great idea, has been in plans at city level for 10 years, first proposed in 2005 – from FL ave/NY Ave Tunnel, along NY Ave to Ivy City and Arboretum. Will study later this year – would be a big connection, make that area around Union Market/4th st a critical connection to region. Ride to Silver Spring, Anacostia Riverwalk, and on.
 - o Safety & Access study – many streets dead end onto Met Branch trail. One proposal to do targeted improvements to dead ends that could be trailheads – take a closer look, study – signage & lighting to improved pavement, sidewalks, help connect neighborhood – more use and more safety.
- Questions
 - o Randy: Interaction w/ Elevation project and their access on FL Ave, and what alternate access points might be?
 - PUD process – as part of development review, in addition to meeting w/ ANC, they'll meet w/ us. We've seen proposal, raised many of same questions as here tonight. Alternate routes – haven't yet identified. Trying to get sense of impact of construction on trail – don't want closed for a long time. Alternate routes – part of the reason this connection is so important is it's one of the only access points between R & N sts.
 - o NY ave trail proposal: Any more specifics on when study will kick off?
 - Nothing at this time, hopefully in next month or two. Public engagement would be early part.
 - o Shelley: VRE is proposing expanding their stuff, could be some potential problems with how this trail would be built.

- Yes – shortly after NY report released, VRE released their plan to study their expansions – hopeful to align projects and that one won't preclude the other. Have identified risk and keeping an eye on it.

4. UPDATE, WASHINGTON GATEWAY (ELEVATION) EXPANSION

Matthew Robinson, MRP Realty

- Frederick – MRP
 - Were here in the spring to present what they are proposing through PUD, hoped to get together w/ ANC, didn't work out. Now on agenda to meet w/ ANC next week, so wanted to re-introduce the plan.
 - Washington Gateway: NY Ave, FL Ave, RR Tracks. Elevation was 1st phase. 2nd part: Was supposed to be 600,000+ sq ft office building; office tenancy in NoMa – hasn't been able to land any tenants. To move forward, propose using 2/3 of building as residential, use South Building as office building, more of creative space.
 - Shares several views of building.
 - Creative office buildings: Higher ceilings (10' finished ceilings), more light, more happy & appealing environment. Hope to attract creative companies & workers.
 - Along Metro-Branch Trail: Would bring more light; have units w/ stoop & door right on trail so more engagement.
 - Bike Lobby – embedded in building. Comes from MBT, has elevator that links plaza to MBT, and stairs; bike racks, bike pumps, creating atmosphere where people can come in, have amenities, would like to stay. Trying to get that as active as possible.
 - Q – for tenants only?
 - A – No, open to the public. Sliding doors will open when someone approaches.
 - Q – Hours?
 - Opens at 6pm, closes at 9pm. Seven days a week.
 - Ned – Planning Committee: Concern about limited hours. That connection is main connection to Florida, also connects neighborhood to Union Market. Next access point isn't until NoMa metro. 9pm is pretty early.
 - A – Did hear that in spring. Want to go to ANC, hear all info, and then will consider options.
 - Q – but if you have sliding doors, you're closing off access.
 - A – so are you looking for extended hours, or open 24-7?
 - Seems like overly engineered approach for that building – seems well thought-out for building, but doesn't see it as community benefit – instead, is a hindrance – closes off FL Ave to MBT. Would rather have it completely open (don't speak for everyone)
 - Sterling– Gearing Up Bicycles: That's a huge primary access point for cyclists, neighborhood. Put door there, (as side note, don't put door right on trail) – if I can't walk through there, visual barrier, putting up big building on trail. Unless you put out big sign w/ fairs every Saturday to say “walk through this area” people won't use it. When you start doing development, people see development as a barrier. When you put up a door, you're feeding into that. If you want access for community, have to keep it open. Love the idea of the bike lobby, but needs to be open for everyone to use. If you're asking for 2 buildings, make a little space in between so people can ride through it. But sliding door, steps, elevators – it's a barrier. Keep it totally open.
 - A: If that's a mainstream desire, we'll look into it

- For safety reasons, having it closed is appealing. Otherwise, if it's completely open and not regulated, will be open and not safe. Is 9pm that big a problem?
How many people use MBT after dark?
 - Sterling: MBT has checked past, but has changed. More people on trail at night.
 - Other resident: Use MBT exclusively at night, that lobby would cut me off
- Q – still looking at retail along there?
 - A: Yes, ground floor – lobby would be in corner, would be able to put retailer on ground floor. Hope to get a café, bike store, something.
 - Wouldn't open onto trail?
 - Correct. Lower level.
- Q – Closing at 9pm – cost concern?
 - No, control. People will hang out, how do you manage it?
 - So not opposed to keeping it open 24 hours?
 - Will look into it. Concerned about safety.
- What security do you have?
 - No real places to have. Would have some cameras for Elevation, but nothing that monitors the MBT trail. But we will bring better lighting, people living on the trail.
- Q – Is it conceivable – to have ramp alongside of building so there's some kind of access? As you come up incline from FL.
 - Would that need an elevator?
 - No – elevator would limit how many bikers you get on trail. Not an engineering issue, just a little ramp.
- How big is space for bike lobby?
 - 30' by 105', approximately. Generous space.
- Elevator – if you could build ADA-grade ramp, that would be great. But if you can't do a ramp, having an elevator for people w/ strollers, etc., would be great.
- How many units are apartments?
 - 300 or so.
- How do you control the space? Hundreds of additional residents, people using the trail – sounds like you're doing a lot of elements making the trail safer. That in itself would address some issues w/ controlling open space through/between building. But important to look at keeping open 24-7. Lots of examples for how to keep it safe & clean & accessible.
- Parking spaces – are you applying for variances about how many spaces?
 - Don't believe so – have 0.6 for elevation, only using 0.35 right now. Would build some additional parking, but not a whole lot. Another 300 units, just in last 6-10 months had proposals to add to NoMa park, other things that aren't included in transportation plans for NY/FL area.
- Q – what's the impact of construction on MBT, what is access plan during construction?
 - My sense is that we can't take out MBT – construction is about 2 years, we can't not have MBT open. Not sure how it will work, but do anticipate redoing MBT – will have period of time when we will take up the asphalt, but in better MBT – will take 1-2 months.
 - As you're thinking about plan, can you communicate w/ community
- During construction, how will people access trail, access FL Ave during construction

- Probably be Eckington Place, can't keep access point open
- What's the setback from building to trail?
 - Varies- have some units w/ stoops and yards between bldng and MBT – maybe widest, 15', to 5-6' at narrowest.
 - Might be helpful – would be useful to know – if you're building w/in 5' of trail – how long will you be taking trail out of commission?
 - Will talk to construction manager
- What are you re-doing?
 - Re-doing the trail for the part in front of building – lighting, trail,
- Q – on other side, able to put in better barrier?
 - Have the right to come on that land and approve it, in original PUD.
- Comm Lewis: Previously met w/ MRP
 - Raised issues of security. Glass elevator – can see what's happening in and out of elevator.
 - Chairs in bike lobby – recommended free wifi – would be a way to have people sitting to use wifi, so safer.
 - Closing time for security – consider extending hours in summer & spring when more people are on trail – at least until midnight. Now hearing people want it open 24 hours, so possible midnight not good enough.
 - If something did happen – have phone in lobby area – connects bike lobby w/ other lobbies – connected to residential 24 hour desk. Offers additional security.
 - How far would cameras show? Security cameras often only show only what's directly in front, so want wider angle if something does happen – see outside of building.
 - Outside steps closing at 6pm – asked for it to be open later.

5. SIRIUS XM, BZA APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION

Relocation of 3 antennas at 1500 Eckington PI NE

Christopher Collins, Partner Holland & Knight LLP

- Want to replace 3 of existing antennas on roof of Sirius XM. Antennas exceed height permitted by zoning regs. Already do exceed height – have to go through board of zoning adjustment. Want to move back from edge of roof – will exceed setback – so less visible from ground. Will far exceed required setback, will be greater in height than what's permitted. 1-2' taller than they are now. We're replacing a system – 4 legs held down by weights. Now, instead of weights holding them down, attached physically to building on steel grid, that grid adds another foot or two – will be a little higher. 2 or 3 antennas increased by <1 meter total diameter – to connect w/ satellite. They will far exceed setback, so you won't be able to see them readily – or at all – like you can now. In addition to relocating 3, 2 are being removed. Six total in location, previously had been 8. VZA hearing is Oct 25th. Has been in touch w/ Comm Pinkney; will talk to ANC next Tuesday. Will introduce Jim Blitz – Regulatory Council – who Sirius is, what they do
- Jim – Here about relocating 3 existing antennas. Building here in Eckington is one of 2 headquarters for Sirius – other is in Rockefeller Center, NY. Moved in 2000 to develop abandoned building – made into one of most high-tech buildings in city. Launched service in 2001, serve over 30million customers from 6 satellites in space. Stream service also. Proud to have played role in commercial development, including helping fund NoMa metro. Happy to participate in community – has done career days at McKinley Tech, mentoring students, reading days, donating clothes,

work w/ police – at one point had police substation, have shot spotter microphones on roof of building, share external video.

- Application involves 3 antennas on FL side on southernmost edge of Eckington. Reroofing building – upgrading or removing antennas. Only used for receiving, no transmitting. Any questions about technical nature, have Fred – Company’s technical broadcast manager.
- Chris – will go through slides.
 - Shows existing antennas w/ rocks, sandbags, etc holding down antennas.
 - Shows current overview of Roof, with antennae in 3 sections, goes through each section and where antenna currently are and where they will be moved to.
 - 1st section – being moved back
 - Middle section – now 3, getting rid of 1, 2 moved back and will rotate
 - 3rd section – getting rid of 1, other stays where it is.
 - All white, for technology purposes, 3-5 ft higher than zoning would allow.
- Randy introduces Shelly – co-chair of planning committee:
 - Basic proposal – already had height exemption, this is slightly higher
 - Never had exemption – was matter of height – antennas were regulated the same as “architectural embellishments” – could include antenna. Now that there’s more antennas, they were coveted by the city, got tax benefits for coming in. Zoning changed a few times, current regulations – because they’re changing the way the antenna are being held down, need permit, so need to meet new regulation.
 - What would be the effects of construction, when you’re taking off old antenna, putting in new one – any impact to community? Long term, do you anticipate more infrastructure updates?
 - All changes are on South Side – there’s roof structures - “penthouses” – those are all between Eckington-side and antenna, so you can’t see antenna from the north. You wouldn’t get the noise or visual impact to community to north b/c of placement of antenna.
 - Jim: Doesn’t anticipate traffic disruption, cranes
 - No decision on whether using cranes or not. Can be disassembled and carried up by crew. Nort part of org to figure out which way they’re going, but would be on weekend during least-used hours, and on FL side to shut down road to take off, put on – but Eckington itself wouldn’t be, and hopefully we don’t do it that way. The satellites come apart, fairly simple, but it’s up to the contractor.
 - Similar things in the future – technology changes. Has to change out two dishes. May happen in the future, just don’t know.
 - No current plans for future work, but could happen.
 - Did talk about one antenna to westernmost – will meet current regulations in relocated location, so don’t need variance.
- Mike: Do you have a formalized community engagement process, events you do every year?
 - We would invite a chair to discuss that, do have formalized process, always looking for more opportunities. Would love to do tours of facility – do annual events w/ McKinley students.
 - Comm Pinkney – have come to XM for assistance w/ Eckington Day, block party, tried last year to get 3 tours of XM, was turned down. It’s a beautiful facility, don’t think anyone here has viewed it except me. Sure the list of organizations you called out you were dealing with when you first came to community, but we haven’t had access.
 - Will give Comm Pinkney phone # to call.
- Randy – happy to hear you’re involved with McKinley Tech.
- Randy motions for support

- o Second
- o In favor: 12
- o Opposed: 0

Question: Sept 20th – VZA on project – S & 3rd st – turning Single Family home to turn into 3 units. Has he contacted ECA?

He has not contacted ECA, he has talked to Comm Lewis, she said he has to go to ECA.

Send Randy an email.

What ECA's position is on projects that don't come to ECA to present. You sent letters in support – what happens if someone doesn't come?

Randy – could talk to board about writing a letter that they didn't approach for support.

Annual membership dues are \$10 (per person), \$7 for senior citizens (65 years plus).

The Eckington Civic Association meets on the first Monday of every month at 7pm.

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