

ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

MARCH 7, 2016

FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES:

- Have ideas for Eckington social events? Email AdamBDuffy@gmail.com
- Want to give input on NoMa BID's plans? Join the NoMa Parks Community Conversation on March 29: <http://noma-parks.ticketleap.com/nomaparkscommunityconversation3/> and give online feedback at Imaginenomaparks.org
- Want to contact MRP with thoughts about their Rhode Island Avenue development plans? Contact Michael Skena at (202)800-8598 or MSkena@mrprealty.com

1. PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Randy welcomes group.
- Next Historic Designation Town Hall: – Wednesday, March 16th, 2nd. Please sign up to distribute fliers to your block.
- Next Eckington Civic Association meeting: April 4th
- Workshop: April 9th on energy efficiency in old homes sponsored by DC Preservation League at St Martin's on North Cap & T st from 1-3pm. More information to follow.

2. UPDATES FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Commissioner Pinkney

- Late March – single member district meeting (date & time TBA).
 - o DPR will answer questions, share plans for Harry Thomas Rec Center & programming.
 - o DGS coming out to talk about parks & recreation upkeep.
 - o DCRA coming b/c of parking in Eckington, and DCRA will speak about illegal apartments and rooming houses, and what repercussions are if you have illegal place rented & need to take tenants to court.
- Bike share station will be added in front of Emory shelter.
- For the full update, see the Eckington listserv & Next Door.
- ANC beautification – will have \$2500 for beautification (didn't spend \$1000 last year, upgraded this year). Considering working with North Capital Main St to focus on the park beside NY Pizza. Would be good if committee & ECA agrees. Hope to put crepe myrtles in park, and gravel/stone around trees.
- Park beside flea market – Mr. Height (Bryan) – suggested if we change fencing around park, some of the traffic might move along. Will meet w/ DGS to have fencing higher and a different look for park.
- Question: Is the money for your single member or Eckington?
 - o Answer: It is for the single member dist. So the other single member should also have \$1500.
- Question for Commissioner Pinkney –

- o Any more rodent abatements? Yes – in Newsletter. Starting in April.
- o In effort to bring activity to Harry Thomas Rec, council office are working on Eckington challenge to his office that would involve baseball game in April or Early May.
- o Trying to get Sirius XM to open up to community – trying to get 3 Saturday tours community.

3. PRESENTATIONS BY NOMA BID ON NOMA GREEN AND MBT

Stacie West, NOMA Parks Director, will give an update on the design process for "PEPCO Park".

Galin Brooks, NOMA BID Planning and Economic Development Director will present the findings of the recent Metro Branch Trail improvement study.

- Pepco deal for park went through! Now the land belongs to city, purchased specifically for park. Upcoming community meeting on March 29th – “community conversations” about NoMa Parks.
- New park – “NoMa Green” - 101 Harry Thomas Way. Map on website. Everything on map has been acquired or is in public right of way.
- Site is 2 acres. Multi-functional green space for lots of different activities, but not all 1 type of sport play (for example). Timeline: start finding designer Spring 2016; first community design meeting in Summer 2016; Design through early 2017; construction begins 2017.
- Community feedback: informal active rec; large open space, Strong MBT connection (still planning for Q st connection, will work on design – not part of plan to straighten out sharp MBT turn but still working on it); amphitheater, garden, meadow, shade trees, plantings. Helpful to think about – how often will you visit, what do you want to do that you can’t do elsewhere easily?
 - o Q – What is portion just above park? Not sure yet – still owned by Pepco. Trying to strategize to make sure have good neighbor on park.
- Other parks in neighborhood. 3rd & L st - next to summer screen site. Will start design on March 29th, in process of bringing designer on board. Much smaller than NoMa green site, but hoping for a couple of uses.
- NoMa meander – if you’ve been near 1st & M, buildings are coming down on first block. NoMa meander is retail promenade, will break up walk between north cap & first st.
- Close to finalizing permit for M st Underpass. Lights shipped for installation in about 2 months. L st underpass will follow soon after. Light installations – making underpasses more bright, more inviting & exciting.
- L st between 1st & underpass, want to build community plaza space for farmers markets, activities, etc. Don’t know about development site to south – will tailor plan when know more.
- Website has lots of information on planning process.
 - o At upcoming meeting – bring kids, will have workshop for them.
- Launching “mysidewalk” engagement tool online. Can share info and get feedback w/ community, especially around NoMa Green. Can upload pictures, link to website, etc.
- Questions
 - o If site going to be cordoned off for now?
 - Yes – blocked off now. Not opening until under construction.

- o Gale/Trilogy – was open field where people can take dogs, wasn't sure if it's a possibility for unused space for now.
 - A – Don't think so, but will ask. Not great surfaces. Dog might get sick.
 - ECA members note, the field was awesome – lots of grass, lots of people brought dogs.
- o Didn't see on list – great if space is designed for people of all ages. Not necessarily segregating playground space – like sculpture/slide, etc.
 - Yes – open to really imaginative uses.
- o Could you talk about plans for 3rd & L?
 - Open for that. At the planning meeting, it may have sounded like it was a done deal for dog park, but will hear from more people at March 29th meeting. Hear that there's a need for a dog park, people always chasing space for that. Also just a need for a nice respite for people. Want to accommodate many needs throughout neighborhood – see park as system.
- o Best place to submit suggestions?
 - MySidewalk launching in next couple of weeks, will have questions, polls, etc. Can find site on NoMaParks.org
- o Meander – what is under construction, any images?
 - Patterson to N– w/in JBG development. Another park south of that in progress.
- o MBT – and possible improvements. What's the plan for funding? Civic association talking w/ JBG about community benefits – how much are funds available, or is there a big hole and we should be thinking about that w/ JBG site, future Pepco site.
- o Looking for inspiration in other cities?
 - Yes – draw inspiration from lots of things. If you've been somewhere and thought it was special, share that.

MBT

- Results of MBT safety & access study.
 - o Study was partnership between DDOT, MPD, and NoMa BID. Looked at MBT from Union Station to Brookland. MBT is 8 mile trail from Union Station to Silver Spring; on and off road, but intend to make fully off-road.
 - o Community participation study – survey with 900 responses; community meetings; stakeholders group w/ people from different orgs.
 - o Reasons for study:
 - Crime on trail
 - PUDs in process along trail – recommendations from study could be funded through PUDs.
- Recommendations – 3 categories: safety, access, branding & identity
- Safety:
 - o Pavement markings
 - o Lighting
 - o Call boxes w/ surveillance video
 - o Mile markers – implemented already
 - o Real time trail counter – “eco totem” – how many people are on trail or have used trail that day. Latest average count – 800 people/day.
 - o High visibility police patrols & WABA trail rangers.
- Identity

- o Large mural over Florida Ave – people may not realize bridge is also trail.
- o Meeting point signs where people can collect and go for ride – M st, near FL Ave
- o Other murals further up trail.
- Access
 - o L st Access point – should be ramp, currently staircase. Needs to be fixed.
 - o Union Market access – this was best recommendation study team came up with. Widen Florida Ave below underpass – bold, but more achievable than some bridging options.
 - o Q: Was Elevation building – did CBA include anything about that? Thought should have been bridge in proposal?
 - Access point was part of agreement, in place today. More land will be developed, will maintain access point and other things for trail. Paved pathway next to dog park.
 - o Q: Possibility for non-car pathway across train tracks at some point?
 - This was the best solution that architects thought was available.
 - o Under NY Ave Bridge – needs improvement, beautification, seating, improve barrier between trail & WMATA property.
 - o Q: On underside of bridge, odd “wedge” – specification is potential connection to trail through their to Fl. Needs some help but not specified in study, but MBT people are aware of it.
 - o Q st Connection: Will happen in some form connecting Q st to trail; NoMa Green is reality, parcel of land is purchased.
 - o Realignment of curve – most cited concern, needs to be addressed.
 - o R st entrance – just north of curve where Dead Ends into MBT. Strong & specific suggestions for access points. DDOT is kicking off “trail head study” - Looking at R, S, T streets about how to mark them and make obvious that you’re entering trail space. Kicking off in next few weeks.
 - o Penn Center – awesome building, has outdoor space, could be reprogrammed, bring eyes on trail and retail & amenities. Building is DGS property.
 - Are DGS (Department of general services) still going to be there? Heard rumor about them leaving.
 - District owned, not sure about plans to leave. Recently released RFP for mural for building.
 - Understanding that grandfather issues w/ building (related to historic nature of building) – only so many things DGS could do w/out reverting back ownership.
 - Have heard same thing, but may be something that adhered to uses.
 - Cannot change windows, floor plan, etc.
 - Who would be one to take charge of making sure building does get reprogrammed? Lots of unused building, part of safety concern for trail, and missed opportunities.
 - DGS in study. Study on Resources page of website.
 - o Edgewood Community Connection – create new connection and green space.
- Questions?
 - o Regarding historic nature of Eckington – concern that seems to be general lack of use of buildings. Is there some acknowledgment of historic nature of buildings being reused/repurposed? How does historic component get integrated?
 - Study focuses on trail & public space of trail. Not on buildings.
 - o With Union Market and other connections, any opportunity for input?
 - Always welcome comments and suggestions. Study was a tool to help entities implement, but can give email: gbrooks@nomabid.org. Not having structured facilitated meetings – already did that.

- o Is there a link to northern areas where park will connect w/ Silver Spring?
 - That's at MBT site.
- o Just sent MBT study to listserv.
- o What's status of Eco Counter?
 - Isn't happening yet because DDOT trying to figure out way to make whole bike counter system homogenous across system.
- o What's "trails to rails" participation? Responsible for maintaining trail?
 - DDOT maintains trail, but RtT responsible for study.
- o Access to trail on southern side of Rhode Island Ave, still have to walk under underpass – wonder if on horizon at all. TO get to metro.
 - Has to double-check.
 - Access at V & W st – but not to metro.
 - Other bridge – well over a million \$, more than a year to build.
- o Of big recommendations, which ones are on track to happen (owner and \$) and which require additional steps (need owner and/or \$).
 - Call boxes have kicked off – MRP is funding one at site of their RIA development. Mile markers – DDOT installed immediately. Trail head program –
 - New lighting installed
 - Mural piece – we're helping, lots of other sponsors.
 - Bigger pieces – new access points, one can be handled w/ new park, some opportunity for R st curve with what happens up there.
 - Not happening yet: Connection under Florida – huge project, lots of \$ and activism. Separate study on that. DDOT is working on adjustments to that part of Florida Ave.
- o NoMa green donation from JBG – can you disclose amount of donation?
 - Don't know. Have talked with them about what they could do, have not set aside something prescribed b/c don't have plan yet. Asked for general contribution until have community-endorsed plan.

4. UPDATE FROM THE RHODE ISLAND CENTER DEVELOPMENT (FORMAN MILLS SITE)

Michael Skena of MRP/REALTY will present an update on the project. The developer is requesting support from the civic association. The community benefits agreement is being negotiated with ANC 5E02, a preliminary CBA will be describe in the presentation.

- Won RFP w/ WMATA for site for Brookland – on MBT; also have site in NoMa.
- DC-based Development firm, live in city, want to be part of community, want to get development site right.
- Site was built in 1980s by current landowners; partnering w/ current landowners on development.
 - o Originally farmland on estate owned by Chief Justice of US; then became part of Catholic school, then became distribution/industry for rail line; then 1980s retail w/ lots of parking. RI Metro stop opened, people/district wants to focus development around mass transit. Helps folks limit car use. Site transitioning from surface park/shopping anachronism to new mode of development – mixed use.
 - o District has thought a lot about what development in that area should look like – density, larger buildings, etc. MRP is incorporating those plans w/ their own ideas.

- Area slated for medium-density development. Talking to community – processing PUD – where have large piece of property, want to do something different from what zoning allows. Asking for maximum height on buildings from 65’ to 90’.
 - Wants to share plan, wants to ask for support from ECA. Want to engage w/ community, appreciates community activism.
- Sharing site plan
 - 20 year build-out. Long-term plan, trying to secure use and density of buildings. Phase I, trying to secure architectural look. 1500 residential units; 250,00 sq’ retail (?); 157,000 sq’ publicly accessible spaces including 1 acre park; 1/3 acre public plazas; 2 across internal roadways (new roadways); bike trail through property from MBT to 4th st.
 - 8 buildings on site plan – 1 story retail, residential above. Don’t know if will be all rental or some condo.
 - Access to trail/integration w/ trail is major part of development.
 - Currently – grade of trail and shopping center are different; plan to haul out dirt so grade of green space will be same grade as trail so feels like integrated to development.
 - Phase I – building 3 buildings; Foreman Mills, Big Lots, Save A Lot stay in Phase I. Taking down 2-story piece of shopping center, doing work adjacent to trail during first part of project.
 - Phase I – want to break down summer 2017, completion date 2019.
 - Retail:
 - Leases for existing retail ends 2022; will likely stay til then. After that, tear down, start on Block 3.
 - Full service grocery store in Phase 3.
 - Building on Rhode Island – designed for full service Gym (Xsport, YMCA – something large enough for a basketball court, pool, exercise room, etc).
 - Planning for movie theater – may happen w/ phase I or later. Would be small, adult-only (18/up), no children after 6pm, designed for movie goer, potentially w/ food and beverage service.
 - Improvements to MBT: Taking suggestions, trying to implement.
 - Call box; improving area adjacent to trail (lighting, wayfinding, all in accordance to suggestions and with DDOT).
 - Putting in Capital Bikeshare station adjacent to trail.
 - Edgewood Commons has raised lack of access between their community & metro, trail – build staircase between street & Edgewood commons. Will build staircase from parking lot to trail. Will have another in phase 2.
 - Jobs program – partnership w/ nonprofit, identify people who are under/unemployed who want to work on project, will do case management program to direct to contractors.
 - Outreach program for small/minority owned businesses so they know of bidding on all work on project.
 - Retaining existing art on wall – mural, mosaic (preserve or replace in kind).
 - Affordable housing – 8% of units, 6% is for 80% AMI, 2% is for 50% AMI. Deeper affordability levels based on community feedback. About 50 units across project at 50% AMI level.
- Questions?
 - Process – requesting letter of support from ECA; negotiating CBA w/ Commissioner Williams (ANC). Timeframe
 - Resubmitted to Zoning commission. Hearing May 19, Thurs 6:30 – all are welcome.
 - Trying to shore up support from civic associations, finish CBA before zoning commission.

- o Height change of 25' – could you talk more about 65-90' change
 - Scale roughly similar to Monroe St market (1 additional level above). Scale of building, width of street similar. 7 stories (1 retail, 6 residential). Many buildings in Edgewood commons are 100' or more, and 40' taller- top floor is 150' taller than ground level in development. Believe it's right scale for piece of land. Adjacent to metros, so makes sense to build tall buildings right there.
- o Pedestrian access – where the pedestrian access will be?
 - Creating “main street” through property.
 - Dropping entire grade of shopping center 10'. Entryway in goes from being “inaccessible” to “accessible” (for people in wheelchairs, etc.). Other entrance becomes very close to being accessible.
 - Pedestrian safety along RIA.
 - Going to be worse – DC Water doing a lot of work from 4th to 8th st on RIA. Bloomingdale will no longer flood, but bad traffic. But afterward – RIA streetscape
 - Kyle Todd, ED RIA Main St – streetscape improvements from 4th st to Eastern Ave; this area (10th st to 4th st) is its own node. One area to address – dark spot under bridge. Everything construction-wise along node on hold until after DC water work.
 - o Getting ready to start announcing next phase of public meetings for design phase of nodes – starting Summer 2016. Had pre-meeting w/ people involved, talked about slightly narrowing traffic lanes under bridge to widen sidewalks; adding guardrails along sidewalks; envious and inspired by NoMa BID lighting project, so interested in doing something like that to brighten make more pedestrian & cycle friendly.
- o Q for RIA – studying rush hour bus lanes?
 - Tossed out idea on regular basis.
- o Still on track with bike lanes for RIE?
 - On 10 year plan
- o Back to MRP: Everything they do is keeping accessibility in mind. Making RIA safe will come after Phase I. Possible that Phase II will involve doing additional improvements, don't know, but 100% invested and aligned to make it safe to cross RIA.
- o Q – Block 1a – Edgewood lighting/branding on building?
 - Emailed Architect to discuss façade. Possible it will happen. Not part of PUD. Once zoning is approved, branding, marketing, wayfinding will be figured out.
- o How many parking spots on site?
 - All parking underground. 0.6 per unit. Retail – 3 per 1000 to 5 per 1000 sq'. Most suburban shopping center – 7 to 10 per 1000. Well below that, assuming that folks will arrive by mass transit, bike, walk. Costs 40-50k\$ per space.
 - For visitors, how much will parking cost? At beginning, 2 hours free, haven't made decision yet. If visiting theater or gym, maybe could validate.
- o Commissioner Pinkney: Why aren't you providing more affordable housing? Would encourage civic association to request 16% - have to provide 8%. It's 1500 units.
 - Required to do 8% at 80% AMI. Lowering portion to 50% AMI – considered public benefit.
- o What's timeline for bike trail from MBT to 4th st?

- Phase I, do about halfway; and then on current parking lot, will be trail at end of phase I separate from traffic to sidewalk. Hope to have complete Summer 2019. Thinking about how to stage construction – dangerous construction site but don't want to prevent trail access. May put in staircase first (need to shore up wall first), so Edgewood can access trail around site.
 - Relocating MBT to other side of stairwell – how?
 - Enough land in existing right of way.
 - Will retailers hire local?
 - No leases at this point, cannot compel at this point. Comparing to Columbia Heights development.
 - Costco & Lowes – had to hire local, but negotiation was between District & retailer. Currently no retailers. Before Phase 2, will have grocer identified, so will bring representative from Grocer and they can answer questions.
 - Retail subsidized for small businesses – still something you plan?
 - Not in CBA, but actively pursuing w/ well-known non-profit.
 - What do you envision being mix of local vs national smaller tenants?
 - Think neighborhood would respond well to local businesses/regional, as opposed to all national. But may be opportunity for right national to come in and do a good job. Hope that majority will be local & regional.
 - Sterling, Exec Director of Gearing Up – would be prime location for expansion in spot facing trail. In conversation to be business along trail.
 - For Phase II – what is length of building? Would like to see more cut-throughs, fewer mega-blocks.
 - Had to create first floor big enough for grocery store. 70-80k sq feet, but hope to revert some to open/green space.
- We will put info in meeting minutes, and on website.

5. ECKINGTON YARDS (FLOWER MARKET DEVELOPMENT) UPDATE

Update on negotiations between the developer and ANC5E03 and the Eckington Civic Association.

- JBG/Eckington Yards development is negotiating with Commissioner Lewis ANC 5E03, and ANC has “great weight” with zoning commission. Also neighbors along R st who are most impacted by development have been in discussion w/ developers.
- Review current status of project (Randy reviews current agreed-upon items).
 - Side note: Trilogy/Gale development may be becoming aware that community room and dog park are open to whole neighborhood, not just development residents.
 - Input in retail – may make more specific as to how input process works.
 - Minimum housing – have repeatedly said it's inadequate. JBG has not yet budged.
 - For rentals – proposal for all rental at 60% AMI.
 - Banners: Commissioner Lewis pushing back – they need to give payment to vendors directly.
- Items that have been rejected
- Quinta – speaking on behalf of R st Residents

- o Had meeting on Saturday, Construction Management agreement covers issues like time for construction, truck path, no RPP, not allowing workers to park on sts, normal requests. On Saturday – 4 priorities identified. Without them addressing those 4 items, will withhold support.
 - Public alley – has been private alley – between R st property line and their property – 20' alley, with 7 story building. Want to remove main loading dock to 2 major buildings (for retail, 1 condo building), and entrance to underground parking lot (1 of 2 entrances) – want to remove from alley, put on Eckington Way or Harry Thomas Place.
 - Massing: Building next to Cube start is 110 sq ‘; other are 75-90’ (including AC unit on top). Have asked to reconsider, reduce massing and height size.
 - Have agreed to do transportation study, but only for R s, Harry Thomas Way, Eckington – requesting transportation for all of 5EO3 & 5EO4. Entire area – just doing the block isn’t’ addressing transportation issues.
 - Construction – Given that planning to do all 4 buildings at 1 time (starting 2017, lasting 2-3 years), asking for first building at R st first, using it to buffer all construction noise & damage, and then do all others after.
- o Response: will have another meeting in next couple of weeks.
- o Asking to revisit some things in Civic Association – if doing anyway, not community benefit.
- o Please come to Eckington and ANC meeting when they are present so they know that lots of people are making comments. Individuals can register as party for zoning meeting. Please attend ECA, ANC meeting, Zoning meeting.
- Commissioner Lewis –
 - o Have been speaking w/ developer, will meet again this week to identify midpoint where people will be happy.
- Vernon – nothing to add.
- Commissioner Pinkney
 - o 50 Florida Ave is ¼ of this project; 2.5 years ago they agreed to 65 landscaped treeboxes for area of Eckington. JBG should rethink issue – they can do treeboxes – need permit, can do them.
- Questions/points
 - o Robert: Thank you everyone who submitted comment on green space 200 NE.
 - Developer has 10 days to revert asphalt to green space.
 - Hope Commissioner Lewis will be at hearing. She plans to attend.
 - DDOT investigation – developer built entryways and stairways on public space w/out permit; will have to go back to public guidelines – will have to come to this meeting, Edgewood, and Bloomingdale.
- Randy – thinks that developers have been receiving a lot of positive input; think community will give blank check. If you have any questions, talk to ECA board or Commissioner Lewis, let us know what you’re thinking.
 - o May 6 is zoning commission, can be delayed. Still in negotiation. They would love to get wrapped up – and we would too, but want something the community supports.
- New pics on zoning website of development where you can see massing, height – very interesting and more detailed from what was before. Case 1515.
- Commissioner Lewis: Nothing is final or set in stone. This is their first offer and it has been rejected; we are deep in negotiation. They know what they have to bring as counteroffer.
- Randy question for group – how do you feel about the NoMa Green and MBT connections as part of CBA – donation of some amount?

- o Doesn't feel like it's representing Eckington, feels like it represents NoMa. Makes sense to ask community.
- o Commissioner Lewis – want something directly benefiting community.
- o Green is going to benefit them in terms of nice amenity for residents – that's good if they make donation, but then shouldn't say we're doing this and so can't do something for community.
- o Can make donation but not part of CBA.
- o Can we call it Eckington Green? In bounds of Eckington, should have branding. Otherwise mentally taking away from Eckington.
 - NoMa open to ideas. Let them know.
- Commissioner Pinkney – did NoMa receive \$50mill for parks?
 - o Yes, but \$17 million for land; Canal park cost \$27 mill to build.
 - o Commissioner Pinkney – thinks community organizations should help each other. Contacted NoMa for something, told they don't do that.
- Are there any community events on horizon?
 - o Had event 2 weeks ago, will do baseball game again. Always looking for programming ideas. 30 people attended baseball game last year; did progressional party that was really popular. AdamBDuffy@gmail.com – send ideas.
 - o Like idea of going to McKinley High event.
- Parking issue – worried about street parking.
 - o Yes – no resident RPPs.
 - o People are selling visitor parking passes.