

ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY WE LIVE IN

JUNE 6, 2016

1. COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADAM

- Next event – pot luck barbecue – on July 30th

NEXT MONTH – DISCUSSING ROLES FOR COMMITTEES

2. UPDATES FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

COMMISSIONER PINKNEY

- Has forwarded monthly update to NextDoor Eckington, Google Group, but has additional updates
- Dept of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs has given ANC5e special email to forward community issues to get priority attention
- Started “block meeting” but it’s rained most Saturdays. First meeting – Todd Place & 1st st, was very effective
- ANC on Historic Designation – ANC looked at what we do with other issues throughout community – if you want a speed hump, need 51% of signatures from that block. If you want residential parking, need 51%. ANC is suggesting that 51% of community would have to participate in deciding yes/no on HD. Also, ANC is going to prepare the notice or letter that will go to everyone to help them determine if they want to participate or not, and would pay for all mail/postage. ANC has put these on table, not in session in July & August, so wouldn't vote until September.
 - o Q: Who sets 51%? Why not higher?
 - Set because all smaller issues, have to hit 51% threshold. Should meet that a minimum
 - o Q: How have other neighborhoods that got HD done it?
 - No idea – just relaying what ANC5e chooses to do.
 - Seems like we should research what other communities have done, use that as guidelines.
 - o Q – Thought you didn't have to be entire Eckington, could be all of Eckington, or just section.
 - Then that section would have to come up w/ 51% of signatures.
 - So should ANC should do, or smaller subsets
 - ANC would pay for, not do
 - o Q - 51% of what?
 - 51% of homeowners
 - Q – so how do you deal with apartment buildings, renters?
 - A – We just put this on paper on Saturday, aren't doing anything on it right now, all those questions will be answered
 - o Q - What makes our neighborhood historic all of the sudden? What they're putting up is all condos, low-income people can't afford them. Subway station – we didn't get any of that. I've been here 47 years. Now that the whites are back in the neighborhood, that makes Eckington historic.
 - o Question/Comment - Citizens are 80 years old, are not going to pay to make it historic. They want you all out of here.

- Commissioner Pinckney: I'm just saying how the ANC plans to move forward when the Civic Association comes to us for support.
- o Q – ANC gets great weight, but have seen zoning overturn ANC recommendation. How does that hold weight when zoning can overturn support of community?
 - Zoning is different from historic preservation.
 - Q – One of board members on zoning is on historic board, he turned over request for HD because no one from ANC was present. How is that going to help the community?
 - A: What I'm talking about is what the Civic Association has to do before they come to ANC, not talking about zoning.
- o Q – Have to pay to vote?
 - Commissioner Pinckney – I am not part of that.
- o Randy: ANC has looked into this after Bloomingdale and Eckington have been talking about this, which is great. Today is about whether Eckington wants to continue to pursue looking into application. It is not a vote to apply. I think we should table what Commissioner Pinckney is discussing until we decide if we're going to pursue or not.
- o Q – We're here because of paper we received in our mailbox.
- o Randy – we're going to vote on whether to continue to look into HD.
- o Q – how can you vote to continue and ask people to pay to vote.
 - ECA would be the sponsoring organization, and we have to be members under our bylaws.
- o Q- Talked w/ two gentlemen who passed out fliers. Who is the Civic Association, what I'm under the impression is, if a civic association comes in, you're changing the rules. Who's the civic association, who's the ANC? The Civic Association has to get ok from ANC to do this? I have family members who live in VA, MD, I didn't understand about homeowners association, all I'm trying to say is, can they start something up when you're established already? Always thought that came – fixing up condos, etc., did you form homeowners association? If your windows aren't right, they got to go, the doors.
 - Commissioner Pinckney – ECA is not homeowners association, they are part of the community, work with and for community, are elected by members of community. ANC is office you have to campaign for, elected on ballot.
 - Two separate entities – ANC, ECA – Civic Association is group of members in each community.
 - Q – How did Civic Association come up, where did you come from?
 - Commissioner Pinkney – have had ECA for years
- o Q – We are the community, we older people are the community. You all come in,
- o Commissioner Pinckney – Until you vote tonight, you don't know if you're going to go forward or stop it right here
- o Commissioner Pinkney – Who has not paid to vote?
 - I don't think that's appropriate to ask.
- o Commissioner Lewis – Feel free to voice your concern at ANC meetings, contact your ANC person to say you're against it. In order for HD to happen, 51% of whole community has to be behind it – if 51% doesn't support, not going to happen.
 - I've been here for 15 years, don't know no Civic Association, never been introduced to the Civic Association, never been asked to vote.
 - Commissioner Lewis – you can start a petition saying you are against [Historic Designation], ANC will look at both petitions, see which one has more signatures.
- o Q – How can you tell – 51% of community, how do you know how many people are 51%?
 - Board of elections ha list of addresses. You can go off address list, knock on doors.
 - Commissioner Pinckney – not everyone who owns a home votes, but there are other lists you can come up with.
 - Q – How can you start a petition?
 - Type up a petition on your computer.
 - Do I have to have over 200 signatures?
 - Have to have 51%
- o Q – My grandmother bought her home in 1957, I've been there 50 years – I'm all for if you want to pay for our area to look historic, but my 85 year old mother is not going to pull money out of her home to look historic. Who's going to pay back that? I'm all for it if you're going to pay it, but if you want our door to look like this, our windows to look like this, it's wrong.

Especially if you've been paying your taxes on time, been there for years, my grandmother struggled and paid for her home. I've been there for years and won't be able to stay if you want the neighborhood to look historic. To come and ask – not even ask – you vote, this is what is going to go on, and then you have to pay to vote. It's a home, we brought our children up in this neighborhood, and you weren't even born. It's been passed down generation to generation. It's not just a house, and we're still trying to live comfortably. It's morally and spiritually wrong. When they do the historic thing, do you know your taxes are going to go up? It's ridiculous. If you all live in this community, you better do something about it. It's wrong, period. It's wrong morally and spiritually and god don't like it.

TOMMIE JONES – REP FOR MAYOR BOWSER

- Introduce new Ward 5 Representative- Hakeem Rogers. Want to make sure we do a good transition, so want to make sure that you the community know who your representative is.
- To contact: @DCTommieJones (twitter), Tommie.jones@dc.gov, 202-664-7512
- Hakim – Update from Mayor's Office. This is the biggest turnout for a civic association. I was born and raised in DC, lifelong ward 5 resident, graduated from Woodrow Wilson High, just graduated from UMD-CP. This would be great for our town hall, to have DC become 51st state. Town Hall
 - June 7 at African American Civil War Memorial – 2 so far, this is the 3rd, and 2 more
 - June7 Statehood.Eventbrite.Com
- Will leave brochures w/ mayor's response to Metro Closing, Safetrack Plan
- It's hot – time to enjoy pools – have Harry Thomas pool
- Sending around sign-in sheet to get contact info
- Hakeem: 202-394-4399. Office – 202-727-2822; email: hakeem.rogers@dc.gov
- Statehood Events – coming throughout the month of June. Statehood @DC.gov – a lot of statehood events

COMMISSIONER PINKNEY

- Harry Thomas Rec Center – Having Single Member District meeting this Thursday on Harry Thomas Rec Center, what we can do, programming, get DGS to maintain it. Thursday, 7pm, right here

RANDY

- Town Hall Meeting last Friday – about Ward 5 homeless shelter. Councilmember Mendelsohn announced – Penn Center was being considered, but instead it will be staging area for MLK library during renovations. Recommended 1700 Rhode Island as preferred location for Ward 5 short-term housing.
- Tommie Jones: Some of you were at Friday's meeting. There was an overarching “no” from Eckington that 326 R st was not preferred choice. Recommendation that councilmember provided was 1700 Rhode Island, that's had 2nd vote, final vote is coming up. Believe that will be Ward 5 location – former MPD Youth Facility – across street from Woodridge Library.

3. VOTE ON CONTINUING EXPLORATION OF HISTORIC DESIGNATION STATUS

Randy – discussion until 8:30, and then have a vote. A number of people said they aren't comfortable paying dues. Are any of those people still here?

Randy – in terms of letting people know, we haven't had the budget for postage. It's something that we want to look at, and that's something where using your annual dues will be helpful. But dues have been part of bylaws for quite a while.

Have a person who has volunteered to pay if you cannot cover your dues – see the treasurer.

Q – Pay to be a member, not to vote.

A – I should not have to pay to vote.

Q – That's not what it said on that paper. Someone put it out to let us know what was going on, let us know what they were trying to sneak past.

Q – Understand that only ECA members can vote on whether or not ECA moves forward, but thinking ECA should take straw poll of everyone who is here, opposed to having minority of community vote. I support ANC's efforts.

A – This is still a minority of community.

Q – But these people are here and should let them speak. Should let everyone vote, take a straw poll – you need to be more representative.

Q – Before I leave, I want to make sure paper we have here – if we don't get 51%, will this be all true? Two gentlemen I talked to were referencing – windows, have the wrong type, fences, doors, steps, you should have a wooden fence, have rooftop – if this comes to fruition, is this dictating that we have to change our ways?

A – If you have windows, and you're not replacing them, they do not tell you to replace windows. You get fined only if you go through proper permit process.

Q – We do not live in a dictatorship. ANC does not speak for the community. Civic Association does not speak for the community. Who gives them the right to come here and tell us how to live and what we need. It's not fair – if I don't go knock on people's doors and tell them, we have to do something,

Q – I'm going to start petition, do my block, and get 51 and more %.

Q – I don't think it's fair.

Q – If you need 51% to be against it, have to be 51% to be for it?

A – 51% either way – but that won't happen until you take a vote here to decide if you want to go forward or stop now.

Q – I've been to a lot of these meetings, I know doors and windows and fences are all important. I have not filled out my ballot yet. I have been a part of this process for a while. I see people who are involved or committed to one view or another. But we're also a part of history. My grandmother has lived on Seaton Place for 70 years. You are standing at a time where you have input on history – when Eckington became or did not become a Historic District. Windows are important, cost is important. But I know the church my grandmother went to is now in negotiation for sale. Is it going to be a charge if someone pays \$5 million? No. Certain blocks where developers have come in and changed the whole look. I'm not suggesting how you vote, what you concerned are. But we are standing in history now. But I'm asking you to look at historic nature, what's going to be lost if you vote this way, what's going to be gained if you vote that way. My grandmother has lived here 70 years, and I've watched the neighborhood change. Look at yourselves as historians – how is it going to be in 20 years, when the church is 5 story condos, and more homes are turned into condos/flats. We are all historians, have a right to have our say, but take a look at our community, say what you want community to look like 5, 10 years from now.

Q – Individual buildings can receive HD. If there's an important church in community, can apply for HD for that, and then expenses wouldn't apply for all of us.

Q – Would have been good to know before new legacy partners came, built on top of Felix the Welder's studio (who did Iwo Jima), did John Kennedy's bust – very noteworthy individual, that was historic. Was on Randolph Place. It's gone, now you have condos witting there.

Q – Wanted to express as recent homeowner, have 2 big concerns about whole thing. Looked at DC gov website for process for HD if ECA as private/somewhat private association decided to go ahead. Couldn't make any sense of it. Glad we have the ANC representative, but process is still no more clear to me. Don't understand that there's not rules and guidelines about how to engage w/ community. If this moves forward, need good faith effort to engage w/ community. Surprised if DC Gov never commissioned study on what HD means for low-income residents. Did anyone look at what this looks for low-income residents? Tried to find basic info non Ward 5. 20% poverty rate in Ward 5 – is HD really answer for community? Don't know, a lot of questions.

Q – Would like to speak to that Spent a lot of time reading literature, on websites. My conclusion I that it's overtly anti-poor. Anything that increases cost even slightly, pushes them out of neighborhood. Understand need to preserve heritage, but part of what makes neighborhood is diversity of ethnicity and income. Want to see that stay, that's part of why we love the neighborhood.

Q – Like many of people in here, have lived in neighborhood for 50 years, have made the adjustment, welcome new neighbors, can be friends, do that because we've accepted each other. They move into neighborhood because they like what they see, like community, even when they were looking at condos, stopped and talked to us, made transition a lot of easier. Maybe our block is an exception, I don't think it is. We do very well together, so to hear statements ignorant statements – about when white people came, but I think those statements are uncalled for, made out of frustration, not from the heart, because my grandmother, my mother, people who have been there forever. A lot of them, if this goes through, are going to be forced to leave the neighborhood. If they don't go by permits they will be fined. They can't make the repairs – and the taxes. When it comes to vote, think beyond yourself, think about your community. Did you move to this neighborhood for the community?

Q – In response – what I struggle with is seeing developers, on our street, they take houses, make into 2 separate extremely expensive units, that will drive lower income residents out b/c that's what made property values increase so much. Don't know that HD will drive out low income residents – have problem in city, these developers are part of city.

A – Pop-up, to do popup, have to go through ANC, VZA – not as easy as a year ago. When you see construction in your neighborhood all illegal construction # even if you don't know if it's illegal so they send inspector – 202-442-7867

Q – Called illegal construction people, said I had to be put on list for them to come out. If I called them Friday morning to say someone was nextdoor doing construction w/ no permits, lady tells me, we have to put this in order, probably won't come to Monday. What good is that?

A – Usually takes 3 days to send out.

Q – How is this going to work? When we will find out?

Called for vote – results announced later in the meeting:

HD Vote:

42 votes – Yes

162 votes- No

4. SAFETY REPORT - MPD

At these meetings, we typically get update from MPD officers, will change order of agenda to have update.

- Sargent James Ellis, been here 2 years after 11 years in Petworth.
- New partner – Sargent McCormick – just transferred from Anacostia, just promoted to this area. Will be taking care of you guys.
 - Q – Are you going to introduce yourself to everyone in the neighborhood? When I was coming up police knocked on everyone’s door, knew everyone’s mom, grandma. We don’t know anything now.
- Commissioner Lewis – been getting influx of crime on my block, 5eo3 area – will you have more people walking around the blocks during the day and evening? Know you have police shortage. How are you going to offset that?
 - We use “PSAs” – what’s your ANC? 502. North Capitol divides 501 and 502 – NW side is 501, have new lieutenant, 502, we run North Cap to Michigan, NY, Train Tracks – including MBT.
- Any questions you have, look on the internet. You want to know what crime is going on, you want to talk to a lieutenant, go to MPD5, you’ll see their email.
 - Lot of people don’t have internet.
 - That’s why I’m here – I pulled up crime stats. I come with that.
 - Commissioner Lewis – Will you be able to come to ANC meeting?
 - Need to send an email – ask us to come. Could be because have new lieutenant. I will give you my email and Sargent McCormick’s email.
- Q – U st, Todd St – we’re real tight, our houses don’t get robbed - new people come to the neighborhood, don’t want to be bothered. Someone come on U st walking up alley, if you don’t look right, we call the police. That’s why you don’t see much action there on 3rd and U.
- Unfortunate that people will call 911, but don’t want to talk with officer – we don’t have a name, any info – it’s good you’re willing to talk to us, I’ll pass that on. Officers feel like no one wants to talk to us. Just having someone go out of their way to speak to us, especially to a young officer, goes a long way.
- Most of the meetings, don’t pull stats. We see certain types of crimes increasing, others going down. During the winter – property crime goes up b/c not many people outside in cold, but people leave stuff in cars. We’ve gone down on property crime – we dropped theft from auto in half. Hoping people leaving less valuables in cars.
 - Commissioner Lewis – someone stole hub caps.
 - Previous 30 days – from 28 down to 13.
- Stolen autos – fairly even (6 to 5). Robberies – w/out a gun stayed even (5, 5). Increased robbery w/ gun (1 to 3). More people are out – always remember, if you cannot walk in group, stay where it’s lit, keep phone in pocket and not in front of your face. Headphones – don’t wear them. Be aware.
- Burglaries – increased a little, mostly north of Rhode Island. No clear patterns. Construction sites getting burglarized. If you have vacant properties and see people in and out, call. If you see a construction site w/ a U-Haul truck, call.
- Commissioner Lewis – starting to see more police presence on MBT trail, but how do we get them walking around in neighborhood? I need to see you guys walking around community.
 - Q – Are they doing All Hands On Deck this year?

- Don't know
 - A – Balancing game – chief gave interview about foot beats. That mountain bike trail is manned every day – 2 of my best officers are out there every day because it's very difficult to police. It goes all the way from Union Station to Michigan, will go up to Silver Spring. Try to get 1 guy north of Rhode Island, one South. We know sometimes suspects will wait for officer to ride by, rob somebody, and then leave. On top of that, talking about having officer on foot. If we have an officer on foot, all day long he's traveling around. I can't tell someone who is being assaulted is on Benning Road, can't leave – priorities come up, we have to go. It's a balancing act – if I put officer on foot beat, he's walking and getting to know people, but is one less officer – and will take too long if he has to get to emergency.
- Q – Can you put security cameras to monitor trails?
 - A – I've been fighting since I got here, said we need to do mile markers - and now we have them. If you have emergency on trail, you can say where you are. Cameras – seeing about cameras. Also see robberies from people on bikes w/ GoPros.
 - Commissioner Lewis – you will be getting camera from CBA with JBG.
 - Q – There's appearance of cameras – Fort Meyers construction company from R to new Footbridge – many cameras there, new school has cameras around its perimeter, and when lights put on under NY Ave, supposedly cameras installed w/ lights. How come there's such an issue w/ cameras. Can you not get access from cameras?
 - Thought you were just asking about MPD cameras. If something happens, we do ask for access to private footage.
 - Are cameras under NY Ave active? Think so. Not our cameras – believe they're Amtrak's camera.
 - Q – Why do we have to register to put camera on house?
 - If you want city to pay for it. It's a voucher system to help pay for camera.

5. ALLOCATION OF \$15,000 TO HOMELESS OR CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY AGENCIES IN ECKINGTON

Randy – have deadline for tonight for how ECA will designate funds for part of Eckington Yards/Flower Market PUD.

Randy: PUD for Eckington Yards Development, allocated \$25k for MBT, \$15 for homeless or chemical dependence agencies in Eckington. JBG will be writing check to agency we select – we can select up to 3 organizations, have to have 501c3 status. On program, list 5, if anyone has another organization, needs to speak up.

- Coalition for homeless – Operates Emory Work
 - Program that assists men who don't have permanent housing. Serves up to 100 men.
- Dash
 - Provides housing services to survivors of domestic abuse survivors
- So Others Might Eat
 - Shalom House on 4th st – houses 94 clients, gives long-term housing
- Pathways to Housing DC – operates 101 Q st outpatient
 - Provides homes to 2000 adults per year who are experiencing homelessness, goal is to find housing.

- Regional Addiction Prevention – 4th st

- 1900 4th st, to empower individuals to choose productive life, teach behavioral skills

Vernon gives background on development, CBA. One recommendation was donation for organization for shelter or chemical dependence organization Need to have something back to JBG on June 9th.

Q – Talking about putting something new in?

Commissioner Lewis – speaks in favor of So Others May eat, opposed to DASH – people use the building for the wrong reason, for housing, drink at night. Hope that you think about SOME, disperse other \$10k in rest of community.

Comment – ANC Commissioner was speaking about, can attest to a lot of places – on committee when SOME came in, at first we rejected it, but found out it turned out to be very good, well-kept place, what I've seen, seen activities have too much traffic, didn't tell us truth about what they were going to really do. I thought young men were not supposed to come in, they're going in and out. To me, SOME, is a worthy cause and financially the money should be earmarked for them.

Comment – I look at this as who are good neighbors, I ride by SOME twice a day, always well-kept. Some other institutions on this side of Eckington – Rap and DASH, those have come to us asking for something and then done something different, or worse, not asked and had to get variance. I would hesitate to support RAP & Dash. Hear Emory Center tends to be good neighbors.

Group decides: You get 3 votes.

Donation will go to: SOME, Emory, Pathways

Randy – Thank you for being here, I hope people continue to come and be involved w/ organization. One specific thing that is coming up, if anyone would like to volunteer – will have 2-3 zoning variances for civic association votes, if someone wants to look at VZA files, help get some info together so we have a presentation, that's something we want to do – a planning/Econ Development committee.

Will have vote on variance for condos for a particular lot, some important issues coming up. If anyone would like to come up, get me their info.

Vote against continuing exploration of historic designation announced at this time.

Randy – Will not be furthering HD application.

Move to amend bylaws to remove ECA purpose as Historic Preservation from bylaws.

Second.

Q – Is it preservation or designation in bylaws? If Preservation, would think ECA wants to continue oral history, continue to have presentations about Eckington history, things apart from HD that ECA should be doing.

Comment – can confirm it's Preservation, not Designation.

Vernon – As part of this, trying to do oral history project of Eckington residents, have spent Saturdays w/ neighbors, and want to interview neighbors to get their stories & recollection about neighborhood. Want to get their memories, how they remember the neighborhood, be able to pass those forward. If you'd like to participate that, contact Lana.

Q – Can see continue activities w/out HP in bylaws?

A – Don't know

Follow-up note: The Eckington Civic Association cannot submit an application to the Historic Preservation Review Board unless the activity of "historic preservation" is in the bylaws.

Commissioner Pinkney – prior to call for HD, already received from previous developer \$ for Eckington Historic Trail, will receive 8-10 markers throughout neighborhood saying where historic places are

Comment – want to avoid going through this whole thing again. Remove from bylaws to go through this again.

Q – Why not amend bylaws to say "don't pursue HD"

Q – My understanding is that board used that language to pursue HD.

Q – Hopes review board requires that it has to be in org's bylaws, so by removing it, that removes ability to pursue that.

Randy – motion on floor, is there a 2nd?

Second

All those in favor of modifying "historic preservation" from bylaws.

Q – Does that mean that civic association cannot participate in historic activities?

A – Means that ECA cannot be sponsoring organization. Could till vote, do letter of support and dissent, but could not sponsor.

Q – Does that stop ECA from engaging in Oral History, other activities?

Q – Understand that people don't want ECA to pursue this again, but I could make LLC and pursue it – won't make it go away forever.

Comment – any org can pop up and propose this, as long as it's in their bylaws, that's what irritated us from the beginning, DC system so undemocratic, requires no buy-in from community.

Comment – but ANC won't sign off on LLC by itself.

Q – Does HD for a particular property, does it have to be designated by property owner?

A- Doesn't have to be – but very different process.

Comment – think it can, but much harder to pass higher bar to show it’s historic. For HD, bar is much lower.

Comment – but it can be done – neighbors did for convent that was part of this building.

In favor of motion to remove “historic preservation” from bylaws:

In favor – 39

Opposed – 7 or 8.

OTHER UPDATES, DISCUSSION

Reporter (Lauren) here who is interested in 45 Rhode Island Ave – the castle like house lots of construction, if anyone knows history from 50s to 90s, very interested.

Upcoming Events

Celia – w/ Rhode Island Ave main st- will have Uprising Festival – Art in vacant areas, 12-6pm on June 26th, festival all along RIA – Uprising Festival DC – get details, encourage everyone to come out and see. Between Railroads heading East to 22nd St.

Vernon – Edgewood holding event on June 18 for residents who need assistance w/ maintaining or keeping home – seminars on home repairs, ways seniors can get free home repairs & yard work, estate planning. June 18, 11-4, 200 Douglas St NE. Talk to Vernon for more info.

NEXT ECKINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETING: MONDAY, JULY 11, 2016

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