

Eckington Civic Association

March 5, 2018

Attendees: 37

- Welcome & introductions
- ECA officer updates
 - Lana gives update on treasurer; we have 41 members
- Committee report
 - Adam – Social Committee. Last big event was Eckington Day. Now, partnering w/ improvement/community service committee to do cleanup on Earth Day – April 22 – at Gearing Up; Gearing Up is also hosting potluck after cleanup. Sign-up for bringing snacks, dessert, beverages; asking for \$200 for barbecue or sandwiches.
 - Motion to donate \$200 for after-party.
 - In favor: 12
 - Opposed: 0
- Elected officials
 - Timmi (?) For Councilmember McDuffie
 - Performance oversight hearings; had 2 for Councilmember McDuffie today; if you have budget concerns or questions, now is the time to talk about them – next round of hearings will be budget hearings.
- ANC Commissioner updates
 - Comm Pinkney –
 - 1 active development – 50 Florida Avenue. By the end of next year, community will receive historic heritage trail as a result of this project, and tree boxes for homes on Q, Quincy, and R? st NE.
 - 101 Q st – here tonight
 - Block meetings will start in April
 - Rodent abatement will start in March
 - Super Liquors has applied for renewal of liquor license, and approval to move to 1633 North Capitol to 1629.
 - Hannah Powell
 - Represents eastern part of Eckington
 - Have several large development projects; one project is Eckington Park – JBG’s project. North side of large empty space off of Harry Thomas Way near MBT. Everything w/ zoning has gone through, hope to break ground beginning of next year. If any specific questions, let Hannah know.
 - Hopefully breaking ground this year is Eckington Yards- old Flower Market & State Farm building (also JBG). Will have them back in before they break ground so they can discuss details & construction impact.

- Naming of new NoMa park – NoMa BID has been spearheading development of park – working title is “NoMa Green.” NoMa wants it broader than Eckington. Has had a call-out for names, will solicit input from the community. Will survey everyone in Eckington (postcard in late spring/early summer) w/ finalist names on which to vote.
 - Where did suggestion for names go out?
 - Went out on NextDoor, ECA list serve, NoMa Parks sent it out, maybe a few other mechanisms. Happened a few months ago.
 - When will park be done?
 - Delayed – hoped to have done by this summer for the next round of NoMa Summer Screen, but had to do some “reverse design” engineering to make it less expensive. Not sure when they’ll break ground.
- Minor transportation issues – sidewalk repairs, curb cuts, etc. Let Hannah know if you’re having an issue, or contact 311 for general issues. Keep reference #; Hannah & Sylvia can put pressure on district to make changes.
- Fence request at 2026 3rd St NE - Alex
 - Trying to build standard 42’ chain link fence in back yard on 3rd & V St. Part of fence goes into public space – on their yard, but corner lot so some space is public. When they moved in, was wall and chain link fence. Redid wall and now want to put fence back in. Applying for permit w/ DCRA, hoping for support of ECA.
 - Questions?
 - Hannah Powell – building fence where it was before? Will it affect visibility? Should not be an issue because it’s on backyard, where it was before, not affecting visibility. Comm Powell notes that much of people’s front yards are actually public space – meant to be “park” land – gave back to homeowners to maintain, but still need permission to make any changes.
 - Motion to support request – seconded.
 - In favor: 14
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstain: 1
- ABBRA liquor license request for the Crucible at 412 V St NE
 - Opened April 1 last year; wanted to see if any negative impact.
 - Sean – thought people from club were parking on street, but it was the school – no issues.
 - Want to get a permanent liquor license – for 2 reasons. Don’t need approval to go to ABBRA to get 1-day temporary license –doing that twice a month (\$300 per, costs \$7k per year). Permanent license is under \$2k. Also saves time. No one realizes they’re selling alcohol – they’ve been careful & quiet & discrete.
 - Questions:
 - Have you ever applied and been denied?
 - No, never been denied
 - Where is it – 412 V st – member’s only private club.
 - Have letters of approval from people in the community.

- Motion: Motion to support, seconded
 - In favor; 12
 - Opposed; 0
 - Abstain: 1
- 101Q Street – DC Safe special exemption - Abraham
 - DC Safe is a nonprofit org that provides crisis intervention services for victims of domestic violence in DC. Integrated w/ DC response to domestic violence. One program is safe housing program – providing housing for victims, usually in immediate moments or hours after incident; average stay is 3 weeks. Intention is to get them back into their existing housing, preserve financial resources they have; during 3 weeks, get production orders, meet w/ attorneys, coordinate w/ employers & childcare. Work-heavy program, and very successful. Has been operating inside condo building alongside homeowners. Think that they’ve proven they can be good neighbors.
 - Important to maintain privacy and confidentiality of victims. Over 6 years, have not had an uptick in domestic violence or violent crime reports in vicinity; location they’re operating in has stayed safe and discrete. Have been looking for permanent home for program; lease expiring in condo building. Acquired space at 101 Q St.
 - Site selection process- have been looking for building since 2014; worked w/ DHCD to identify suitable properties. Also met extensively w/ councilmember McDuffie & others to identify appropriate sites. Ultimately encouraged to work w/ commercial real estate market, brought them to this site.
 - Mixed-use building, 32000 sq. ft. First 2 floors commercial – allowed by right; upper stories would be residential.
 - Need special exemption for shelter use (top 3 floors) and for side staircase that would go up to roof.
 - Façade will be brick, some masonry, and large windows. 4 entrances into building. Back of building – split face and concrete masonry units; side of building will be concrete masonry. Upper parts – stucco and wood-look laminate. Landscaping – entire front of building will be landscaped, and large portion of roof will have green roof. Two entrances on Q st are clearly defined; current area is hard scape and parking – all go away, will be green space. Will be more attractive than what is currently there.
 - 11 proposed parking spaces (6 required by code); also 6 other spaces – will try to lease back 5 of them, so will likely have 16 spaces total for people working in building.
 - On roof – children’s and adults’ outdoor areas; will keep these areas and their noise up and away from the street.
 - Questions
 - What type of commercial?
 - Office space.
 - Who are the residents?
 - DC residents
 - How many units?
 - 30 residential units. The average length of stay is about 20-30 days; residents don’t drive/won’t have vehicles on site. Foot traffic on 1st st

entrance – 1 intake/day on average, so not a lot of new foot traffic during a daily intake process.

- What's the organization?
 - DC Safe
- Isn't that first floor currently Pathways? What's happening with them?
 - Pathways has existing lease through 2020 for office space – so through 2020, Pathways will be present. Given traffic associated w/ Pathways – we're not going to be adding a new human services building to the neighborhood; hoping to improve on existing program & flow. Adding green space, more welcoming lobby, congregating space in back of building that is away from street & residential parts of neighborhood.
- What are the sizes of the units/
 - Studio to 2 bedroom; design allows to combine units if needed to accommodate larger families.
- Austan notes that the team has been very willing to meet w/ community to discuss project and impact.
- Safety – is there anything we should know about safety, in terms of things you've seen already?
 - Bottom line is, this is supposed to be safe, discrete, private place. We need to be pretty rigorous about confidentiality of site – in terms of residents in units, if we find violations of confidentiality policy, we have asked clients to leave in the past. We have fortunately not had any violent incidents in shelter units. The other things we are keeping an eye on are maintaining staff there 7 days a week; every day have program staff who can meet w/ residents, do crisis intervention. Will have 24 hour security staff.
- So if a resident has a car, where do they park?
 - Typically if a resident has a car, we recommend that they leave the car at the existing residence so they can come to the site – want clients to move quickly to the location and not be recognizable when they move around the city. We typically transport clients to the site with an uber; generally these are residents without vehicles.
- Dash is at 3rd and T St. When they moved in, residents complained about an uptick in drug dealers hanging out on corners; boyfriends of residents trying to meet up with them; there was a big brouhaha. Now, have not heard anything since they initially moved in after 1st year. We don't have to look forward to that kind of activity?
 - Our hope is not. We're familiar w/ DASH and their program; trying to learn from that. Different experience for people who are in transitional housing over 12-24 months vs people recovering from crisis in 2-3 week stay – clients are busier, less likely to have immediate contact w/ partners, policy is if there's any indication that client is not taking safety of other residents serious, ask them to leave

- Zoning exemptions: For use as shelter, and for stairwell on east face of building, facing parking lot.
 - Want multiple stairwells to provide safe, discrete access to units.
 - On architecture – could you explain how design responds to street scape or heritage of area?
 - Pulling brick from local row houses, pulling scale of towers from scale of neighborhood, to reduce difference from row houses, provides step down from larger commercial buildings to smaller row houses.
 - Q – Reason to not have bays down to 3rd level?
 - Don't attach well at that point – look clunky.
 - Motion: Move to support request
 - In favor: 14
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstain: 1
- Denise – Office of the people's council
 - Advocate for DC consumers' utilities (Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon Home Phone) – if you're having a dispute, you can handle on your own or contact us. Denise does energy efficiency workshop – can do hands-on workshop for easy steps for energy efficiency.
 - Q – Do you have special programs for seniors?
 - We assist all people, but have a seniors resource guide
- Dave Thomas Circle
 - Spoke at DDOT oversight hearing; also met with councilmember Mary Cheh to work on getting DDOT in front of us.
 - Got lots of ideas for Dave Thomas Circle – short-term ideas, longer-term priorities, and advocacy strategies.
 - Note – need to look at strategies for engagement – at hearing, 6 people were there to talk about street light strength, vs 1 person talking about Dave Thomas Circle.
 - Goal for tonight – look at short-term list so if we get DDOT to visit, what do we want to talk to them about while pushing them for longer-term changes?
 - Any thoughts to add
 - Simplify flow of car traffic – both plans, there's no clear left turn off Eckington Place to get east on FL or north on NY ave. Concept 3 prolongs/continues problem we already have – 3 intersections to get to union market. We should be facilitating flow of people to get to those location. Need left turn on Eckington Place.
 - Signaling of lights – seems to be backup of traffic on FL ave Eastbound – seems like lights are too short for cars.
 - Entry point – eliminating entry on Eckington Place – traffic is so bad, have to go up FL ave to P to North Cap since traffic is backed up so much. If you close entry points on Eckington place, residents would have to use North Cap, would back North Capitol up even more.
 - Concern – Eckington place already blocked on east side b/c of tracks, so this would also block off south border.

- Timing – recently, had several times where you cannot get around if you’re coming from Eckington south and trying to get onto Florida to get around, you cannot do it w//out running a red light. To go around the circle – onto 1st st
 - Maybe move stoplight on FL back
 - Also sign not to block box – people block intersection all the time
 - Most traffic trying to go eastbound on NY or FL, so blocks portion for anyone going south or west
- Process question – how did we get to these 2 designs
 - Started w/ 6 options, did NIPA study, narrowed to these 2 options that seemed most practical. No build (leave Wendy’s) or build (acquire Wendy’s).
 - Sylvia – designs represent culmination of lots of meetings since 2014
 - Eminent domain – could be tied up for decades. Are we here to choose and get to 1 option?
 - Purpose of our getting together – to talk about short-term, what can we ask DDOT to improve life now, recognizing that implementing these big designs may be years ago. And how do we get DDOT to engage w/ us more. Now, no mandate and no money attached to redevelopment of DTC.
 - Hannah Powell – there’s a political will problem, and “what is the solution we’re going to rally around’ – no right/perfect answer for intersection. What can we as Eckington community do to get behind? If we can coalesce behind one option, can put pressure (especially around election year) for change.
 - Sylvia Pinkney – my assessment is that DDOT has 2 options. They have not put out a call for any additional comments, but it’s ok for civic association, ANC to give them comments. They will review them as they have done the whole 4 years. Of these 2 options, one or the other will come to ANC; once they have ANC support, it goes to council. At that point, I’m sure it will put out call for comments & testimony; that is how I see it. I thought the ECA was coming up w/ something that could be done now to make the traffic issue better at the circle, not to pick one of the two chosen scenarios.
 - Austan – hope to give people an opportunity to provide input & suggestions for short-term fixes and long-term priorities. Not sure that tonight will be to decide which one to support. But idea behind identifying which one we support is to bring that to DDOT, and then so that goes to ANC and to council. But want to approach dual track of long-term fixes and DDOT engagement. Short term, what are some of these ideas that we can send to DDOT now.
 - Question – if we’re trying to think through and work toward longer term goal, is there an opportunity to provide feedback on the non-supported issue in case the one we want doesn’t move forward.
 - Think DDOT will get feedback on either option, but want to focus generally on making sure DDOT is engaging.
 - Comm Pinkney – there will definitely be community input b/c they have to come to ANC, we would not see them w/out that step

- Think we should keep idea on table favoring 1 concept w/ some pretty serious concerns.
 - Eckington – people use circle through all modes – walk, drive, bus, bike – don’t think interests of groups are in opposition; if you focus on making intersection regular, predictable, safe – bike lanes, reasonable traffic signals, improving general flow of everyone through there.
 - Comm Pinkney – our councilmember has stated to ANC which of the scenarios he prefers – he is hoping they choose #6 (no Wendy’s).
- Advocacy
 - Don’t see FedEx on list – would be a potential partner – want to get trucks in and out.
 - Union Market TIF – thinking to use some TIF money for intersection? More about engagement – developers get involved in advocacy.
 - Wish we used our approval weight with these developers to get their partnership – their traffic studies did not include DTC; lots of residents w/ lots of ubers to neighborhood making traffic worse. If there’s any more big developments, we should keep this in mind.
 - Comm Powell – I would be all for putting more pressure on developers coming through; one thing that makes it difficult is we as a community have not coalesced around what we’re looking for.
 - Commercial tenants are another source of potential support/advocacy.
- Motion to support option 6
- Alternate motion: Motion to support option 6 w/ recognition that there are concerns about both
- Motion: Civic Association strongly prefers Option 6 to Option 3, but strongly requests that DDOT work with Eckington to resolve significant concerns.
 - In favor: 14
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstain: 0
- Comm Powell – to the extent that the ECA can have standard letter, start spamming people w/ our long-term picture. Something written that other people (e.g., NoMa Bid) can attach along w/ their letter.
 - Short-term stuff – if there are, as we go through a short-term ask list, Comm Pinkney and I can submit short-term requests to ANC.
- Short-term ask
 - Fixing/extending timing of light
 - Disagree w/ suggestion to close entry points from Eckington and First Street to circle
 - 3.i stop signs at Harry Thomas and Eckington – that’s included in Eckington Park apt building – they’ll put those in
 - If closing Wendy’s ingress/egress – concern that it might back up traffic more.
 - Reason for closing – many cars cut through Wendy’s to avoid circle – can create traffic on entering/exiting side.
 - Change to “reduce’ number of entry/exit points

- Decision to remove b/c controversial
 - 3d – sometimes helpful to turn right on red of Eckington – removed
- Next steps:
 - Engaging w/ council more – Sterling, Katrina, Shelly, and Austan talking to Vision Zero people. Talking to McKinley & Mundo Verde re. safe passage to schools initiative – those schools targeted for this area.
 - Draft standard letter that Comm Powell suggested
 - Engage NoMa, already reached out to JBG & Foulger Pratt for their support.
 - Adam Duffy – can talk to North Capital Main St for support
 - ANC Pinkney – R st Alley – can't close off entrances and exits to places b/c emergency vehicles need to get through.