



April 2018 ECA Meeting

April 2, 2018 | 7:00PM-8:30PM Location: The Summit at St. Martins

Attendees: 23 people

- Officer updates (5 min)
 - President Katrina welcomes everyone
 - Introductions
 - Katrina updates
 - Will be talking about Dave Thomas Circle
 - Trader Joes in NoMa, lots of other restaurants coming into NoMa
 - Eckington day – want to get started, would like some help in writing grants in June, lots of planning getting closer to the day
- Committee updates (5 min)
 - Adam – Social Committee – Earth Day Cleanup – Sunday, April 22nd, and Potluck after (Cleanup 10am-12pm, Potluck at Gearing Up 12:30-2pm)
- Elected official updates (8 min)
 - Councilmember McDuffie's office (Nolan Treadway)
 - Working on budget for upcoming year; handing out more prominent budget oversight hearings – if you want to comment, the public is invited to testify.
 - DC Emancipation Day – parade on Saturday, April 14th
 - Nationals give Councilmember McDuffie tickets for Ward 5 Day – April 27th – can call or go online to reserve tickets
- ANC updates (10 min)
 - Commissioner Pinkney (ANC 5E)
 - Super Liquors – they applied for a license renewal, but not to have the license transferred to a different location (since they're supposed to move to 1629). That will be an issue. They were supposed to be here tonight to answer their own questions, but did not come. Super Liquors staying where they are as far as I know, since the application still has the old address.
 - We have a new business in the area – 1707 North Capitol St – Workafrolic – if you have children, they have childcare hours, you can share workspace, share play space, and take exercise classes. Operates with a monthly fee.
 - 1711 – Cotis – Innovative Solutions for IT and Health Care - existing business but changed its name.

- 1715 – Has been purchased; will meet with owner this week or next, have invited executive director of North Cap Main Street. Business is very excited about being on North Cap.
- Harry Thomas Rec Center – been doing work there, especially since landscaping has moved from Dept. of Parks & Rec to Forest Service. Have discussed what should be removed in terms of trees and bushes, and they have been removed so that there's nowhere to hide behind. There will be new trees coming soon. Both bathrooms and the kitchen were renovated late last year, so Harry Thomas is looking up. Now just need to get some classes there.
- Comprehensive Plan – attended Chairmen Mandelson's quarterly ANC meeting; office of Planning was there. Explained what he's done so far and what has happened with the amendments. There were 3,000 amendments forwarded; Office of Planning entertained 100-300 b/c others did not meet the criteria. During ANC quarterly meeting, 5-6 ANCs raised voices, informed that at some point, Office of Planning told them that whatever they included would not be included in final amendments. Told ANCs that when final plan comes before council, they could testify and forward amendment resolutions. Developers have already gone down to testify; they're up in arms about PUD process, being taken to court 17-18 times; would like some of that changed.
- Traffic calming – will submit traffic calming plan for R st for alley in back of unit and 100 block. Alley runs into McKinley parking lot. Will have DDOT come out and do safety study/survey and determine whether we can have rush hour (can't enter between certain hours). Constituent contacted about safety study on R st to calm traffic; he's come up with suggestions. Hardest part is getting petition signed – he needs 80 signatures.
 - Question about traffic calming – you cannot get off of R st onto North Capital during morning rush hour; what can we do? Why can't they have training vehicles park in alley?
 - Residents on R st won't want people parking in alley, especially when they have to move cars for street cleaning. Put "no parking" signs out there because residents were complaining about out-of-state cars parking and taking their parking spaces.
 - Comm Pinkney attended DDOT's training for ANCs a few weeks ago, they said this may be the answer
- Comm Hannah Powell (ANC 5E03)
 - Shares new newsletter
 - At Large Councilmember Robert White is having a Ward 5 meet-and-greet on April 19, 2018 at Steel Plate in Brookland
 - Updates on developments included in newsletter
 - Comprehensive Plan – ECA voted on a series of amendments that Eckington would like to see in comprehensive plan. Council is currently considering comprehensive framework; ECA amendments were to the main body of the document. We expect to see more language coming out later about that, after the framework is finalized.
 - Comm Pinkney – attended Chairman Mendelsohn's quarterly ANC meeting where Office of Planning was there; ANC's amendments were not included.

- Comm Powell – We may be talking about 2 different things. They haven't released the main body document yet; we're interested in the language for the mid-city area – that language isn't out yet. At that point we can compare what ECA proposed vs what's in the doc.
 - Was a marathon hearing about planned unit developments (e.g., Eckington Yards, Eckington Park, Washington Gateway) – a lot of development has been delayed due to law suits; that was controversial issue at hearing. In testimony, advocated to look for ways to provide preference for people who live in neighborhood as preference in lottery for affordable units. Lottery is district-wide. If you live in this area, you're being affected by development. Ideally if the development is coming here, would be nice if some units that are set aside as affordable housing are given as a first shot to people who live here.
 - Q- What's considered "affordable"?
 - Set by Dept. of Housing & Urban Development; everyone would agree that "affordable" is not actually affordable – based on Area median income, which includes Fairfax Co.
 - Comm Pinkney – would housing preferences be against district law?
 - Currently inclusionary zoning is just blanket – you enter the lottery; it's a complicated system. This would require a change to DC law to avoid the displacement.
 - Comm Pinkney – if you're picking and choosing, it can't be a lottery.
 - DC Public Schools lottery segments different groups (e.g., sibling preference) – you can be in first group of people who are considered. Bottom line, encouraged council to consider ways to keep residents here.
 - Did receive notice that former Baptist Church at corner of Seaton and 3rd had permits issued – by right development. Have requested to get copies of building permits. The proposal – it was a single lot; developer is trying to subdivide into 4 parcels, put 2-unit townhouses on each parcel; allows him to avoid parking requirements. If you do live near that development and have concerns, let Hannah Powell know. Don't have a lot of influence if he's doing by-right development.
- Dave Thomas Circle: Vote on recommended short-term changes (Austan leads) (10 min)
 - Quorum count – have 11 voting members in attendance
 - Adam walks through recommended short-term changes, and the items that had been removed
 - 1b: Comm Pinkney worries that this would require adding a light, would not ease up traffic.
 - Interest in deploying traffic police – captured in #5
 - # 8 was unclear, decided to remove

- Is a traffic light a temporary or a permanent change?
 - It's permanent, but could be done quickly, whereas other things would take 5-10 years.
- Motion to adopt recommendations as modified
- Seconded
 - In favor: 8
 - Opposed: 1
 - Abstain: 1
- Question: Would ANC reps be willing to submit resolution to support recommendations to ANC
 - Comm Powell – yes
 - Comm Pinkney – Yes, will submit
- Stable Artists' Studio - 327 S st - talk about project (10 min)
 - "Stable is not just artists' studios" – 501c3, formed a few years ago, have been searching for a home, looking for rent-stabilized studios for visual artists, and a gallery space. About a year ago, connected w/ developers that purchased building near Gearing Up; enormous building, renting a little under 10k square feet. Entrance will be on Randolph; will be opening up this fall. Will have lots of programming open to the community.
 - The space will contain 25 studios and 1100 sq. ft. gallery space, and a common area and mini WeWork style-space – for artists that don't need studio space. Around 40 artists in the space. Biannual open studio space to see art, and it will be free. You can see artists working in their spaces. Gallery space will have programming; will want to work directly w/ community – want to develop relationships here. Want to directly engage community so we're not siloed.
 - Will you be offering classes – very interested in offering, but may need to be industrious about how we do that – don't have classroom space, but education is part of mission.
 - Challenge is that we've already outgrown the space – there's a lot of interest & demand; plan to expand within building eventually; take on more space, include a classroom.
 - All artist-run, organized, founded. Working w/ 3 different developers.
 - Room to include children? Yes, many possibilities.
 - NoMa folks have done a great job of creating public art – especially murals; would be exciting to do something similar in Eckington, especially along bike path. Agree- let them know if there's specific spaces you want for mural.
 - NoMa going to cut back on murals, doing art pieces around the area.
 - We're really committed to visual artists – there's many iterations.
 - Where Randolph St dead ends into bike path, there's currently concrete planters; we want to create a space there that people will want to use where the weathers' nice. Haven't looked into funding yet, but would like to create tables, an area people can hang out.
 - Have you talked to Gearing Up yet? Not yet – keep missing them.
 - Fundraising – about halfway there – if you're doing events, we'd be happy to promote them.
 - Could maybe host meeting at gallery once it's up and running
 - Have you worked w/ Main Street Programs (North Capitol Main Street or RIA Main Street)?
 - Not currently included in the scope of North Cap Main Street – working to expand the scope.

- Next Weds 6-8 PM @ Pub & the People – North Capital Main Street annual meeting.
- North Capitol st - Parking requirements (Thaddeus)
 - Goal is to remove peak parking restrictions in part of North Cap that is over the underpass (S to V st)
 - Traditionally, the way the city has thought about North Capitol – it's thought of a thoroughfare. We're trying to change that view overall. Have 2 frontage roads w/ parking restrictions from 7-9:30am on both sides.
 - Point of peak parking restrictions – open up additional lane to increase flow of traffic. It doesn't work on either side of the street.
 - Why remove?
 - Creates weekday hardship for Eckington residents. Doesn't help traffic flow. Removes otherwise usable parking. Heightens driver & pedestrian danger (parked car creates buffer between cars and sidewalk). Not used on comparable streets (e.g., 1st st or Connecticut Ave), and decreases availability of parking on East/West streets.
 - DDOT has considered this – thinks these parking restrictions may be outdated. But DDOT has always thought of North Cap as heavy-traffic arterial, and not lower-traffic residential traffic.
 - Traffic restrictions on both side are from 7-9:30am (doesn't make sense for northbound traffic).
 - Inconsistent signage. On NW side, no zoned parking; on NE side, inconsistent – some w/ RPP parking, some w/ restrictions, some w/ nothing.
 - Effect on residents – DDOT hasn't directly addressed this specific section, but has indirectly – said that similar contexts may hurt business or residents. Also, current situation prioritizes commuters over local residents.
 - Mid-City East study wanted to reclaim minor streets & corridors from commuters, return to residential needs.
 - People speed. People speed less when there's on-street parking.
 - Could add 27 parking spots NW, 13 NE (40 total)
 - Plenty of room for vehicles – they go by at all other hours of the day.
 - Vehicles don't use the street as 2 lanes – it's still treated as one.
 - Don't know traffic flow for our area
 - Trash pickup – NE side, not an issue – T st to RIA, trash pickup is from alley; but from S st to T st, no peak parking restrictions and people put cans out. On NW side, trash pickup happens before peak parking restrictions go into effect.
 - Comparable – Connecticut Ave from Dupont Circle up to R st – same street width, same # of bus routes, but CT Ave allows peak parking.
 - Benefits of removing peak parking restrictions
 - Prioritizing curbside use and use for residents over commuters
 - Decreases ambiguity over signage
 - Increases # weekday parking spaces
 - Alleviates hardships for residents
 - Opens up parking on E/W st, and spaces for nearby businesses.
 - Increases pedestrian and driver safety.
 - Next steps – gaining support; already spoken w/ ANC rep and will speak at upcoming meeting.

- Have already gone to residents on all 5 blocks, so far gotten 35-40 signatures on petition.
 - Question – 4-6:30pm restriction – is there a need for that?
 - No – zero benefit. More to show arbitrariness of signage on your side. But it's not needed at all.
 - Want to make sure it's not kept in here as a possibility – most people come home around 5, they'd have to park on side streets and then come back later. Suggest you not put 4-6:30 in report b/c people may see that as another option.
 - Agree – overall, peak parking restriction is not needed. Same argument would still be made.
 - Comm Pinkney – think that was a great presentation but take issue w/ several things.
 - RPP is on a given block b/c that's what residents want. The area you're speaking of is a bottleneck, which is why parking was removed years ago – when cars veer to the right, come to stop light at RIA, cars can turn to left or right or straight. That becomes a bottleneck.
 - You have a bus; as the bus moves along, all the cars are in one lane rather than 2; traffic backs up down north capital st.
 - Todd Place residents tried to get parking removed totally – if you look at same area on NW side toward NY Ave, it's a bottleneck. They removed parking so that there could be 2 lanes of traffic.
 - Disagree w/ comparison to Connecticut Ave – way more lights, so people can't move as freely as they can on North Cap.
 - Other concerns about congestion on North Cap.
 - RPP on North Capitol st – it's not a residential street. A street that has 2 sides of residents. The people on North Cap are on a commercial strip.
 - Concern about bus – adding more 80 stops, concern about cars double-parking (e.g., ubers waiting to pick up) and causing delays. Or for cars pulling out of parking space creating delays.
 - Already have people stopping w/ stop sign at T & North Cap.
 - Katrina interrupted – over time, and no longer have quorum.
- Thank you all for coming.
- April 14th is RIA PorchFest – Rhode Island Ave, have shuttles along RIA from Metro stop to Public option, porches all along w/ free music.
- Have until May 14th to protest Super Liquors license, hearing is on the 29th.