

**Community Liaison Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 10, 2019**  
**American University – East Campus – Constitution Hall (Rooms 1-2)**  
**7 p.m.**

**Introductions & Opening Remarks**

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by Don Edwards, from Justice and Sustainability Associates, at 7 p.m. Chief of Staff and Counselor to the President, Seth Grossman, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University, welcomed representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs).

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

**Standing Reports**

*Student Conduct Off Campus since March 2019; Office Campus Conduct Presentation*

Jeff Brown, Dean of Students, provided information on the Student Code of Conduct as relevant to off-campus student conduct for the period June 19 to September 23, 2019. The university received nine (9) complaints. This presentation can be found at:

[https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-preliminary overview.pdf](https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-preliminary%20overview.pdf)

Alan Pollock, of Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked where the incident in Spring Valley occurred.

Jeff Brown responded that the incident occurred on 49<sup>th</sup> Street.

Shelly Repp, of Neighbors for Responsible Development, asked what the comparison was between this 2019 number with the number of incidents at this time in 2018.

Jeff replied that AU received four (4) reports last year in comparison to nine (9) reports this year.

*Construction Projects Update*

David Dower, AU Assistant Vice Present for Planning and Project Management updated the CLC on progress at the Hall of Science and provided information about 3244 Nebraska Avenue. This presentation can be found at:

<https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-meeting-presentations-12-10-19.pdf>

Alan asked how many students can be in the lecture hall.

David replied that the lecture hall fits 100 people.

Alan asked when the neighborhood tour of the Hall of Science will occur.

David responded that AU likely will schedule the tour around commencement time in May or June.

Dennis Paul, of Neighbors for a Livable Community, expressed a concern about lighting and asked if AU is still putting shades in the Hall of Science building.

David replied that the window shades are still in the plan as was agreed to address neighbors' concern about light pollution.

Troy Kravitz, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked about the plans for the grounds at 3244 Nebraska Ave.

David responded that, due to the easement and other stipulations, the use on the site is highly constrained. He explained that, aside from renovation within the president's house and a small addition for program needs, that limited development is allowed and that the rest of the property is protected.

Dennis Paul asked about the size of the property.

David replied that the site is 3.5 acres.

Diana Gregg, of Wesley Heights, asked about the plans for the house on the property.

David answered that the house will remain a house, and not be subdivided or transformed. He added that the current house meets AU's needs.

Tom Smith, of Spring Valley Wesley Heights Citizens Association, asked about the intentions for the current house of the president.

Dan Nichols, Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety & Transportation Programs, replied that no decision has been made. He explained that the site is still rented by Army Corps and that AU is waiting for answers from testing on the ground.

Tom asked what options are being considered for the site.

Dan responded that all options are on the table and will be announced when AU is ready.

Tom asked how the president's house site ties into the restoration of the adjacent site. He further asked how the restoration of the adjacent site over the summer will be combined with the current president's house.

Dan replied that the adjacent site will be open lot and that AU has not decided what will happen with the current president's house.

Tom asked if AU will request Army Corps to tear down the current president's house if testing reveals problems under the current house.

Dan answered that AU is waiting for test results and that no decision has been made.

Tom expressed concern about a lack of transparency about the plans for those two sites and requested information to be shared with the neighborhood.

Adrian Small, of Spring Valley, asked about plans for the security building lot.

Dan replied that the lot also is owned by Army Corps and AU wants the building torn down. He stated that the lot currently is under restoration – landscaping the front part and removing a slab to reset soil – and then will be remediated as an open lot.

#### *Enrollment & Housing Update*

Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relation, presented the Fall 2019 Enrollment and Housing report. This information can be viewed at:

<https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-meeting-presentations-12-10-19.pdf>

Shelly asked how many beds are occupied.

Ed replied that AU is at capacity with maybe a few beds remaining.

Tom expressed concern that undergraduate enrollment numbers are higher than the promise AU made at the Zoning Commission. He asked if AU will reduce its ceiling to 6,400 students or if the current cap will this be the number used for the next campus plan.

Ed responded that AU is still working through issues around enrollment and will introduce its intentions in the new year.

Tom asked what AU is doing to be in compliance with what was promised to the Zoning Commission. He shared his concern that AU is above the agreed upon enrollment number and insisted that AU control its enrollment numbers and keep its promise. He further requested transparency and honesty in upholding its commitment, especially given the new AU leadership.

Ed stated that AU is in compliance with the zoning order. He explained that the enrollment numbers provided in 2011 were projections. He stated that AU is working through projections and enrollment issues internally and with the AU Neighborhood Partnership. He added that AU will share about its next campus plan in the new year.

Dennis Williams, of Tenleytown Neighborhood Association, raised concern about AU students increasing competition for affordable housing, especially given the draft Comprehensive Plan includes provisions about student housing and expresses interest in increasing affordable housing in these neighborhoods. He asked if AU is aware, concerned, and has a plan towards affordable housing.

Ed replied that the AU Neighborhood Partnership the AU itself are examining student housing. He also stated that the AU Housing Director gave a presentation at the last CLC meeting.

Dennis Williams asked if The Frequency count towards affordable housing with students being eligible for affordable housing.

Ed agreed to find out what the affordability mix is at The Frequency. He stated that he does not have knowledge of any student's income.

Jonathan McHugh, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E, emphasized that the students previously at the Berkshire were moved to The Frequency.

John Wheeler, of Ward 3 Vision, added that The Frequency is a by-right building.

Dennis Williams raised a concern about competition for housing stock when neighborhoods are struggling with affordable housing.

Shelly added that 4,000 students are living off campus.

Troy asked for an explanation of a process that allows private properties such as The Frequency to become affordable housing without landlord engagement.

Shelly asked if students or city residents will be tenants of the units at The Frequency.

Dennis Williams raised a concern about meeting the city's goals of affordable housing.

Don asked CLC members what AU can do to bring more information or attention to the issue.

Dennis Williams stated that the city has targets for affordable housing in this community. Given that AU has students off campus, he asked to know that AU is aware of the issues and is willing to work with Mayor's vision. He added housing students on campus is a way to free up the housing market.

Don clarified the questions being raised by neighbors as 1) "Is AU aware?" and 2) "What is the university's point of view on potential contribution to affordable housing in the District with this community as the focal point?"

Tom requested a response to a growing undergraduate population requiring the need for master leases, and in turn, taking rental housing off the market. He asked what AU is going to do to enable an adequate supply of rental housing in this area.

Diana stated the need for information about average cost of what students pay for housing in order to have an informed discussion about affordable housing.

Dennis Williams added that both market rate and affordable housing are being pushed by the Mayor.

Don asked if AU would respond to the questions being raised about housing.

Ed agreed that AU would respond to questions.

John suggested that Glenbrook could be considered for student housing.

Chuck Elkins, of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D, asked if the 200 off-campus beds allowed by the Zoning Commission is the same number AU intends to use in the next campus plan.

Ed responded AU is still looking at the numbers.

Shelly stated that enrollment and on-campus housing are key questions in the next campus plan.

Kani Xulam, of Fort Gaines Citizen's Association, asked how AU's 67-percent occupancy number compares to George Washington University and Georgetown University.

Ed replied that he was unsure about their housing requirements and stated that AU will find out the answer.

#### *Community Relations Update*

Maria Barry, Director of Community Relations, shared information about recent outreach and community work by American University. This presentation can be found at:

<https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/clc-meeting-presentations-12-10-19.pdf>

John expressed appreciation towards AU students who participated in a clean-up at Fessenden Park.

Maria stated that she supports fulfilling requests for student volunteer support and recognizes that students volunteer independently as well.

Chuck provided update on research partnership between AU students and ANC 3D. He stated that the Secondhand Smoking report was provided at the last ANC 3D meeting. He added that a scooter and pedestrian safety report and a tenant protections report are in the works.

Adrian requested to see the Secondhand Smoking report and expressed concern about a worsening smoking issue in neighborhoods.

Dan requested that Adrian call him when issues arise.

Jonathan asked if AU identify internal, on-campus spots for smoking to avoid spill-out and negative impact in neighborhoods.

Maria replied that AU has dedicated smoking spots at Fletcher Gate and near SIS by Nebraska Ave. Ed agreed to look into options by raising concerns about the AU non-smoking policy with AU leadership.

Chuck pointed to the lack of community consultation in the initial decision by AU to adopt the non-smoking policy.

Jeff replied that AU did meet with the community before the non-smoking policy was adopted, but the community's comments and feedback are being raised again.

John stated that the designated spot on Nebraska Ave. is surrounded by AU property and not adjacent to private property. He also noted the littering problem from smokers in the public space near the AU Law School.

Tom noted that the designated spot on Nebraska Ave. is public space.

### **New Business & Neighborhood Issues**

#### *Community Liaison Committee and the Campus Plan*

Ed Fisher provided information on the process of community engagement with the next Campus Plan in 2020. He explained that there will be a series of public meetings in 2020 as well as updates at all upcoming CLC meetings. David Dower provided information of a preliminary assessment of AU main campus conducted by Perkins-Eastman. The assessment presentation can be found at:

<https://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/facility-working-group-presentation.pdf>

Tom asked if the timeline of the process would be posted on the AU website.

Ed replied that the timeline will be reflected in meeting minutes. He stated that AU can post timeline information, and that neighbors can expect an update at each CLC meeting.

Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community, asked about intentions for the space by the tennis courts.

David replied that a possible use is the site for the Center for Athletic Performance for varsity athletics.

Tom asked what programming would be expected at the Center for Athletic Performance.

David replied that current program expectations are competitions for women's volleyball and for wrestling and practice for men's basketball.

Tom requested that David explain the opportunity sites shown on the presentation.

David noted the opportunity sites: Northwest of Katzen Arts Center, the tennis courts, Osborn building, Asbury building, the Child Development Center, location of Kreeger and Watkins buildings, area including Jack Childs Hall, Rockwood and Hamilton buildings, a portion of the Quad, area in front of the library, the land between the EQB and Hurst buildings, the Kay Spiritual Center, Building 5, and the East Campus parking lot. He also pointed to the existing building footprints that may be renovated due to vacancy.

Tom asked about an expansion to the Kay Center.

David replied that an addition to the Kay Center was in the prior Campus Plan.

Ben Tessler, of Westover Place Homeowner's Association, asked what possible uses are under consideration for the East Campus site.

David responded that AU was not far enough in conversation to determine possible uses, and that he only has knowledge of the library, the Center for Athletic Performance, and the Kay Spiritual Center.

Dennis Paul asked if AU would consider keeping the tennis courts by having an underground building.

David replied that an underground building is unlikely since a connection will need to be maintained between the Center for Athletic Performance and Bender Arena, as Bender Arena will remain competition site. He further noted that none of these developments will be to the level of further processing.

Ed stated that the campus assessment will be uploaded to the website and be opened to comments online. He added that AU will have more information at the March 3 CLC meeting at which AU will be able to answer questions more adequately.

Tom asked for an update on the AU Neighborhood Partnership. He also asked for information about plans and opportunity sites at the Tenleytown Campus.

David replied that there are development restrictions in Tenleytown up to approximately 2030. He stated that the Tenleytown and WLC campuses were not included in the assessment because AU does not believe there are opportunity sites for potential development.

Tom asked if buildings in commercial zones are now required to be included in next Campus Plan.

David replied that AU buildings in commercial zones are included, which are 4801 Massachusetts Ave., 4200 Wisconsin Ave., and 3201 New Mexico Ave.

Ed added that buildings specifically in medium density zones are required inclusion, which means 4200 Wisconsin Ave. is included.

Tom asked how AU will be working with the AU Neighborhood Partnership and the CLC on the next Campus Plan.

Ed responded that the AU Neighborhood Partnership is helping with major elements, such as housing, off-campus and on-campus student life, and transportation, and providing input on objectionable impacts. The Steering Committee will meet monthly or every six weeks and working groups will meet monthly.

Tom asked who attends the working group meetings and if minutes are available.

Ed replied that working group members are attended by members of the AU Neighborhood Partnership and that the meetings have no minutes.

Tom asked if the working groups have selected members.

Ed responded that anyone is invited to participate. He added that an individual is welcome to participate if it complies with the ground rules.

Tom asked, assuming he was a working group participant, if he could share information with the board of his affiliated organization.

Ed explained that working groups are asked to keep some information confidential.

Tom expressed dissatisfaction with information about the AU Neighborhood Partnership being withheld from everyone. He stated that the CLC is designed for campus planning.

Jonathan disagreed with the statement that the CLC was established as the mechanism for campus planning.

Tom asked if the AU Neighborhood Partnership is making decisions or recommendations.

Ed responded that AU is working closely with the AU Neighborhood Partnership with members providing recommendations and suggestions to AU. He explained that there are five working groups which are explained in the FAQs provided.

Tom requested that AU shares the names of individuals who are members of the AU Neighborhood Partnership.

Gretchen Randolph, of Spring Valley Neighborhood Association, explained that membership changes and is growing. She shared that the members of the AU Neighborhood Partnership are not a secret and emphasized that members must abide by the guidelines.

Ed agreed that the names of members will be shared with the CLC.



Tom requested that the schedule of Partnership meetings be shared by AU.

Ed and Dan noted the schedule request.

Tom asked for a report about the AU Neighborhood Partnership become a standing report for the CLC agenda.

Ed replied that AU will consider the request.

## **Good of the Order**

*CLC Meetings for 2018-2019*

**Proposed 2019 – 2020 CLC Meeting Dates: January 7 (Town Hall); March 3; June 9; September 15; December 1**

Don Edwards thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

The next meeting of the CLC will be on **January 7 (Town Hall)** in Rooms 1-2 of Constitution Hall on East Campus.

## **Attendees**

*Community:*

Esther Concia, Cathedral Heights resident  
Chuck Elkins, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D  
Diana Gregg, Wesley Height resident  
Jeffery Kraskin, Spring Valley Wesley Heights Citizens Association  
Jonathan McHugh, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E  
Troy Kravitz, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D  
Dennis Paul, Neighbors for a Livable Community  
Alan Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association  
Pat Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association  
Gretchen Randolph, Spring Valley Citizen's Association  
Shelly Repp, Tenleytown Neighborhood Association  
Adrian Small, Spring Valley resident  
Tom Smith, Spring Valley Wesley Heights Citizens Association  
Charis Sharp, Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School  
Benjamin Tessler, Westover Place Homeowner's Association  
John Wheeler, Ward 3 Vision  
Betsy White, Wesley Heights resident  
Dennis Williams, Tenleytown Neighborhood Association  
Kani Xulam, Fort Gaines Citizens Association

*American University Staff:*

Maria Barry, Director of Community Relations

Jeffery Brown, Dean of Students

David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management

Ed Fisher, Assistant Vice President of Community and Government Relations

Seth Grossman, Chief of Staff to the President

Katie Porras, Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Services

Daniel Nichols, Assistant Vice President of Risk, Safety & Transportation Programs

Sherry Rutherford, AU Campus Plan Consultant, Requity Real Estate

*Other:*

Joshua Babb, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC

Don Edwards, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC

Kayla Elson, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC

Laura Gramling, Justice and Sustainability Associates, LLC