

**AU Neighborhood Partnership  
Steering Committee Meeting Summary  
December 3, 2024 , 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Duber Hall, Room 114**

**Community Attendees:** Stanley Harris, Jerry Gallucci, Andrew Heimert, John Wheeler, Margurite Pridgen, Chuck Elkins, Tricia Duncan

**AU Attendees:** Matthew Bennett, Laura Marks, Jason Millison, Sherry Rutherford, Jonathan McCann, Jeff Brown, Josh Finver, Phillip Morse, Evelyn Thimba

**JSA Attendees:** Donzell Robinson, Katherine Smith, Olivia Hille

Highlights	
Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and Meeting Guidelines</li><li>• Co-Chair Opening Remarks</li><li>• Enrollment Update</li><li>• Campus Safety Conversation with Phillip Morse</li><li>• Governance Check-in</li><li>• Working Group Updates</li><li>• Community Relations Update</li><li>• Closing Comments and Questions</li></ul>
Actions Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange a meeting for the neighbors on the steering committee to discuss appointment of 2025 Steering Committee (SC) Community Co-chair.</li></ul>

Discussion Recap	
Welcome and Meeting Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Donzell welcomed everyone and reviewed the ground rules.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Respect the process</li><li>○ Be patient and engaged</li><li>○ Follow the facilitator's directions</li><li>○ Allow every voice to be heard</li><li>○ Speak courteously and respectfully to others</li><li>○ Maintain zero tolerance for any obscenity or comment (written or verbal) that is meant to attack or intimidate another person.</li></ul></li><li>• Jerry Gallucci and Matthew Bennett, the Steering Committee Co-chairs, welcomed everyone</li></ul>
Enrollment Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matt reviewed the annual enrollment update.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ AU is down in enrollment. The university has still provided housing for 70%+ of its students this year and their focus is currently on increasing enrollment for next year. Across the country, enrollment is down 5% in higher education which is</li></ul></li></ul>

	<p>due to smaller graduating high school classes and this last year the FAFSA enrollment issue only worsened this. There is also a shift in demographics of students seeking higher education. Matt handed the topic off to Evelyn Thimba, Vice President for Undergraduate Enrollment</p> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p><i>How far below target are you?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evelyn answered that with the 400 students studying abroad there are just under 7,000 students enrolled at AU, a 4% decline from 2023.</li> </ul> <p><i>Are there easy fixes/ less than easy fixes?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evelyn said there is no easy fix. There continues to be lots of pressure for the incoming classes, creating a much more competitive environment. The current focus is on the next admission cycle and leaning into the demographic cliff in 2026 with 15% fewer high school graduates, with the northeast seeing greatest decline. The main struggle is that the proportion of high school graduates choosing to go into higher ed is shrinking. 2016 was the height of college admissions, where 70% of high school graduates went to college. The University is looking for a strong and sustainable path.</li> </ul> <p><i>There are lots of jobs that don't require degrees - what is AU doing for long-term sustainability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matt explained that AU is looking to expand certificate programs, and different kinds of learning.</li> </ul> <p><i>Could AU explore offering a non-traditional degree such as plumbing?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evelyn gave an example that Kogod School of Business has incorporated AI literacy into all their programs. AU is looking to be strategic and add skills that are appealing to future students.</li> </ul> <p><i>Have you looked into doing a SWOT analysis?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evelyn explained that similar work predates her and Matt. A current SWOT analysis is a work in progress, and they are trying to determine what kind of Liberal Arts University they want to be.</li> </ul>
Working Group Updates	<p>Phillip Morse introduced the Safety and Security Working Group (SSWG) work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phil gave a history about why the program was started, which related to AU's awareness of the UVA and Michigan State gun violence incidents on campus.</li> <li>Phil explained that the SSWG was launched to understand the community's perspective on security at AU. Groups included staff, students, and faculty. There is also a survey currently active online for the broader community. The aim of these educational listening sessions is to determine stakeholders' views on AUPD having or not having weapons, or taking a hybrid approach.</li> <li>Phil explained that the feasibility assessment must consider many components, including infrastructure, human capital, legal risk, and budget resources. This assessment is currently being done.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The final product of this project should be done in February.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>The survey is open to the community and no decision has been made.</p> <p><i>What has the demographic make-up been of these groups that have been able to weigh in?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phil explained that faculty, staff, and students were included in the process, and he worked with student affairs to diversify groups so that marginalized populations were equitably represented.</li> </ul> <p><i>In the lethal force option, have you built in a distinction between carrying weapons on campus and beyond? I am concerned about having armed officers in the community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phil explained that officers can go from main campus to satellite campuses, which means they can go through neighborhoods with weapons, but they are not within their jurisdiction and cannot act on anything they see.</li> </ul> <p><i>Is there anything that has happened on campus that has prompted this discussion?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phil explained that there have been several examples and a lockdown over weapons or presumed weapons on campus, several resulting in investigation and legal action. Phil explained that Ward 3 has the lowest crime rate in DC.</li> </ul> <p><i>Were you able to find the perpetrators of the gate desecration?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phil said that they were able to find 1 of 2 perpetrators, and they made an arrest for the second instance.</li> </ul>
Governance Check-In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Terms of Reference (TOR) have been the same for a number of years. With no major projects on the immediate horizon, it would be a good time to update it. The updates to the TOR could include expanding the language beyond the founding communities in the TOR.</li> <li>The discussion surrounding new community additions are not about the communities or the people specifically, but the technical aspects of updating the TOR.</li> <li>Jerry stated that this document came about due to the Zoning Commission and that this document should represent the living organization that the partnership has become.</li> <li>Chuck explained the historical context - that neighbors pushed for more direct engagement with AU. This led to a formal partnership, focused on the immediate neighborhood around the main campus. The terms were carefully negotiated, with both AU and neighbors involved in the process.</li> <li>John stated that the topics covered in the partnership affect communities outside those who directly line the main campus's property boundary.</li> <li>Donzell reiterated that the partnership is a consensus-based body, not a voting body. By starting this conversation, we can make people feel considered and welcome while we keep the engagement and participation that we currently have and holistically engage with other community members.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p><i>Who gets to invite new members? Can the co-chairs invite new members to join?</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chuck explained that in the past the partnership has made those decisions.</li> <li>• Margurite explained that McLean Gardens is focused on specific topics that overlap with the partnership, and they are open to collaborating.</li> <li>• McLean Gardens has been active in SLS before, and that most work is done in the working groups.</li> </ul>
Working Groups	<p><b>Facilities and Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Facilities and Planning working group met in September. AU will need to test the barrier for Jacobs Field before considering any proposed changes in how the field is used.</li> <li>• The Meltzer Building construction is about 50% complete.</li> </ul> <p>Questions  <i>Do you plan to take this testing planning methodology to the Facilities and Planning working group?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AU will collaborate with the group when there is more information - this will happen, at the earliest, mid next year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transportation and Parking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DDOT TDM data will be shared in a special meeting with the group before the holidays when it is finalized. Updates on OLLI parking enforcement around the Spring Valley Building were shared along with CaBi stations development process on Rockwood Parkway and Spring Valley.</li> </ul> <p>Questions  <i>What are the complaints surrounding OLLI parking?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each of the complaints are dealt with individually; there are tickets being issued when illegal parking occurs.</li> </ul> <p><i>Have people given feedback on improper ticketing?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an official appeal process, but they prefer if people contact the office directly.</li> </ul> <p><i>When tickets are given in that area, are they saying they are part of OLLI and have DC parking?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They go to his office, then they go to Tony, and are reminded of their responsibility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Life and Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLS' core objectives remain the same for the upcoming year; the focus is prevention and expanding membership.</li> </ul> <p><b>Off-Student Conduct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between Sept 11<sup>th</sup>-November 21 there were 10 total student conduct reports. It was determined that 9 reports were not AU students. The focus was on orientation completion - those who have not done orientation will face the student conduct process. Another focus is determining where students live.</li> </ul> <p><i>Are AU Students who attend parties reprimanded?</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The university often holds those who hosted parties responsible if possible.</li> </ul>
Community Relations Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jason recapped the AUNP Partnership membership meeting in October with keynote speaker Amy Dacey. Jason has been visiting apartments that house students to create relations with landlords and distribute the Good Neighbor Policy.</li> <li>• Since Jason has joined, the community newsletter has increased its recipients by over a third.</li> <li>• Laura invited all to celebrate President Alger's Inauguration on March 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.</li> </ul>
Closing Comments and Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jerry and Matt both provided closing comments. Jerry asked facilitators to plan a time for the committee to discuss a new co-chair.</li> <li>• Donzell adjourned the meeting.</li> </ul>