

Community Liaison Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 2, 2015

**American University – School of International Service – Abramson Family Founders Room
7 p.m.**

Introductions & Opening Remarks

The meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was opened by AU Vice President of Campus Life Gail Hanson, who convenes and leads the meetings for American University. She opened the meeting at 7 p.m. by welcoming representatives of neighborhood organizations and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs).

Attendees introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

Construction Update

David Dower, AU's Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management, updated the CLC on progress of construction at the Washington College of Law and East Campus. His presentation can be viewed at

<http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Capital-Projects-Update-06-02-15.pdf>

David Dower said there would be a follow-up East Campus community meeting on June 16.

Chuck Elkins, a neighbor, asked if anything of interest was found during excavation of East Campus site to which David Dower responded no.

David Dower explained the university's plans for an updated science building and noted this was in accordance with what was approved in the most recent campus plan.

Alan Pollack, of the Fort Gaines Citizens Association, asked for clarification of where the current science building (Beeghly Hall) is located. David Dower explained that it is on the west side of campus, near the old radio station and vehicle maintenance garage.

Off-Campus Student Conduct Update

Michelle Espinosa, AU Associate Dean of Students, presented the annual report related to off-campus student conduct. Her presentation can be viewed at

<http://www.american.edu/communityrelations/clc/upload/Off-Campus-Student-Conduct-Update-06-02-15.pdf>.

Michael Ralston, of the Greenbrier Condominiums, stated that the number of neighborhood incidences seemed very low when compared to the number of students living off-campus.

Kate Berenson, a neighbor, reminded attendees that if they are aware of any homes in the neighboring community that are about to be rented, to inform AU's Director of Community Relations, Andrew Huff (202-885-2167; ahuff@american.edu).

Nan Wells, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 3D03, asked how much the university engages Student Government in conduct-related issues. Michelle Espinosa responded that students do participate in promoting responsible conduct, and said that they have been effective in communicating the message to their peers. She also mentioned that Student Government leaders' efforts to reach out to problem houses also have been effective.

Nan Wells asked how one could get on the mailing list for newsletters that are sent to students, as she would like to see them. Michelle replied that she could bring copies of the letters to show neighbors at the September CLC meeting.

Nan Wells reminded everyone that they should call 911 to report any student-related incidents. She also asked to see a copy of the procedures that the university follows regarding student conduct-related incidents. Gail Hanson agreed to make the procedure chart from Michelle's PowerPoint available in print form. Michelle Espinosa also noted that the procedures have not changed.

Chuck Elkins asked if the Metropolitan Police Department goes to the off-campus location of every student conduct-related incident, and whether they file a report. Dan Nichols, AU's Executive Director of Risk, Safety and Transportation Programs, explained that AU Public Safety and MPD respond to these locations together.

Nan Wells asked what information is reported to MPD by AU Public Safety. Dan Nichols replied that AU Public Safety has an administrative function, that there is a dual response for all reported incidents, and that MPD has their own procedures for filing a report. He reminded attendees that the AU crime log is updated daily and can be found on the Public Safety website (<http://w.american.edu/publicsafety/dailycrimelog.pdf>).

Chuck Elkins asked whether both AU Public Safety and MPD will show up if he calls AU Public Safety. Dan Nichols replied that they would and that AU Public Safety then will report the names of any students involved to Michelle Espinosa.

Nan Wells asked if AU was attempting to expand Public Safety's authority, and whether this city-wide effort is still progressing. Dan Nichols replied that the Consortium of Universities of the Metropolitan Washington Area has been working with all D.C. universities to align jurisdictional issues with Clery Act requirements. The Consortium's proposal eventually will go to the D.C. Council for a potential public hearing and vote.

Chuck Elkins stated that he anticipates changes regarding parties at fraternities and sororities, as insurance companies are considering adopting a new policy whereby they would mandate that major parties only happen in third-party establishments. If alcohol is expected to be served at parties, they can only be held at venues holding liquor licenses as liability is moving to vendors.

Michelle Espinosa said that AU has received a significant number of student-related noise complaints at the Avalon. She explained that AU works closely with Avalon management and that they now report complaints directly to the university. Previously, the Avalon did not report on tenants as a privacy matter. AU also provides printed materials for AU and non-AU tenants

at the Avalon, describing their responsibilities and expectations as good neighbors and what other tenants should do to handle issues which may arise.

Chuck Elkins asked if AU knows the number of single-family homes occupied by AU students. Michelle Espinosa responded that were 16 reported in the last year.

David Fehrmann, of the Westover Place Homeowners Association, asked if a single complaint or incident would be recorded just once, or in multiple categories on the complaint summary chart in Michelle's PowerPoint. Michelle responded that, if appropriate, it would be recorded in multiple categories. She also added that when the nature of the complaint is not specified, it is registered as noise.

Nan Wells commented that the number of incidents seems to be increasing. Michelle Espinosa responded that one reason for the increase is that AU's threshold has lowered, so more incidents are brought to conduct and the other is the new collaboration with Avalon management.

Chuck Elkins asked what is a typical "censure" and what is defined as a "sanction." Michele Espinosa said that violators of the Student Conduct Code are issued a written censure that creates a disciplinary record for the individual.

Chuck Elkins asked if AU maintains the addresses of off-campus students and whether it is possible to ask students to report their off-campus address information directly to AU.

Michelle Espinosa said that the Registrar's office is making some revisions to their off-campus student information, and that there is an effort under way to obtain local address information. She stressed that, while the university is trying to obtain address information, they are also respectful of students' privacy.

Michael Ralston stated that he didn't think it was appropriate for students to be required to provide their private, off-campus addresses and that when he was in college, he wouldn't have necessarily wanted the university to know where he lived. He added that students have a reasonable expectation for privacy when they're living off-campus.

Nan Wells said that accurate data is important, but that being able to locate a student is very important.

Dan Nichols reminded everyone that if a criminal investigation is under way, the university has other means of finding off-campus student information, and that they would be able to locate a student.

Michelle Espinosa said that community relations initiatives are ongoing with the Avalon. She and Andrew Huff also have attended meetings with the Greenbriar Condominium Association. She also said that the university is in regular communications with the Berkshire. She said that the number of student-related incidents has decreased dramatically and that the university plans to continue to visit apartment managers where students live and educate them about AU practices, as well as offer printed materials.

Old Business

Vendor Parking in front of the Katzen Arts Center

Linda Argo, AU's Assistant Vice President for External Relations and Auxiliary Services, provided an update on the parking issue on Massachusetts Avenue outside of the Katzen Arts Center. She stated that since AU alerted all vendors, there has been just one ticketed violation by a vendor. AU staff noticed the infraction and called MPD to have the driver ticketed. The vendor was notified of the incident, and gave assurances that parking regulations would be reiterated to their drivers.

Installation of new street light

Linda Argo reported that with regards to the need for an additional streetlight on the southwest crossing of Ward Circle, the university has partnered with Spence Spencer, ANC 3D01 Commissioner, to work with the District's Department of Transportation (DDOT). She said DDOT recently reported that once an invoice is received from Pepco to allow for the use of an existing manhole to connect the streetlight pole, it will be installed.

University Avenue gate

Dan Nichols stated that with regards to the problems with the University Avenue and Fort Gaines gates malfunctioning, it was a problem with the switches, which has been fixed. With regards to complaints of students jumping the gates on University, AU Public Safety has followed up and has concluded that it is not a recurring issue.

DDOT Ward Circle meeting

Linda Argo said that AU has been contacted by DDOT to host a meeting about proposals to change traffic configuration in Ward Circle. The meeting is set for June 17 at 7 p.m. in the School of International Service's Abramson Family Founders Room. She stressed that this is a DDOT meeting and that AU is only the host. She also said that feedback is invited and that DDOT would be contacting the ANCs regarding the meeting. Gail Hanson said that she would put the meeting notice on the CLC listserv. (Note: this meeting has been canceled by DDOT).

Activity and sound on Jacobs field

David Taylor, Chief of Staff to the President, stated said that AU has met recently with Dr. Jessica Herzstein, daughter of the late Bob Herzstein, regarding Jacobs Field. Dr. Herzstein has been brought up to speed regarding the progress made in sound management over the years.

Jessica Herzstein noted that while the meetings have been helpful, she was concerned about noise levels which she said seemed high on some Sundays. She also expressed concern over the types of events that were allowed on the field as part of the most recent zoning order.

Community interest in sexual assault prevention efforts

Gail Hanson stated that Tom Smith and Chuck Elkins had expressed concerns about AU's sexual assault prevention initiatives.

Chuck Elkins said that ~~there are not issues with what the university does when a sexual assault occurs and that~~ he and Tom Smith want to address ~~the narrow issue of~~ whether there is anything the community could do to assist in sexual assault prevention. He said they were especially concerned with violations that may occur in off-campus rental units, and suggests that this might be an opportunity to brainstorm. One suggestion they propose is to allow neighborhood associations and individuals who may know landlords of rental units to suggest language in leases to limit the number of people allowed at parties. He also stated that the community could do a better job of informing each other on what to do about noise- and alcohol-related violations. He also said that he was impressed with AU's "Step-Up" video and campaign.

New Business

Transport of special event guests to the President's residence on Glenbrook Road

Gail Hanson stated that Tom Smith raised an issue about shuttle transportation to the President's house on Glenbrook Road for several AU parent events and end of year events with graduating seniors. She explained that AU uses shuttles six to eight times a year to mitigate pedestrian and vehicular traffic during events at the President's house. She also said that the Special Events staff – who oversee events at the President's house when parents visit at the ~~E~~beginning of the year and during senior class cook-outs – appreciate that it's a residential neighborhood and have given assurances that they are sensitive to the community's needs and expectations. She also noted that the university has never received a complaint from any resident of Glenbook Road, all of whom are given advance notice of such events. When she looked into the matter of bus traffic through residential neighborhoods, she also found that regular shuttle bus drivers have been known to take shortcuts through the neighborhood at the time of shift changes. This practice has been addressed and terminated.

Ideas for campus and community engagement

Gail Hanson shared some initial ideas for neighbor involvement with the campus community including activity showcases during Eagle Summits where neighbors are welcome to staff a table and share community-related information. She also discussed the upcoming "Explore DC" activities for incoming freshmen, where students explore their local neighborhood. She invited interested neighbors to contact Andrew Huff if they would like to participate. She also mentioned that the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church has agreed to co-host with AU a cookout in the fall where neighbors will serve as "honorary grillmasters." She invited the neighbors to consider getting involved.

Nan Wells said that she would suggest discussing Welcome Week as an opportunity for engaging AU students about the history of the Spring Valley neighborhood.

Gail Hanson said that “Explore DC’s” success depends on neighbors’ involvement, and that she and Andrew Huff would follow up on the topic in the future.

Jane Waldmann, of the Tenleytown Historical Society, encouraged everyone to come to the Reno School for an exhibit on June 17.

Linda Argo reminded everyone of the lecture series sponsored by OLLI; the Katzen summer exhibitions; and Neighborhood Movie Night on August 21.

Gail Hanson thanked everyone for attending.

The next meeting of the CLC will take place on Thursday, September 17 at 7 p.m. in Room 200 of the Mary Graydon Center.

Attendees

Community:

Kate Berenson, Neighbor

Chuck Elkins, Neighbor

David Fehrmann, Westover Place Homeowners Association

Mary Ellen Fehrmann, Westover Place Homeowners Association

Jessica Herzstein, Neighbor

Eli Hoffman, D.C. Public Schools

Bill Krebs, Spring Valley/Wesley Heights Citizens Association

Beth Marcus, Sutton Place Condominiums

Elaine Marshall, Greenbrier Condominiums

Alan Pollock, Fort Gaines Citizens Association

Roshini Ponnampерuma, Fort Gaines Citizens Association

Michael Ralston, Greenbrier Condominiums

Jane Waldmann, Tenleytown Historical Society

Nan Wells, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D

American University Staff:

Linda Argo, Assistant Vice President for External Relations & Auxiliary Services

David Dower, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Project Management

Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students

Gail Hanson, Vice President of Campus Life

Hisham Khalid, Office of the General Counsel

Dan Nichols, Executive Director of Risk, Safety, and Transportation Programs