

**American University Neighborhood Liaison Committee Meeting
Bender Library Archives Reading Room
7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2008**

MINUTES

1. Attendance

AU Representatives:

1. Jorge Abud, Assistant VP, Facilities and Administrative Services
2. Jerry Gager, University Architect
3. Walter Labitzky, Director of Facilities, Washington College of Law
4. Mike McNair, Director, Public Safety
5. Anthony Newman, Director of Risk Management & Transportation Services
6. Penny Pagano, Director of Community & Government Relations
7. Maria Pahigiannis, President's Office
8. David Taylor, President's Chief of Staff
9. Sara Waldron, Associate Dean of Students

Neighborhood & Community Representatives:

1. Ellen Berlow (Embassy Park)
2. Mike Bilecky (FGCA)
3. Anthony Byrne (TCNA)
4. Mary Ellen Fehrman (Westover Place)
5. Robert Herzstein (NLC)
6. Lee Minchiello (ANC 3D08 Commissioner)
7. Dennis Paul (Spring Valley)
8. Alan Pollock (FGCA)

2. Handouts & Old Business

Handouts:

- Agenda
- NLC/AU Meeting Summary for 05/29/08
- President Kerwin's Fall Semester Update
- The FAS Visionary (Fall 2008 Newsletter)

Old Business:

Jacobs Field – Turf and Sound Policy

- The turf on Jacobs Field has been replaced with a more natural-looking green turf.
- Mr. Herzstein informed the committee that the sound problems at Jacobs Field have improved somewhat. The bass is still a bit loud. Furthermore, when he has approached AU staff and asked them to turn the volume down, they have done so, but he asked that the staff continue to monitor.

Campus size/Student Enrollment

- Enrollment this fall was steady. More freshmen enrolled this year, but that number was offset by declines in other areas. Total numbers are still well below the 10,600 cap.
- The number of employees on campus also remains basically unchanged from last year.

Email Updates:

- The neighbors found the email update sent before the start of the academic year (mid-August) very helpful. We should continue this practice in future years.
- Neighbors are also interested in receiving the President's quarterly campus updates as well as Public Safety's Crime Alerts.

3. New Business

Campus/Community Crime and Safety:

- Chief McNair reported that there have been a number of incidents around campus between the months of July and September. In particular, there has been a string of sexual assaults that the MPD believes involves the same perpetrator – Public Safety met with MPD's 2nd District Commander and Sex Squad the week of September 15th. Unfortunately, they have not been able to make an arrest as the students/victims have been unable to give a definitive description of the perpetrator.
- In general, there has been a rise in assaults around DC and Montgomery County, but the MPD does not believe they are connected with the crimes in the AU area.
- Chief McNair also provided an overview of the **Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act**, which requires colleges and universities nationwide to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. He also outlined what types of crimes would trigger a crime alert from Public Safety.
 - The Jeanne Clery Act requires: 1) schools to publish an annual report every year by October 1st that contains 3 years worth of campus crime statistics; 2) to disclose crime statistics for the campus, unobstructed public areas immediately adjacent to or running through the campus, and certain non-campus facilities including Greek housing and remote classrooms; and 3) to provide "timely warnings" and a more extensive public crime log.
 - Crime statistics at AU are collected from various campus offices and public agencies including: Office of the Dean of Students, Housing and Dining Programs, Judicial Affairs and Mediation Services, and the Metropolitan Police Department.
 - Crimes are reported in the following 7 major categories: 1) Criminal Homicide (Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter & Negligent manslaughter); 2) Sex Offenses (Forcible Sex Offenses includes rape) & Nonforcible Sex Offenses); 3) Robbery; 4) Aggravated Assault; 5) Burglary; 6) Motor Vehicle Theft; and 7) Arson.
 - The "timely warning" requirement is somewhat subjective and is triggered when the school considers a crime to pose an ongoing "threat to students and employees" while the log records all incidents reported to the campus police or security department.
 - Both AU's daily crime log and annual reports can be found online at <http://www.american.edu/finance/dps/index.html>
- **Suggestions/Comments from neighbors:**
 - The city street lights are not very effective as they are covered by trees. Mary Ellen Fehrman asked if we would work with DC to get the trees in our area trimmed.
 - Alan Pollock informed the group that the MPD has a daily neighborhood crime alert listserve should AU want to join (www.crimereports.com).

4. Facilities

Summer Renovations

- Residence Halls
- Mary Graydon Bridge and Entrance (to be completed by the 2nd week of October)
- Classroom Improvements
- Turf Field replaced
- 4545 42nd St – Repairs to underground parking lot (to be completed by end of calendar year)

Buildings

- No new building acquisitions

Campus Plan

- AU has begun very preliminary/internal discussions and is seeking consultants
- After the adoption of the University's Strategic Plan by the Board of Trustees (hopefully in November 2008), and after the two-year budget plan is adopted, facilities planners will begin talking to campus leaders about their space needs and future plans.
- Late spring/early summer, AU would like to build a mechanism whereby neighbors can provide input/feedback on the campus plan process.
- AU would like as a wide reach as possible, and to begin receiving input from neighbors early on in the process.
- The idea of including some neighbors as part of a campus plan committee was offered.

5. Student Issues

Start of the Academic Year:

- **Freshman Service Experience:** More than 550 AU students participated this year in the Freshman Service Experience, performing community service at 20-30 different sites (schools, non-profits, etc) around DC.
- **Discover DC:** 330 AU students participated in this program to learn more about the various DC neighborhoods and the social and economic issues that they face.
- **Move-in Date:** The move-in date for the returning students was delayed this year in efforts to reduce the number of parties/incidents in the two weeks prior to the start of classes. It seems to have worked well as the number of complaints from neighbors/incidents reported dropped.

Student Houses

- 4485 Sedgwick St. is no longer occupied by AU students.
- There is a new student house, however, across the street from Mr. Pollock's home. So far the communication between the students and neighbors has been good.
- Additionally, students have been asking for more cards to open the gate (the limit is 4 per house). As they have not been able to secure more, they are propping the gate open. AU Public Safety is notified when this happens and they close the gate. However, this issue needs to be addressed.
- 4335 Westover Place – Ms. Fehrman reported to the NLC that this house seems to have more than 6 people living in it and that the composition seems to change every few weeks.

6. Parking & Traffic

- Mr. Newman reported that 280 tickets have been issued so far this year – of these only 24 are second time offenses and 96 of them have been voided.

- Similarly, Mr. Labitzky reported that over 650 tickets have been issued so far this year in the Law School area – a very high percentage of these, however, were first offenses. Additionally, he has noted a huge increase in the number of bicycles and scooters at the Law School.
- Mr. Taylor wanted to follow up once more on the Quebec Street ticketing complaint lodged by ANC Commissioner Smith. He reported that this incident seemed to be an aberration, that is, no clear determination could be made as to why tickets were written and placed on neighbors' cars on that street (which is outside of the normal range of the ticket writers). The individual who wrote those tickets is no longer employed by the university.
- Mr. Newman also informed the group that should neighbors receive tickets they can have the ticket voided by Public Safety, and add their car/license plate added to AU's do-not-ticket database. Furthermore, they can contact Stephen Price (202-885-2448) at should they have specific parking issues. He has been assigned to neighborhood parking issues.
- Ms. Pagano suggested we had signage in the parking "hot spots" to reinforce the AU parking rules.
- Mr. Pollak asked if AU could send public safety officers to the Fort Gaines neighborhood to keep an eye out for vandalism as there has been a recent increase.
- Ms. Fehrman informed Mr. Newman that there have been school buses idling in the back area of the Nebraska lot near Westover Place and asked him to look into it for her as it is bothersome to the neighborhood.
- Ms. Fehrman also asked that we add a sign to the Nebraska lot that indicates that parking is free after 5pm and on the weekends. She has noticed that people still are parking in Westover Place when there are weekend events.
- Lastly, the chain link fence between Ward Circle and Westover Place, by parking space #99, is broken and Ms. Fehrman requests that it be fixed.

7. Army Corps

Hughes Hall:

- Over the summer, the Army Corps removed the soil just north of Hughes Hall as it contained some contaminants/arsenic which was tested some months ago. Clean soil was brought in to restore the area.

4825 and 4835 Glenbrook Road:

- 4825 Glenbrook remains a high probability dig; therefore, they are taking extra precautions and are working inside a metal containment structure.
- The President's residence remains vacant.
- There are no discussions on demolishing either of these properties. Once the Army Corps has completed their work, AU will assess their use.

Public Safety building:

- This is a low probability dig, and will continue at least through end of year.
- The Army Corps has found some lab glassware and a shell canister.

8. Other Business

December Meeting:

- AU would like to have a brief meeting in December followed by a social event for all neighbors at Katzen.
- We could discuss how to set up the campus plan neighborhood input mechanism then.