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(ANC Survey is Live) Neighborhood News, Week Ending October 8

1 message

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Fri, Oct 13, 2023 at 1:52 PM

I held this week's newsletter to announce today ...
ANC 3/4G's Community Center and Library Survey is now live. Take it [here](#).

And to clarify that the ...
DMPED meeting tomorrow (Oct 14) is at the Community Center (not Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church), from 12-4 PM. Register [here](#).

It's time to make your voices heard!

Neighborhood News for ANC Single Member District 02 Week Ending October 8, 2023

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Plus: next bioretention bed clean-up (Sun, 10/15)

The survey. The ANC survey is to obtain neighbors' views (your views) on the salient issues concerning the District's proposed redevelopment of the Chevy Chase Community Center and Library. It has 24 questions, eight (8) demographic questions, (15) substantive questions, one (1) final open-ended question. These cover the initiative overall, priorities for a future site, the notion of declaring part of the current site no longer needed for public purposes, desired amenities for new or renovated Community Center and Library facilities, affordable housing variables (amount, type, levels of affordability), among a few other questions. It should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. **Please take it. And be sure to indicate that you reside in SMD 02.**

Tomorrow's DMPED meeting. DMPED is the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, which is hosting the meeting. Again, **it's now to be from 12-4 PM at the Community Center, not Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church.** It moved due to robust response. At the registration [link](#), you will see a note to take a "survey," which asks if you are participating in person or virtually (if virtually, you will be sent a link). The meeting, part of the District's [OurRFP](#) process, is to hear further from Chevy Chase residents on what we desire for a new Community Center and Library site, now (per DMPED) to incorporate housing, including affordable housing. Our views will help DMPED shape its request for proposals to be issued to developers interested in bidding on the project. There will be much more on the table, however, including no doubt further neighbor views and concerns about declaring part of the site no longer needed for public purposes (i.e., "surplussing") to accommodate affordable housing. The meeting's long; the exact agenda is forthcoming. What DMPED has told me is that representatives from various city agencies (e.g., Department of Parks and Recreation, DC Public Libraries, Office of Planning, et al) will be in attendance (presumably) to brief and take questions. As to the overall DMPED process for the redevelopment and where we are now, see below.

Wednesday's follow-up DMPED session. DMPED has scheduled another all-resident engagement session for Wednesday, October 18 from 6-8 PM, also at the Community Center. Separate registration is required – click [here](#). This second meeting, per DMPED, “will review themes from the first meeting and begin drafting the OurRFP language.” Ambitious.

What the District's proposed redevelopment is about: further background

The following I've shared in part before but wanted to replay here as relevant context for the survey and DMPED meetings.

Who's proposing what?

Taking it from the top ... The District is proposing to redevelop the Chevy Chase Community Center and Library site to construct new facilities and incorporate housing, including affordable housing. The site is the 1.68-acre, 74,000-square foot lot on the 5600 block of Connecticut Avenue, NW, bordered on the south by McKinley St and the north by Northampton St. The Community Center and Library were both built in 1968 and, in the view of many, in need of updating for some time.

What does “affordable housing” mean? Housing is considered affordable when the total cost does not exceed 30% of one's income. The Chevy Chase Community Center and Library site would have at least 30% “dedicated affordable housing,” meaning housing restricted to defined income levels. The levels are set as a percentage of Median Family Income and range from less than 30% to up to 80% of MFI. MFI in the DC area is \$152,100 for a family of four and \$106,400 for a single-person household.

How did affordable housing emerge as an issue in Chevy Chase? In 2018, following a task force review and community survey, ANC 3/4G issued a report with [recommendations](#) for modernization of the Chevy Chase Community Center, leading to a detailed [design concept](#) produced by the District. Affordable housing was not mentioned at the time. Two years later, in 2020, ANC 3/4G [proposed revisions](#) to the District's [Comprehensive Plan](#) (Comp Plan), calling for a “Small Area Plan” for Chevy Chase to redevelop not just the Community Center but all of upper Connecticut Avenue from Livingston Street to Chevy Chase Circle. This time, the ANC recommended affordable housing.

What's driving the housing priority and focus on the Community Center and Library? The transition from the 2018 recommendations to the 2020 proposal aligned with revisions made to the Comp Plan. The Comp Plan is DC's development blueprint. It focuses on advancing inclusivity District-wide. Affordable housing is a key strategy. Based on the ANC's 2020 recommendation and with its further support, DC's Office of Planning (OP) developed the [Chevy Chase Small Area Plan](#) (CCSAP). The DC Council approved it In July 2022. It seeks to implement the objectives of the Comp Plan in our neighborhood. Considering Chevy Chase as one of the least diverse neighborhoods in the District, the CCSAP seeks to foster social and racial equity, also through affordable housing. It prioritizes the Community Center and Library site for redevelopment because it is District-owned property.

What do we know about the District's plans? What we know thus far is limited to OP's [proposed new zoning](#) for the Community Center and Library site. It would allow an 80' building or 60% lot coverage, although not both (due to floor area ratio restrictions). We do not yet know what any new building might look like. Building configurations will vary by developer proposals in response to the DMPED's request for proposals.

Where are we in the process? Since January of this year (2023), redevelopment efforts by the city have accelerated under the auspices of OP and DMPED. OP is handling the proposed new zoning; DMPED is managing the project. DMPED held its first community engagement meeting in January to solicit citizen input. It followed this with its own [survey](#) in February and March to assess community preferences for new Community Center and Library facilities. However, ANC resolutions (see below) and community response (outcry) moved the District to redouble efforts to consult with the community – hence, the OurRFP process and the October 14 and 18 meetings. Attached is the slide deck from when DMPED last briefed the ANC, on July 24. The deck details the process, project timeline, actions thus far, etc.

What have been the ANC's positions to date? The ANC has passed **three resolutions this year** regarding the proposed redevelopment. **The first, at the January 23 meeting**, stated the following: "Whether the ANC would ever be in a position to support surplussing remains to be seen, but support of surplussing cannot even be considered unless and until DMPED works with the Commission to develop and execute a substantial community engagement process that gives residents the opportunity to offer suggestions and site priorities prior to a surplussing decision and issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP)." **The second, at the May 8 meeting**, affirmed "the community and the ANC must be full partners with the District in development of the request for proposal for the Civic Core and in changing the zoning of the upper Connecticut Avenue corridor." **The third, at the July 24 meeting**, called on the District for "clarity about the institutional needs for the future library, community center, and outdoor space—as DMPED, OP, DPR, and DCPL currently understand them—before advancing future zoning options at the Civic Core. And it urged District agencies (notably, OP and DMPED) "to receive the ANC's community survey, due to be completed in the Fall of 2023, before advancing in the zoning process."

So, here we are.

The next bioretention bed clean-up will be this Sunday (Oct 15), starting at 10. The date had been tomorrow (Saturday) but has shifted one day to avoid a conflict with the DMPED meeting and to avoid tomorrow's forecasted rain. **The meet-up spot is Northampton and 27th St.** The bioretention brigade (our committed crew of neighbors) welcomes additional volunteers. Please email Jane Sherman (janetillinghastsherman@gmail.com) if you can lend a hand. I'll be there with pastries (or donuts) and coffee.

Finally, [here's](#) last week's newsletter from the office of our Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George.

As always, be in touch with any comments, questions, or requests for service.

Best, Bruce

Bruce Sherman

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner

ANC 3/4G Single Member District 02

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 **Chevy Chase Civic Site - OurRFP Discussion PPT - 230724.pdf**
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