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Neighborhood News, Week Ending May 21

1 message

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Mon, May 22, 2023 at 12:03 AM

Councilmember Janeese Lewis George visits the neighborhood Wednesday, May 24, 4:30-5:30 PM

The visit is part of the CM's [Care Days](#) initiative.

She and I will be knocking on doors and engaging folks.

Please email me if you wish us to stop by to address a specific concern.

ANC 3/4G meets Monday, May 22, 7:00-8:45 PM at the Chevy Chase Community Center and on [Zoom](#)

[Agenda](#) includes: WMATA Better Bus Draft Visionary Network and proposed M4 bus route changes, Capital Bikeshare in ANC 3/4G, DC Smart Street Lighting Project

For the ANC meeting:

- **Better Bus proposes changes to the M4.** Better Bus is Metro's initiative to improve service for the region, the first redesign in 50 years. The M4 would become DC 201. The new route would mimic the current M4 on the northern end at Knollwood; then go straight down Nebraska Ave past Deal, Jackson-Reed, Tenleytown, and AU; turn onto New Mexico Ave towards Georgetown to M St; then head east to GWU and Foggy Bottom. Service would be every 15-30 minutes. **Issues:** (1) It will be slow-going through Georgetown, Foggy Bottom, and the West End. **A 30-minute interval is too long; 20 minutes should be the maximum. And extra buses are critical during the morning rush.** (2) DC 201 and DC 200 and DC 203 (E4 replacements) would cross at Military and Nebraska. **The new proposed transfer point needs careful planning; it's a dangerous intersection for pedestrians.** (*Many thanks to neighbor Cynthia Collier for her analysis of the new bus routes and recommendations.*)
- **How many Capital Bikeshare stations should we have in ANC 3/4G?** We only have two now, at Safeway and Broad Branch Market, for 14,000 ANC residents. Two more are on the way, one at Utah and Tennyson as part of the slip lane project, and another at the future Maret-ECC athletic field. The Capital Bikeshare Station Request Tool shows where new stations are being considered city-wide. Residents can suggest locations there and submit feedback to the ANC.
- **The DC Smart Street Lighting Project is coming to the neighborhood.** Approved by the DC Council last February, the project will convert 75,000+ street and alley lights to energy-efficient LED technology with remote monitoring and control capabilities. LEDs better direct light onto roads and sidewalks while reducing energy consumption by 50%. The project will also extend Wi-Fi coverage in underserved neighborhoods. **Installation in Wards 3 and 4 is projected through Q4 2023 but could begin as soon as 45 days.** We'll hear details at the meeting.

News of the week:

- **Neighborhood crime was again in focus – the ANC convened a special meeting on public safety on May 15 in response to community concerns.** MPD, Second District Commander John Branch and Lt Marlon Ollivierre briefed as did Deputy Attorney General for Public Safety Elizabeth Weiser. Some 25 neighbors attended in person and on Zoom, many voiced concerns (especially about recent gang shoplifting), and asked questions. **Local crime (PSA 201) has risen 28% year over year** due largely to increased thefts (from autos, of autos, from stores). **Violent crime remains**

low – five cases this year compared to four last year at this time. **Here's the complete picture of crime in our neighborhood compared to the situation city-wide.** MPD's on the case, analyzing connections among recent thefts, hopeful of arrests soon. **What can we do?** Stay vigilant, leave nothing in our vehicles, report all crimes, provide evidence, and install video-enabled doorbells (with support from [DC's rebate program](#)). **Still, it only takes a carjacking**, such as Wednesday's on Jocelyn St, **to ignite community concern** and renew calls for MPD to do more, including reporting crime data faster and more broadly (although official reports will always lag spontaneous social media posts).

- **Neighbor concerns regarding oversized residential construction continue unabated.** Nearly 40 residents joined the May 16 Zoom discussion, the second in six weeks on the topic (recording at <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Z1TwKgQuvpmBGR54vJGb4hEhyb7J5mXwpJ4oB3pQikMdwvXDUhbj3hm8RW0iWkk.zBgcVHkxqHHjXO5>, passcode: p7.Am+%3). This time fellow Commissioner Michael Zeldin participated along with local real estate agents, developers, and architects to assess how neighbors can control outsized construction. Taiwo Demuren, developer of the 6116 and 6118 30th St and 6008 34th PI properties, and his architect described their projects and took questions. Professional opinion remains that by-right development according to code leaves little room for citizen input. Yet the experts counseled tracking property transactions and permit applications to intervene with developers, reinstating broader neighbor notification, and considering historic neighborhood designation. At the same time, questions persist about 30th St code violations and the original Zoning Commission decision deeming both lots (one non-conforming) buildable as well as the permitted demolition than now resembles a raze at 34th PI. We've further engaged DOB (Department of Buildings), which has ordered a new inspection of 34th PI, as well as the Mayor's office. Meanwhile, neighbor and professional architect Claudia Russell has reassessed the builds at 30th St relative to the approved plans. New queries will go to DOB, and up the ladder, as needed.
- **Maret School has completed transplanting the heritage trees at the Episcopal Center for Children property.** This follows the removal of 66 other trees. School representatives reported at a meeting of the ANC's Maret Field Project Task Force on May 17 that the development is now entering a budgeting and planning phase, from now until July, when there will be little observable change at the site. Meanwhile, **Friends of the Field (FoF) has filed a motion at the Board of Zoning Adjustment to stay Maret's construction of the playing fields.**
- **The Wilson Aquatic Center is still closed for repairs.** Various neighbors have inquired. The problem remains excessive humidity, creating unsafe conditions. The culprit is the failed HVAC system. Replacing it is still a work in progress.

Announcements:

- **Tennis?** [Sign up](#) for kid and adult camps this summer at Lafayette-Pointer Park.
- **Feed the hungry.** [NW Community Food](#) in Van Ness prioritizes donations weekly.
- **Help the elderly.** Northwest Neighbors Village is seeking volunteers to aid the elderly with transportation, shopping, technology, etc. Learn more and sign up. Next orientation is May 31, 1:30-3:00 PM, on Zoom. (Neighbors Frances Mahncke at Knollwood and Janean Mann on Tennyson are NNV founders and former officers; Sam Smith on Nebraska is current treasurer.

CM Lewis George's weekly newsletter is here: <https://janeeseward4.com/ward-4-dispatch-big-budget-news-responding-to-tragedy-and-chevy-chase-care-day/>.

As always, please email me with any questions, comments, or requests for service.

Best, Bruce

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