



Jane Sherman <janetillinghastsherman@gmail.com>

Neighborhood News (plus a new survey), Week Ending September 17

1 message

Sherman, Bruce (SMD 3G02) <3G02@anc.dc.gov>
 To: "Sherman, Bruce (SMD 3G02)" <3G02@anc.dc.gov>

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Streetlight survey results are in – 52% say the brightness of the new lights is just right. Details below. Haven't weighed in yet? Do so here.

Now, voice your opinion on bioretention beds, as the District proposes installing more in the neighborhood. Take the new flash [survey](#).

Neighborhood News for ANC Single Member District 02 Week Ending September 17, 2023

ANC explained (for newcomers)
Bikeshare stations resolved
Streetlights survey results in
More green infrastructure planned
Neighbors digging in – more volunteers welcome
Plus: Military Road repairs starting September 20,
 Chevy Chase Day Sept 23, Upcoming Lafayette HSA activities,
 Northwest Neighbors Village volunteer opportunities

- **What's the ANC?** It's a question I get with every neighborhood newcomer I meet – and there have been lots recently – and even from folks who've been around a while. Here's the short take ...

The ANC's a non-partisan, neighborhood body of locally elected representatives ("Commissioners") whose main job is to be the community's voice. That means giving you a say before District (and federal) government on matters affecting the neighborhood: zoning, streets, recreation, education, social services, sanitation, planning, safety, budget, health services, etc.

There are 46 ANCs city-wide and 345 Commissioners. Each ANC area is subdivided into Single Member Districts. Our ANC (3/4G) has seven SMDs. Each SMD has about 2,000 people. We actually have 2300+ residents in our SMD (02). Don't know our territory? Scope out our map.

District agencies must give ANC recommendations "great weight." Also, agencies must give neighborhoods 30 days' notice before taking any significant action.

Commissioners are also the first line of engagement with neighbors to address issues with delivery and quality of District services. Read more about ANCs [here](#).

With that reprise, what *is* going on at the ANC and in the neighborhood?

- **Bikeshare stations will be going in at Nebraska and Utah and Nebraska and Oregon in 2024.** The ANC passed a resolution at the [September 11 meeting](#) endorsing the city's plans. Accommodating neighbor concerns, the station at Nebraska and Utah will be as far from the intersection as possible, and the one at Nebraska and Oregon will be on the north side of Nebraska not on Oregon as originally planned. On further constituent input, I inserted language in the resolution

asking DDOT (District Department of Transportation) to review the locations after a reasonable period to assess performance and suitability (basically, are they working out as planned?)

- **New streetlights are on and your views have come in.** Our streetlights survey has two questions: (1) "Have you noticed the new streetlights?" and (2) "How do you find the brightness?" Forty-six (46) people have responded thus far, and forty (40) have answered the brightness question. **Of these, 52% (21) say the brightness of the new lights is just right;** 22% (9) say the lights are bright; and 25% (10) say they are too bright. No one has said they are dim or too dim (the other response categories).

Do we have a problem, then? Well, yes, but perhaps not a systemic problem. The lights are adjustable. **You can ask the city to dial down the brightness if the light next to your house is too bright.** Go to DC 311 and file a "streetlight repair investigation," and in the space for additional information, request an adjustment. If you have any problems, contact me.

Again, if you haven't yet taken the streetlights survey, you still can – here. And please do!

- **The next city project for our neighborhood is more green infrastructure.** As reported last week, bioretention beds (aka rain gardens) are in the works for the intersection of Nebraska and Utah – one on the east side of Utah just north of Nebraska, the other on the south side of Nebraska just east of Utah. See the attached site illustration.

The planned beds are part of DDOT's green infrastructure initiative, not just for our neighborhood but across Chevy Chase (scores of [locations](#) are in play). The beds implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs). Over time, pavement on streets has contributed to excess stormwater runoff and increased levels of pollutants in the City's waterways. Green Infrastructure reduces this stormwater runoff and improves water quality. Beyond water management, the beds help reduce heat effects and aid in traffic calming.

What's the issue? There's a tradeoff. **New beds would eliminate some parking** – ten spaces in total along Nebraska and Utah. The loss would occur as ECC (Episcopal Center for Children), located at Nebraska and Utah, begins its after-school program in the coming weeks and then its therapeutic program in 2024, and the Maret athletic fields also come online in 2024. The result could be parking forced in front of neighbors' houses – despite the 50-car on-site parking lot at the fields. **Maintenance is also an issue,** and a big one, especially for residents who live close to existing beds. Many are wildly overgrown. Some block traffic views. Others have drainage issues.

I've already explained the situation to DDOT project engineer Eric Schwartz. But you might want to speak with him directly and ask your questions. **Please join our neighborhood Zoom call on Thursday, September 21 from 3:00-3:30 PM.** (I'll record it for those who can't participate.)

Meanwhile, what's your view? Do we want more of the beds in the neighborhood? Please take our survey.

- **Neighbors to the maintenance rescue.** Various neighbors have already dug in to weed and clean up some of the bioretention beds in our area, as noted in previous newsletters. To its credit, DOEE (Department of Energy and Environment), which is responsible for the maintenance, has accepted our proposal for more of us to lend a hand.

Neighbor and certified Weed Warrior John Burwell will lead a team to include Marissa Martino, Jim Fasules, and Jane Sherman (my wife), among others. DOEE will be providing additional plants for six of the neighborhood beds. **Planting is currently scheduled for October 25.** The team will be preparing the designated beds for planting, and to carry out some routine maintenance on other beds in the neighborhood.

There are three scheduled meetings before the planting date: Sunday, September 24, 2 PM at 29th Street and Tennyson; Saturday, October 14, 1 PM at Northampton and Moreland; and Saturday, October 21, 10 AM at 29th and Stephenson. If you have work gloves, please bring them (the team will have some extras as well). Each session should last about an hour. **Please email Jane**

(janetillinghastsherman@gmail.com) if you plan to attend. She'll be in touch with any changes due to weather.

Announcements

- **The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is scheduled to begin roadway repairs including concrete repairs, milling, and paving on Military Rd NW from Nebraska Ave NW to Oregon Ave NW starting on or about Wednesday, September 20, 2023, weather permitting.** The roadway project is anticipated to be completed by Friday, October 27, 2023. Temporary lane closures are to be expected with one travel lane remaining open. The contractor is authorized to work Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and Saturdays (daytime) with prior DDOT approval.
- **Chevy Chase Day is this Saturday, September 23, from 1-4PM.** This is the big neighborhood celebration of the year. There'll be music, art, yoga, dance, etc, for adults and face-painting, balloon-twisting, a juggler, a caricature artist, a bouncy house, and free ice cream and cupcakes for the kids. Councilmembers Matt Frumin and Janeese Lewis George will be in attendance. Mayor Bowser will speak at 2PM. The full schedule is at the websites of the co-organizers, [Chevy Chase Main Street](#) and the [Chevy Chase Community Association](#).
- **Northwest Neighbors Village (NNV) will host its next virtual volunteer orientation on Thursday, September 29 from 10:30 AM-12:00 PM.** Volunteering is a great way to help older adults to thrive as they age in our community. Volunteers provide transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping assistance, simple home repairs, and computer and technology assistance. Details available [here](#).
- **The Home School Association at Lafayette Elementary School will host several community events in the coming weeks. Outdoor Movie Night will be Saturday, September 30, 7:15-9:15 PM** on the baseball diamond. The Fall Festival will be Saturday, October 28, 1-4PM with games, inflatables, and food trucks at the school playground.

Finally, [here's](#) the weekly 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 02
202-798-1420

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