

July 12, 2021



**Chevy Chase Small Area Plan – Community Advisory Committee
Meeting #5 Notes: Wednesday, July 7, 2021 5:30-7:00pm**

Community Advisory Committee Attendees:

- Anthony Catalino, Office of Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh
- Commissioner Connie Chang, ANC 3/4G SMD05
- Commissioner Peter Gosselin, ANC 3/4G SMD06
- Robert Gordon, Chevy Chase Citizens Association
- Jerry Malitz, Chevy Chase Main Street Strategic Council
- Peter Lynch, Chevy Chase resident
- Nancy Slade, Friends of Chevy Chase Circle
- Renee Turner-Inman, Hawthorne resident
- Carl Lankowski, Historic Chevy Chase DC
- Steve Altman, Northwest Neighbors Village
- Ellen McCarthy, Ward 3 Vision
- Jamie Butler, WIN Ward 3 Congregations Affordable Housing Work Group

Absent:

- Aakash Thakkar, Chevy Chase resident
- Karin Perkins, Ward 3 Ednet
- Sara Swetzoff, Ward 3 Mutual Aid Network

DC Government Representatives:

- Erkin Ozberk, DC Office of Planning

Agenda:

1. Welcome & Introductions (5 minutes – led by Erkin Ozberk)

2. Updates from CAC Members (30 minutes)

- ANC Engagement Activities (per April 26 resolution)

Commissioner Chang discussed four topics that the ANC would like to cover as informational exchanges:

1. The process/steps for turning the Community Center / Library into a unified campus?
2. The regulatory techniques to buffer and transition between existing homes and future redevelopment along the corridor.
3. Personal stories of people in Chevy Chase of diverse lived experiences in terms of what they like or find challenging about the neighborhood etc.
4. Zoning 101 with a focus on the commercial corridor.

Commissioner Gosselin shared an update on a community forum that the ANC is working to develop and host in September, with ongoing support from OP and their consultant LINK Strategic Partners.

- Washington Interfaith Network Ward 3 Congregations Affordable Housing Working Group

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Jamie shared that WIN is organizing a meeting on July 21 from 6pm to 7pm hosting Dr. Brian McClure who heads up the Council Office of Racial Equity to discuss how they are considering planning legislation coming to Council.

- Historic Chevy Chase DC

Carl shared an update on the renaming of the Newlands Fountain, which was named by an act of congress. NPS has been running a Committee has been developing wayfinding signs to contextualize the history of the fountain (which is now on).

- Chevy Chase Civic Association's Chevy Chase Day

Robert shared that Chevy Chase Day will be held on Sept 18 from 1pm to 4pm at the Community Center / Library (rain date is Sept 25). The event will host a Zydeco band, magician, juggler, puppet show, chalk art, CH/ART will do an art show, and rigs/trucks from MPD and FD will be in the parking lot. The typical turn-out is 1,000 to 1,500 people participating. Robert suggested the CAC to be involved in the event to furthers the planning process. Cmr. Chang suggested including DC Health to distribute vaccines. Robert suggested a big poster showing the corridor. Erkin indicated that OP plans to have a table at the event to share plan updates and encourage participation in September design activities.

- Jerry mentioned the Brittany apartment building on Connecticut Avenue was sold for \$17 million.

3. Northwest Neighbors Village Age-Friendly Design Suggestions and Survey Responses (30 minutes – Steve Altman)

Steve shared Age-Friendly Design suggestions for the Small Area Plan as well as responses from the Northwest Neighbors Village (NNV) survey of Chevy Chase DC residents over 60, which generated over 80 responses and lots of comments.

Ward 3 has the highest percentage and highest number of people over 60 in DC. Five senior living facilities within about a mile of the SAP area. Chevy Chase is a good area of seniors and for all people, but there are some issues and areas to improve.

Steve categorized the survey responses as “Four S’s”: Shops, Services, Socialization and Safety.

Shops – DC Office of Aging has an age-friendly business checklist. NNV is working with the Main Street to get the businesses to qualify through this formal certification.

Services – urgent care facility identified as something folks are interested in seeing potentially in the area.

Socialization – Incredibly important for an aging community. All services/functions of NNV are “social events” because they involve human interaction and connection.

Safety – Walking is principle activity of seniors. Seemingly a good walking/jogging environment but lots of comments.

Steve went on to share several specific comments from respondents:

- People valued what is there today, and implored “Don’t screw it up.”
- Recognizing opportunity for housing, but also physical nature of structures (indoor/outdoor) for programming.
- People wanting social gathering space and also more benches (social seating area).
- Senior citizens don’t like to share the sidewalk with bicycles, so they need dedicated space (bike lanes).
- Crosswalk timing. Bus service reduction. Parking both at home and at commercial destinations.
- Perceptions of safety are increased by presence of police.
- Concept of multi-generational housing (Colorado matching system).

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- Technology – not all people are able to look up an address on their smart phone and need physical wayfinding and signage to help orient to the commercial area.
- Many people have identified the need for access to public toilet, not always convenient to ask at a restaurant etc.

Steve is still working through how best to summarize and formally share the survey responses to support the work of the CAC and Small Area Plan.

Everyone commended Steve for his efforts and thanked him for sharing. Jerry commented that respondents to surveys like these are self-selecting individuals and while they shouldn't be considered statistically representative groups, they are important for understanding what people think, want, and experience.

4. Recap of Visioning Workshops and Survey with overview of responses (20 minutes – Erkin Ozberk)

Erkin provided a recap of the community engagement on the SAP since the March 4 Kick-Off, focusing on the Visioning Workshops and Survey in May and June. Initial outcomes from these activities were shared as they will inform the Small Area Plan's vision and goals. A more refined version of the presentation provided (slides below) will be shared at ANC 3/4G's meeting on July 26.

Robert asked why there was mention of exploring housing opportunities off of Connecticut Avenue if the issue of gentle density on the residential side streets had been "put to bed." Erkin responded that the report-out reflects what was shared by workshop and survey participants, despite clear communication that 2+ unit homes in the areas zoned for single family homes within the SAP area would not be consistent with the recently updated Comprehensive Plan.

Cmr. Chang asked about the plan's existing conditions report as well as visioning survey/workshop report. Erkin indicated that a market report on residential and commercial property was being finalized for release later in the summer, to complement similar work that the Main Street is developing on the retail market. The visioning workshop/survey report would be completed by end of July to align with the ANC presentation and we welcome feedback from CAC members based on what was presented.

5. Next Steps / Action Items / Other (5 minutes)

Jul 14 OP to meet with Garfield Condo residents about Small Area Plan

Jul 26 OP to present overview of Visioning Phase and SAP Next Steps to ANC



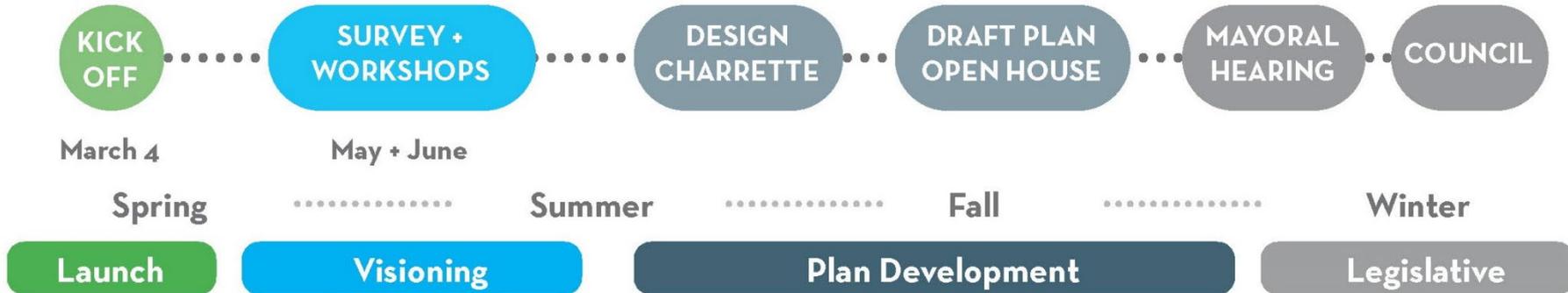
Chevy Chase Small Area Plan

Community Advisory Committee Meeting #5 – July 7, 2021



The Chevy Chase Small Area Plan kicked-off publicly on March 4 and we're closing out the Visioning Phase this summer.

We are here!





The Project Team and Community Advisory Committee have been busy developing and implementing the Small Area Plan's community engagement strategy.

- **March 4** Kick-Off Meeting (~300)
- **April 7 and 8** Virtual Office Hours (~24)
- **April 12 and 20** ANC Q+A sessions with OP Dir. Andrew Trueblood (~100)
- **April 27 to June 22** six CAC partner events focusing on housing, neighborhood history and the planning process. (100+)
- **May 15 and June 12** pop-up at Chevy Chase Farmer's Market and Lafayette Pointer Park Celebration (~100)



PDFs and videos are posted under “Past Events” at: publicinput.com/chevychase

Visioning Workshops held virtually on June 5, 8, 9, and 10 brought together community participants to discuss future change.



- **Around 80 community participants** attended one of four two-hour sessions held online at different times/days. Tuesday evening (6/8) and Wednesday mid-day (6/9) had highest attendance.
- Main room facilitated by LINK Strategic Partners using the Zoom platform. Break-out rooms of four-five participants were co-facilitated by OP Staff (10) and CAC members (10) using the Mural whiteboard tool.
- Six questions led the break-out room discussions focused on participants' values, concerns, and thoughts about inclusive change in the neighborhood.
- Facilitators observed a diversity of participants and perspectives in the groups, with many familiar faces/names and some newcomers to local public processes.

What is one of your favorite experiences in Chevy Chase?

walkability	The Avon Art	Library
Restaurants		

How has Chevy Chase changed?

What is a challenge facing Chevy Chase?

What does equity mean to you?

The Framework element of this Comprehensive Plan will help us make the most of our location and resources. It will help us make the most of our location and resources. It will help us make the most of our location and resources.

How can buildings and public space play a role in advancing equity in Chevy Chase?

What would make Connecticut Avenue a more inviting and accessible place to shop, work, and socialize?

CCOP
Chevy Chase Small Area Plan Boundary
Land Use Change Area
Chevy Chase Community Center & Library



Input from the Visioning Workshop discussions coalesced around five main themes, each articulated by what people value, are concerned about, and would like to see change.

1. Social and cultural character

- Value friendly neighborhood, access to Library /Community Center and farmers market, participating in recurring community events, increased awareness of neighborhood history
- Concerned about a lack of income and racial diversity, ongoing school overcrowding, need for functional gathering places
- Would like to see increased diversity (racial, socioeconomic, and age), fair access to education, jobs, and housing, Chevy Chase being part of change to accommodate growth and inclusivity

2. Physical neighborhood character

- Value “small-town” feel, mixed architectural styles, historic character, greenery and tree lined streets
- Concerned about houses getting larger, potential loss of green space, and compatibility of new development scale.
- Would like to see preserved historic character and buildings, exploring opportunities for more housing beyond commercial corridor, orienting buildings towards Connecticut Ave, activation and programming of public space, underground parking in new development, re-envisioning the Avenue as a gateway, more trees and tree boxes with bioswales



3. Housing

- Concerned about a lack of affordable housing, financial challenges to creating affordable housing
- Would like to see people living near workplaces, increasing housing choice, moving away from exclusionary housing practices, more equitable distribution of affordable housing across neighborhoods and the District, accommodate significant affordable housing on library and community center site, higher density along Conn. Ave to accommodate more housing/affordable housing, development on east and west side of Conn. Ave should be treated differently

4. Retail and services

- Value the Avalon as a historic asset, the mix of unique small independent businesses, access to amenities and services.
- Concerned about market changes might affect small businesses, a lack of minority and black-owned businesses, need for functional gathering spaces.
- Would like to see local small businesses preserved, meeting / community space integrated in library and community center redevelopment, increasing access to amenities and services, more activity along northern most blocks on Conn. Ave, varied and creative retail options, specialty retail such as bakery, coffee shop, bookstore explore creative use of WMATA property, increase sidewalk cafes, preserve historic/pedestrian scale of retail.



5. Mobility

- Value the walkability of neighborhood and wide sidewalks.
- Concerned about pedestrian safety, a lack of bike lanes and bike parking, reduction in bus service, constrained access to parking.
- Would like to see improved pedestrian safety on and across Connecticut Ave, improved pedestrian access at Chevy Chase Circle, improving transit options, incorporating traffic calming measures along Conn. Ave such as bike lanes, support for multi-modal transportation

The online Visioning Survey open May 14 - June 24 garnered substantial input from over 500 community participants.



- **568 community participants** responded to the survey.
 - The overwhelming majority (**95%**) live nearby to Connecticut Ave.
 - **Over two-thirds** have lived/worked/shopped locally for over 10 years.
 - **80% white, 40% adults under 50 years old, 60% female.**
- **20 questions**, mostly multiple choice. Half were self-identifying questions.
- **1,693 written comments.**
- Responses reinforced the Workshop themes, providing richer detail and participant information.
 - Personal experiences raising families, attending Halloween parade, shopping at stores...
 - Desired levels of housing affordability (% MFI)
 - Specific types of public space improvements and transportation issues/opportunities
 - Desired retail amenities that may be lacking today
 - Meanwhile, differences on opinion on the need for change (physical, commercial, residential).

Upcoming SAP activities include refining and sharing the draft SAP Vision and Goals that will inform the Design Charrette and Plan Development.



- Jul 14 OP to meet with Garfield Condo residents about the Small Area Plan
- Jul 26 OP to present overview of Visioning Phase and SAP Next Steps to ANC
- Sep Community Walk and Design Charrette