

LeDroit Park Civic Association

Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2021

*Meeting conducted virtually via Zoom.

Board Present:

President - Elliot Seibert

Treasurer - Danielle Lopez-Lezama

Secretary - Becky Reina

Parliamentarian – Richard Myers

Motions:

Motion to approve North Capitol Safety letter

- See discussion and letter text below
- Motion passes: 8 yays, 1 nay, 1 abstention
- Conducted via chat feature in Zoom and verbally for participants calling in via phone.

Announcements:

Future LeDroit Park Civic Association Meetings – February’s virtual meeting will take place on February 23rd, 7-8 PM.

Agenda:

Safety Report and Update – *Captain David Augustine (david.augustine@dc.gov)*

2 shootings: Tuesday 12/8 juvenile; and juvenile on 12/10, have a vehicle that MPD believes was involved in the shooting and they are turning that into forensics for potential leads.

Continue to have auto thefts; please turn your car off and take the keys with you. One of the shootings involved a vehicle that was stolen just a few hours before.

Arrested 8 people nearby - simple assaults, guns taken by MPD. On 1/6/21 unarmed carjacking, arrests made. Sometimes cars are stolen outside of DC and used in crimes within the city.

Siebert asks about burglary in 300 block of U St NW; no one home so only a property crime. Burglary in 1900 block of 6th street; Captain Augustine believes that was entry through an unlocked window; please be mindful of window and door locking.

ANC Commissioner Larry Handerhan, brings up tomorrow's safety call. He will recirculate dial in.

Captain Augustine was at riot at the Capitol on 1/6/21 and stresses how well MPD served that day. Matt Fey suggests maybe LPCA should do something to thank MPD.

ANC Commissioner Report – Larry Handerhan, ANC 1B01 Commissioner

Introduction of Larry, who is LPCA Membership Chair. Has lived in DC most of adult life. Was at DC Human Services until a week ago to start a federal job.

1B01@anc.dc.gov

C: 202-599-4930

Lots of development coming to the area, so things to keep our eyes on.

Josephine Chu of Common Good City Farm

Pop up farm market on Sunday 2/7/21 from 12-3pm. Farm Market Pre-orders:

<https://forms.gle/Wm42PU3cfFFfAgTc7>

LEAF programming is offering pick up projects at farmers market. LEAF Meal Kit Pre-orders:

<https://forms.gle/7PvSyMwwsgHabGG26>

Opened up CSA program for full and half. Register for CSA: <https://2021csa.eventbrite.com>

2021 Home Apothecary Program, see additional details and register:

<https://2021herbalism.eventbrite.com>

Josephine Chu, josephine@commongoodcityfarm.org

Callbox Art Proposal – *Aiyana Adams, LeDroit Park resident and artist*

Born in DC but moved to 300 block of T St NW a year ago. Proposal to paint the call box on the corner of 3rd and T Sts NW. Call boxes were installed in the city for fire (1860s) and police (1880s). This one is a police box.

DDOT painted the boxes years ago to prime them for decoration by artists. Some were painted, many were not. Aiyana would like to paint the box using historical colors of police boxes and including coy fish with a nod to a Chinese fable about perseverance.

Elliot asks with a chat question from Betsy McDaniel about lead and Aiyana says if it's there it's encapsulated and she will be careful not to disturb it.

Motion to approve resolution letter for painting by Matt Fay, seconded by Richard Myers.

Motion passes: 9 yays, 1 abstention.

2014/2016 2nd St NW Construction Update – *Sam Medvene, Century 21 Redwood Realty*

Developer of 2014 and 2016 2nd St NW. 4 condos, 2 in each building. Same footprint, similar architectural facade. Project is somewhat larger than anticipated due to condition of the original buildings. All 4 units are 2 bedroom, 2 bath.

Tree in rear lot of 2018 2nd St NW, not on these properties, so the tree will be untouched.

Projected completion of late summer 2021.

Questions from David Lasker who is with Friends of the Park. Clarifies that they are building on same footprint of previous buildings and just adding a 3rd story, no extension.

The company is just Sam and his brother, so they are closely involved. David passes along concern from a board member of Friends of the Park. Sam confirms that they will be careful and explains that they often lean pallets against the tree for the purpose of protecting the tree.

Aaron, a nearby resident, asks about whether they have added parking. Sam says they explored adding a curb cut for front yard parking, but that wasn't permitted, so it will be street parking.

SamMedveneRealtor@gmail.com / (703) 314-5833

Howard University Campus Entitlement Plan Update – Derrek Niec-Williams, Howard University

Elliot provides context that HU joined the LPCA November meeting to introduce the new campus plan. Folks largely liked the changes, but there were some concerns about losing greenspace around the new hospital site and ambulance access.

Special committee on this of:xxxx

Had been a time crunch but HU has pushed back it's committee approval to April 5th, case number is 20-08

Niec-Williams quickly goes through the whole campus plan for review. (See more detailed notes from our November meeting.)

Current historic district is the heart of campus which are designated historic landmarks. HU wants to expand to a larger historic district to include buildings through 1960s (as reflecting important historical changes in the university such as first black HU president and campus architect). Will come back when HU is applying to HPRB to ask for LPCA blessing of the historic district.

Note that Howard Hospital parking is separate from the HU parking. HU is attempting to reduce parking as pushed by the city (and replace surface parking with structure parking under buildings as much as possible), but hospital parking is considered essential to hospital operation.

Focus on the hospital relocation: DDOT agreed that the streets around the hospital can become 2-way streets on both Bryant and W.

Current surface parking lot along 4th street, would be cut down to only ADA compliant parking, to create more park and green space along 4th St.

Excitement about VP Kamala Harris, HU alumna, now in the White House.

Q that is the new Art building larger than current, because many universities are cutting art funding lieu of STEM. Niece-Williams say the new building is indeed larger.

Even after new hospital is built, the structured garages between 4th and 5th Streets will be used and the new hospital will have additional underground parking.

Q about whether the campus will be more walled off, referencing the recent dog walking saga. Niec-Williams says no, campus will stay open.

Question on what will be on old hospital site, N-W says a revenue producing development of some kind. Will follow 5-10 years after the new hospital is open, partially because of needed remediation after hospital use.

N-W walks through changes to campus plans to highlight the need to replace any greenspace lost to hospital redevelopment somewhere else on campus, e.g. along 4th street. Matt Fey Q re making W st 2 way for ambulances only. N-W says they brought it up with DDOT and they punted to say that's something that would be addressed in further processing when there are more details. DDOT was fine with basic idea to make Bryant and W 2-way, and this is land owned by HU so there is flexibility. N-W says they can put a sentence in the campus plan re a dedicated hospital lane, but it would push our approval another month. N-W suggests a LPCA approval letter could include that desire and perhaps that would have more weight. N-W does says they can put it in to the plan, but our letter is more likely to get our preferred outcome of dedicated hospital lane into zoning order. Elliot would like "yes and" of getting it into the campus plan and in our letter.

Joe Leonard is concerned that dedicated hospital lane issue hasn't come up in previous meetings. Jason Bello stresses that the most important issue is getting direct access for ambulances from the hospital from GA Ave.

N-W says he will make sure they can massage the language so that HU and LPCA are in full agreement before submission for April meeting.

N-W shows campus plan changes that displays various access throughout campus, to now include new green space along 4th St concurrently or before losing greenspace at new hospital site. If a second hospital phase moves forward in 2031-2041 10-year-plan means that new greenspace is taken, HU will be mindful of finding more at another site.

Elliot asks Jason and Matt how it's been going working together on this committee; Jason stresses that N-W and Joe and have been great partners to our neighborhood and worked hard to solve our collective concerns. Jason is satisfied that the HU has stated in the campus plan that they will rearrange the street for direct ambulance access, but if b/c they aren't fully in control of those decisions, there is also a failsafe stated in the plan that HU will work to rearrange the physical hospital plan to make sure direct ambulance access is possible.

Jason also brings up HU's goals to create more affordable housing as such an important landowner in the area. Says HU is working with developers to go above the legal city requirements for affordable housing.

Joe agrees working together has been easy.

Motion to support HU campus plan before ANC and ZPD committee by Jason Bello.
Seconded by Larry Handerhan.

Motion approved. 11 yays, 0 nays, 0 absentions.

North Capitol Redesign Study Budget Request Letter – *Nick Sementelli, Safety Advocate*

Nick Sementelli lives in Eckington. He and neighbors have been trying to bring more attention to dangers of North Cap. 6 pedestrians have been killed in last 2 years. Brought around a letter year ago with short (repainting), medium (changing light cycles) and long term changes (a safety study). Many changes to N Cap, lots of new housing, McMillan coming. Sementelli's group thinks now is the time to study and plan for current safety and long term needs.

Letter asks mayor and council to fund planning study in next budget.

Richard Myers motions to support the letter as written; Elizabeth Floyd seconds.

Motion passes: 8 yays, 1 nay, 1 abstention.

Other community announcements and updates:

ANC1B Meeting: February 4, 2021 6:30 – 8:30 pm



BerwynParkDecorativeArts.com

Aiyana Adams 517 T St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

717.519.9924

LeDroit Park Call Box Art Proposal



History of DC Call Boxes

The first call boxes were installed in D.C. in the 1860's for the fire department—any citizen could break the glass, pull a lever, and a message would be sent to a central office with a telegraph system tapping out the box number for the location. In the 1880's, the district's police installed their own call boxes for use by their officers to check in with precincts while on patrol.

The call box on the corner of 3rd and T Streets NW (on the west side of the Anna J. Cooper Circle) was a police call box, based on its shape (you can find an extensive history of D.C. call boxes on the House History Man blog [here](#)). According to the article, police boxes were originally painted with a grey base and blue top.

In 2002 and 2003, DDOT stripped, prepared, and primed around 700 call boxes around the city in order to prevent further rusting and to prepare them for being painted. (This is the brown paint that is currently on the box.) Cultural Tourism DC then led the Art on Call Initiative, a joint effort with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and neighborhood groups, to paint and install art in the boxes. By the time the program ended in 2009, 145 call boxes had been beautified.

Overview of Proposal

- o Prepare the call box by cleaning it with a wire brush to remove loose paint chips and rust, then spraying it with a rust-inhibiting primer (to reinforce the nearly 20-year old primer that is currently on the box)
- o Paint the call box a dark teal blue with dark gray trim and metallic gold accents (see colors below)
- o Draw a decorative piece of art in the recessed interior (sidewalk-facing) part of the call box (see preliminary sketch below)
- o Treat the decorative art interior with a UV-blocking sealer

Colors

These proposed colors are a nod to the historic colors of the call box, since they were originally painted blue and grey.

(Note that colors may look different on your computer)



Dark Teal Blue (main)
(accent)

Dark Grey (trim)

Metallic Renaissance Gold

Proposed Art

There is a Chinese legend about koi fish; the tale goes that a school of koi were swimming up the Yellow River and reached a waterfall. Many of the fish turned back, but several refused to give up, continually leaping in an attempt to get to the top of the waterfall. After hundreds of years of jumping, one finally reached the top, and the gods recognized the koi for its perseverance and determination, turning it into a golden dragon.

When I was brainstorming for the art I would suggest for this call box, I couldn't ignore the likely history of a police call box in LeDroit Park. When the neighborhood was originally developed as a whites-only residential area, and then later when it became primarily a black neighborhood, there were probably times when this police call box was used in support of the mistreatment of DC's black residents.

The symbology of the koi, for perseverance in the face of adversity, and the ultimate triumph for its efforts, seemed an apt and beautiful acknowledgement of the history of our neighborhood, and tips the hat to our black forebearers in residence.

Below is a quick sketch of the proposed artwork for the interior of the box (the finished piece will be more detailed). The background will be in the same dark teal blue as the rest of the box, and the fish will be drawn with metallic gold and rose gold leafing pens (slightly different than the colors below). I will write the name of my decorative arts company, BerwynParkDecorativeArts.com, in letters no more than 1 cm high, in an unobtrusive place on the finished piece (possibly inside the recessed area of trim around the call box. (I don't want this to look like an advertisement, but, rather, as an artist's acknowledgement.)



Sketch of the proposed artwork

Location for call box interior artwork

January 26, 2021

Re: Callbox Art

The LeDroit Park Civic Association, on January 26, 2021, resolves to support Aiyana Adams in painting the historic callbox at 3rd and T St NW with her design of gold koi fish on a dark teal blue background.

January 26, 2021

(via email only)
Zoning Commission
441 4th St NW # 200,
Washington, DC 20001

CC: Larry Handerhan, ANC 1B01 SMD
ANC 1B ZPD Committee
Derrek Niec-Williams, Howard University
Joe Leonard, Howard University

RE: LPCA Support for Case 20-08 - Howard University's Central Campus Master Plan (CMP)

Dear Members of the Zoning Commission,

On November 24, 2020, the LeDroit Park Civic Association voted to support Case 20-08 - Howard University's Central Campus Master Plan (CMP) with a vote of 11 - 0 - 0.

The LeDroit Park Civic Association supports Howard University's CMP and values its vital role to the preservation and development of the Central Campus and surrounding neighborhoods and supports Howard University's efforts to plan new capital projects as part of the CMP.

In particular, the Civic Association was concerned with the following aspects, which Howard University has addressed in its latest versions of the plan:

- **Maintenance of green space area.** The neighborhood is concerned that the existing green space between the Stokes library and College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences would be lost and converted to a vehicle turn-around. We appreciate the plan's commitment that "[g]reen space displaced by the new H1 will be replaced with enhancements to green space east of the Stokes Library, either prior to or concurrent with the development of H1. Should H2 move forward, this green space shall be replaced elsewhere in proximity to LeDroit Park."
- **Ambulance access from Georgia Ave.** The neighborhood seeks to ensure that ambulances have a direct access route to the ambulance entrance of the new hospital. Given the location of that entrance, it will be necessary to convert W St NW, which is currently one-way westbound, to two-way to allow ambulances speedy access from Georgia Ave NW. We appreciate Howard's coordination with DDOT on this effort and the plan's proposal in Figure 4.59 to perform that two-way conversion. We further recommend exploring limiting the new east-bound lane to emergency vehicles only to avoid broader disruptions of traffic patterns. Additionally, if DDOT does not approve the two-way conversion of W St, we recommend that Howard University reconfigure the ER access points to ensure the access is direct from Georgia Ave NW.

The LeDroit Park Civic Association requests that if during the planning and implementation of capital projects, any changes to the CMP are required, that all recognized parties be given great weight in considering those changes before any approval by the Zoning Commission.

Sincerely,

Elliot Seibert

President, LeDroit Park Civic Association

Jeff Marootian
Director - District Department of Transportation
55 M Street, SE, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Director Marootian:

The North Capitol Street Corridor has long been one of the most dangerous streets in the District. Another pedestrian death on January 3rd, the sixth in the last 18 months, has brought that danger into tragic focus. Since 2018, the following people were all fatally struck while walking along North Capitol Street¹:

- Johnson Doerue of Northwest DC, age 67, on September 12, 2018
- Troy Austin of Southeast DC, age 56, on February 11, 2019
- Unidentified pedestrian on February 20, 2019
- Jascha Wilson of Southeast DC, age 29, on August 13, 2019 of a hit-and-run and succumbed to his injuries the next day
- Brad Hinds of Silver Spring, MD, age 39, on November 15, 2019 of a hit-and-run
- Unidentified pedestrian on January 3, 2020

If Vision Zero is a priority for Mayor Bowser and her administration, it's clear fixing this corridor needs to become an immediate priority.

Thankfully, plans to do just that already exist. Released last January, the [North Capitol Needs Assessment study](#), completed by the NoMa BID in partnership with your agency and the support of a wide coalition of local stakeholders², lays out a comprehensive plan for improving some of the most dangerous intersections in the corridor.

The study [identifies sixty specific improvements](#), including forty-five that the study projected could be accomplished by the end of 2019. Those fixes include:

- New Signage and Pavement Markings
- Protective Barriers
- Safer Lane Configurations
- Sidewalk and Crosswalk Improvements
- Public Space Activations
- Traffic Control Officers
- De-Conflicting of Dual Turn Lanes
- And more

¹<https://dcw50.com/news/67-year-old-man-killed-in-pedestrian-collision-in-northwest-d-c/>
<https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/traffic-fatality-1500-block-north-capitol-street-northwest/>
<https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/traffic-fatality-5000-block-north-capitol-street-northeast/>
<https://dcist.com/story/19/08/15/man-dies-of-injuries-after-hit-and-run-on-north-capitol-street/>
<https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/traffic-fatality-1400-block-north-capitol-street-northeast/>
<https://dc.curbed.com/2019/11/20/20974099/dc-traffic-deaths-vision-zero-h-street>

²ANC 5E (Commissioner Pinkney), ANC 6C (Commissioner Edelman and Committee Chair, Mark Kazmierczak), CIM Group, District of Columbia Housing Authority, District of Columbia Office of Planning, Government Publishing Office, John and Jill Ker Conway Residence, Mount Airy Baptist Church, North Capitol Main Street, Tyler House (Tenant Association President, Venus Little), Uncle Chips

Unfortunately, a recent resident site assessment indicated that only 12 of those fixes were actually implemented last year.

In addition, DDOT published a [Mid-City East Livability Study](#) in 2013 that called for the following improvements, none of which have been implemented, nearly seven years later:

- Pedestrian priority corridors on N, R, and T streets
- Significant safety improvements at the intersection of New York Avenue and North Capitol Street
- Significant safety improvements at the intersection of Florida Avenue and North Capitol Street
- Significant safety improvements at the intersection of Lincoln Road, Q Street, and North Capitol Street
- Curb extensions at the intersection of North Capitol Street and local streets, including P, Bates, Randolph, S, Seaton, T, U, V, W, Adams, Bryant, and Channing Streets
- And more

With the death toll climbing on this street, the pace at which these improvements are being implemented is far too slow. When Ruby Whitfield was killed on Florida Avenue NE in March 2013, DDOT launched an effort to redesign that facility; last year, DDOT installed interim improvements when Dave Salovesh was killed on that same corridor in April. We believe there is an equivalent if not greater imperative to implement emergency safety improvements on North Capitol Street given that five pedestrians have been killed on this corridor in under twelve months.

For that reason, we're asking your office to take immediate action to implement all of the recommended short-term fixes in the studies and jumpstart the long-term ones.

We can't afford to watch another person die in our neighborhoods because we waited to act.

Sincerely,

ANC 6E

ANC 6C

ANC 5E09 Commissioner Dianne Barnes
The NoMa Business Improvement District

North Capitol Main Streets

The Eckington Civic Association

NoMa/H Street Civic Association

Hanover Area Civic Association

Bates Area Civic Association

Safe Streets for Hill East and Near Northeast

LeDroit Park Civic Association

Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)

The John and Jill Ker Conway Residence Peer Leadership Group

PADRES, the parent association of Mundo Verde Public Charter School, Cook Campus at 30 P Street NW, serving more than 400 families.

Langley Elementary Parent Teacher Student Association

Ward 5 for All (60+ individual signers)

The Pub & The People

Republic Cantina

Domestique Wine

Uncle Chip's
7DrumCity

...

CC:

Mayor Muriel Bowser
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

D.C. Council Vice-Chairman and Ward 5
Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
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Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen
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Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh
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