

Meeting Minutes
Cleveland Park Citizens Association
Cleveland Park Library, Downstairs Meeting Room
Tuesday, December 4, 2007

CPCA President George Idelson convened the meeting of 56 people at 6:30pm. Before introducing the evening's major speakers (DC Council Chair Vincent Gray and Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh), Idelson invited updates from the audience. Board member Susan Lynner briefed the group on restoration progress at the Tregaron Conservancy and invited end of year contributions to the nonprofit organization. Lynner noted that a newsletter describing the effort would be mailed out shortly to interested parties. Sgt. Chris Liveley, a reserve officer in the Second Police District briefed the audience on the recent merger of Police Service Areas in Districts 2 and 3 and advised on a temporary expansion of force to prevent stealing of packages during the holiday season. In response to an audience query, it was reported that the Klinge Bridge construction is due to be completed by Christmas.

Idelson then introduce the featured speakers, noting that it had been a year since Gray and Cheh had last addressed CPCA.

Cheh reported that her attention during her first year in office has been focused on both legislative and Ward concerns. In the legislative arena, she has been working on environmental reforms to set emissions and energy appliance standards and to establish green schools that meet Leed (sustainability) certification requirements. She has introduced a comprehensive energy bill to provide assistance to low-income residents, increase efficiency, and reduce energy needs. In the Ward, Cheh has focused on moving long stalled projects, such as: the Wilson Pool; installing all-weather playing fields; construction projects at Alice Deale and the Rose schools; road paving projects; and fixing problems at recreation centers and other community anchors. Cheh advised that even though there are no Ward 3 schools slated for closure, she is hoping to schedule a Ward hearing on the issue. In response to a query from the floor and later from the chair, Cheh said she would report on the status of the restoration of the Cleveland Park Fire Station.

In a PowerPoint presentation, Gray, reported that over the last year, the Council has adopted 226 acts. The most significant were education reforms, which transferred authority for the schools to the Mayor's office. Other major issues during 2007 have been DC voting rights, the sale of the Greater Southeast Community Hospital, payday lending, HPV education and immunization, and investigating the scandal in the Office of Tax and Revenue. Council has also worked to enhance their effectiveness by creating new Offices of Communications and Policy Analysis, increasing financial analysis, adopting a three-year strategic business plan, and by expanding technology in Council chambers. The Council is holding youth hearings each Saturday and is planning a page program for DC youth. The FY08 budget includes funds to restore Eastern Market and the Georgetown Library, commercial tax relief for small businesses, funding for a force of 4,250 police officers, and increased funding for health and human services. The Council's prospective 2008 agenda will include school closings, universal pre-kindergarten education, special education, workforce development, Medicaid/health care finance, procurement reform, housing, libraries, and small business property tax relief. Idelson noted that small business property tax relief will not help merchants who rent their facilities. Gray asked CPCA to review the proposed bill and advise him on ways to help the small business community.

Other audience reactions included questions and comments regarding transparency, the status of the Planning Commission, the school system central office, charter schools, and the outcome of the Rosenbaum Task Force on emergency medical services.

Idelson adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Buchanan, CPCA Recording Secretary.