

Cleveland Park Citizens Association
Membership Meeting
October 16, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Gina Polidoro, the new President of CPCA following the resignation of Helen Chamberlin for personal reasons.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes of the September 18, 2014 membership meeting and the 2014-15 Work Plan were approved unanimously without discussion.

John Korbel, Treasurer, outlined the Budget proposed by the Board for 2014-15. There were no questions and it was approved unanimously.

At 6:45 pm, Gina Polidoro introduced the community part of the meeting. The first topic was the status of equipment at the Cleveland Park fire station (Engine 28).

Captain Robert Leland of Fire & Emergency Services (FEMS), Engine 28, along with Deputy Fire Chiefs Kenneth Crosswhite and David Foust, reported that ladder truck 14 housed at Engine 28 failed inspection on August 27, and several other ladder trucks failed in September. The DC fleet consists of 26 ladder trucks of which FEMS attempts to have 16 in service daily. With seven ladder trucks out of commission, service is maintained through rotation of the others. Citywide, five new ladder trucks and ten new hose wagons will come on line this winter. Ladder trucks are expected to last for 17 years, and are placed in the reserve fleet after 12 years. New ladder trucks cost \$1.2M, and can cost \$200,000 to repair. DC funding for fire equipment is robust; the difficulty is in acquiring the needed trucks. New trucks can take 14-16 months to build. We were assured Cleveland Park has adequate service coverage now, with ladder trucks nearby, e.g., at 4300 Wisconsin Avenue (Tenleytown).

Cleveland Park is considered “densely populated” considering the apartment buildings on and near Connecticut Avenue. The average number of citywide monthly calls for FEMS in the last year increased by 1000 over last year.

Capt. Leland said the renovation of Engine 28 is very successful. Not only are the doors large enough to accommodate new fire trucks, but all of the systems are modernized and “green” elements have been added, such as a green wall watered by recycled rain water.

The second topic was crime in Cleveland Park. Captain Melvin Gresham, DC Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) 2nd District, introduced his colleagues, Sgt Kenneth Johnson, Sgt Benjamin Firehock, and Officer David Kiley. They reported on recent crime statistics in our community, Public Service Areas (PSA) 203 and 204. Overall, crime is down, but there were recently three assaults and several robberies in our PSA's. It was noted that month-to-month statistics are not as useful as comparing one month's crime activity to that in the same month the previous year, since crime is seasonal.

David Kiley is the officer on foot patrol for Cleveland Park (PSA 203). He regularly walks from 2:00 pm to 9:30 pm between Macomb St. and Porter St. from Connecticut Avenue west to 39th Street. Another foot patrol officer covers the area west from Connecticut Avenue to 42nd Street between Macomb and Calvert Streets, especially around the hotels. Officer Kiley welcomes emails but urged residents to call 911 with any concern because those operators are trained to receive citizens' calls.

In answer to questions, we were told that there is no camera surveillance by MPD in our area and private security on private property and Secret Service activities are not police issues. Neighborhood watch programs are encouraged and neighbors can arrange for an officer to walk with them on occasion.

In answer to a question about periodic rashes of car break-ins in Cleveland Park, Officer Kiley said, early this year, someone was arrested whom they had suspected. When he was arrested, he possessed a document that had been taken from one of the cars that had been vandalized. Officer Kiley said that alarms on most cars sound only when a door is opened, not when a passenger window is broken.

At the request of an attendee, Sgt. Firehock responded to one concern by saying that an officer would be stationed on Devonshire Place between 8 and 9 am on a weekday soon to prevent speeders.

The officers reminded residents that most area crimes are crimes of opportunity, and criminals take advantage of our community's peacefulness. They advised us to keep valuables out of sight, keep doors locked, and not talk on cell phones when walking. One said that criminals' interest in cell phones is not for resale but for the personal information they can use or sell; he advised us to avoid banking via mobile phones.

Turning to the third topic, Nancy MacWood, ANC3C commissioner, reported on the **Cathedral Commons** development. She recognized Ann Hamilton for her steadfast attention representing CPCA on the Construction Liaison Committee.

Ms. MacWood reported that Giant is scheduled to open November 6. It is expected to be open 24 hours, at least initially. In addition to the CVS, which is now open on Newark Street, other retail in the PUD's south block will include Barcelona Wine Bar (next to pre-existing Cactus Cantina) and Raku. On the second floor above the Wisconsin Avenue streetfront will be several fitness studios, including Solid Core. She pointed out that, although a tenant for the two story "rotunda" space at Wisconsin and Newark has not yet been identified, it might be a restaurant, and that the second floor will not be subject to the mandated limit for streetfront restaurants. Retail establishments on the north block will include SunTrust and Wells Fargo banks, Wiley Wag (dog boutique), Parks Cleaners, and Eye Optical. A tenant for the restaurant space across Newark St. from CVS has not yet been identified.

Ms. MacWood said that while infrastructure construction will continue through November on Macomb Street, preventing curbside parking there, patrons of the existing Macomb Street restaurants are allowed to park for free in the new Giant garage. When the Giant garage opens with 393 parking spaces, the first level will be for Giant customers; they will get 90 minutes of free parking with Giant validation. It is expected that validation will be available for other retail in Cathedral Commons as it is now for CVS. No parking rates have been announced to date but are expected to be low-end market rate, at least initially. Thirty spaces in the garage will be allocated for patrons of

Macomb Street restaurants, but how that will be accomplished is not clear. Details for how area residents may purchase monthly parking in the garage have not been provided.

Ms. MacWood said trees are now being planted on the south block streetscape. In the north block, sidewalks and curbs will be installed early next year, and then trees will be planted. Instead of 8" caliper trees that the Zoning Commission order specified, all will be more sustainable 4" caliper trees, and the developer will contribute the cost difference to DC Urban Forestry to plant trees elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Traffic signals are to be installed at the intersection of Wisconsin/Idaho/Ordway. Idaho Avenue will become two-way west of Wisconsin; this will enable delivery trucks to enter and exit loading areas on Idaho Avenue, and allow buses and other vehicles to travel in both directions too. Permits for the intersection construction have been issued, although neighbors on Ordway and Idaho east of this intersection still have some issues with DDOT's plans; they hope for improvements such as a raised walkway and landscaped barriers to slow drivers entering residential streets.

In answer to a question about rental of the north block apartments, especially the availability of affordable units, Ms. MacWood said that she does not believe they are being marketed yet.

Despite community objections, Ms. MacWood said that DC's Alcoholic Beverage & Control Board (ABRA) approved Giant's application to sell open wine and beer, so shoppers can imbibe while they shop. Giant's in-house café will also sell Starbucks drinks.

Ms. MacWood said it is not clear if the Giant garage will be adequate to prevent increased parking on neighborhood streets. Whether or not new apartment residents will be allowed Resident Parking Permits (RPP) and Visitor Parking Passes for parking on area streets remains to be seen. Although the north block garage has one parking space for each of the 124 units in the apartment building, it is not clear whether tenants have the choice to buy the parking spaces, whether they may sell them, or if they may park freely with RPP.

As for the fourth item on the agenda, Gina Polidoro reported on plans for the **Cleveland Park Library**. She said that DC Public Libraries (DCPL) recently announced its recommendation to demolish the library and replace it rather than renovating. DCPL's report concluded that both options could achieve the necessary code improvements, and the costs were similar -- \$11.5 M for new vs. \$10.5M for renovation. With limited space at the site, either option would enlarge the library to 22,000 SF, compared to 18,000 SF now. The potential benefits of a new structure include greater flexibility, parking, and a net zero green building. Ms. Polidoro said she will inquire why the budget is less than \$15.5M that was previously allocated. She suggested the difference might be found in the cost for the temporary library that will be located at a place to be determined.

Ms. Polidoro said she expects DCPL will welcome input from the community about the new library and engage with CPCA's Library Committee and Friends of the Cleveland Park Library. She encouraged any interested members to join CPCA's committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Lenzner, Recording Secretary