

060916 MINUTES OF CPCA MEETING  
CLEVELAND PARK CITIZENS ASSOCIATION  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2006  
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CPCA President George Idelson opened the meeting at 10:15am. Approximately 80 people were in attendance. He explained that the session was co-sponsored by the Cleveland Park Historical Society (CPHS) and introduced CPHS President Joan Habib. The focus of the discussion was on the proposed DC Comprehensive Plan, required by the DC Home Rule law, to update the 1998 planning document. The draft Plan outlines land use policies that will impact the city's growth for the next two decades. Mr. Idelson noted that he had written to Mayor William and the Council in July to ask that the city not rush the review process. The Council will hold a hearing on the proposed Plan on September 26, and the Mayor and Office of Planning hope to see the Plan enacted by the end of the year. Mr. Idelson introduced the three panelists (Ellen McCarthy, Director of the Office of Planning; Nancy MacWood, ANC3c Chair; and Barbara Zartman, Past President of the Committee of 100 for the Federal City) and advised that Council Chair Primary Winner Vincent Gray would not be able to attend the panel discussion.

Ms. McCarthy, whose office prepared the 500-page document with input from a citizens task force, advised that the Plan is intended to guide DC development by establishing policies for land use and related elements. The Plan focuses on physical planning issues, not operational issues. The draft document is based on an audit of the outdated 1998 plan, input from DC agencies, field surveys and mapping, and technical studies on economic and development trends, demographics, transportation, environmental quality, urban design, and historic resources. Since its first draft in January 2005, the Plan has been widely reviewed at citywide workshops, through group discussions at ANCs and citizens associations, and by a 28-member citizen task force. The latest version, the Mayor's Draft, covers 13 citywide elements (framework; land use; economic development; housing; environmental protection; transportation; community services and facilities; urban design; historic preservation; infrastructure; parks, recreation, and open space; educational facilities, and arts and culture) and implementation. It has 10 area elements: Near Northwest, Mid-City, Capitol Hill, Rock Creek West (which includes Cleveland Park), Rock Creek East, Upper Northeast, Far Northeast/Far Southeast, Far Southeast/ Far Southwest, Lower Waterfront, and Central Washington. The plan includes a policy map and block-by-block future land use maps. Ms. McCarthy concluded her remarks by noting that the plan sets long term policy on land use. It is not zoning. Zoning decisions will be guided by the policies outlined in the Plan, if and when it is enacted by the Council.

Ms. MacWood expressed concern regarding language changes, which might be interpreted as less stringent than the old Plan. She also was concerned that the new Plan would allow increased density, that the document does not reflect the impact of current and new jobs in the District, and about increased traffic and the apparent lack of policies related to institutions.

Ms. Zartman described the Committee of 100 as the independent voice on City issues related to land use. She expressed concern about the reliability of the data, that there are inconsistencies between the land use and other elements, that it seems to presume that development and growth are always good, and she suggested that the Plan needs to offer more specific guidance for zoning decisions. She also stated that the absence of ward plans (as opposed to area elements) is a mistake since wards are a political reality.

Mr. Idelson then opened the discussion for questions from the floor. Many questions dealt with the impact of the Plan on zoning and historic preservation decisions. Ms. McCarthy advised that once the Plan is approved it will be law and will guide zoning decisions. Preservation issues will continue to be ruled by the Historic Preservation Review Board. Cleveland Park is not likely to experience much change. Other questions and comments dealt with the need for more mixed use and affordable housing, the impact of the Plan on quality of education and human services and the interaction of the Plan with the Federal Plan under development by the National Capitol Planning Commission. Ms McCarthy advised that the Mayor Elect and new Council members will have input on the Plan. However, if the document is not approved in 2006, it will begin a new 18-month review process In January.

Mr. Idelson closed the meeting at 12:30pm and advised that the next CPCA meeting, a forum for the Board of Education candidates, will be held October 7. There will also be a second, as yet unscheduled, meeting in October to update members on plans for the Newark Street Giant.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joan Buchanan, Recording Secretary