# ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E

**TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS**
**WAKEFIELD CHEVY CHASE FORT GAINES SPRING VALLEY**

**c/o Lisner Home 5425 Western Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20015**
**https://anc3e.org**

**Meeting Minutes**

**July 21, 2026**
**7:30 p.m.**
**Virtual Meeting**

The meeting convened via Zoom at 7:33 PM with Commissioners Bender, Cohen, Gianinno, Hall, Mitchell, and Quinn in attendance.

Chairman Bender opened the meeting by welcoming constituents and inviting announcements.

**Agenda Item 1: Announcements / Open Forum for Members of the Community to Raise Issues of Concern or Importance to the 3E Neighborhood**

Commissioner Bender invited announcements from the public about issues of interest or that should be on a future 3E agenda:

- A constituent and Member of the Friends of the Tenley Library expressed concern regarding deteriorating conditions outside the library. She described accumulations of trash, discarded items, and unsanitary conditions near the library entrance, including the presence of a toilet and other items belonging to unhoused individuals congregating in front of the library. Ms. Pickering stated that the conditions were unattractive, created odors, and may cause issues with residents who are patrons of the library. She asked if there was anything the ANC or Councilmember's Office could do to clean up the area.
- Leigh Catherine Miles from Councilmember Frumin's office responded that she would make note of this concern and speak with the constituent services coordinator to notify the appropriate city service offices to address it. She asked if photos could be sent to the office to support their request. Ms. Miles reminded constituents that residents can contact the Councilmember's Office to assist with constituent concerns and service needs at: fruminoffice@dccouncil.gov; (202) 724-8062; https://mattfruminward3.com/
- Ms. Miles also provided a summary of activities from the Office of Councilmember Frumin. The Council is currently in recess and there is no legislative activity, but the Councilmember is still working throughout the Ward, including doing site visits of homeless shelters, conducting his annual site visit to all schools in the Ward to ensure they are student-ready, and visits to new developments in the Ward. To learn more about Councilmember Frumin's activities and priorities, the monthly newsletter is posted on the website, distributed on the neighborhood listservs, and is available by direct email.
- Che Demczuk, Ward 3 Representative from the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS) office responded to the constituent's concern by stating MOCRS is also in constant contact with city agencies to address the group of unhoused individuals in front of the library. MOCRS is in close contact with the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), library staff,

and St. Ann's Parish, which does allow unhoused people to be in and near the church as part of their ministry. Constituents can contact him at MOCRS directly about this or other concerns at: Tel: 202-341-7706; Email: che.demczuk@dc.gov.

**Agenda Item 2: Presentation by Second District Police**

Lt. Gatewood provided the monthly public safety update for PSA 202. Over the past 30 days, she reported an approximate 27% decrease in crime overall from this time last year. She reported that there were no violent crimes reported in the past 30 days. The most recent criminal activity included property thefts from businesses in Tenleytown, including Target, Wawa, and CVS, and a break-in at the residence at 4901 Mass Ave.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- No questions from constituents.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

- Commissioner Bender asked for any update on the murder of Brady Flowers or the other shooting that took place in May. Lt. Gatewood responded that detectives are still investigating the two cases and because they are still under active investigation, they cannot share more information at this time.
- Commissioner Quinn asked about the reported self-inflicted shooting in Friendship Heights that took place in May. Lieutenant Gatewood explained that the individual involved was a teenager who does not reside in the District. She further stated that the firearm involved was a ghost gun and that MPD had identified the individual and initiated a custody order in connection with the incident.
- Commissioners expressed appreciation for the MPD's willingness to provide regular updates to the community.

**Agenda Item 3: Discussion of and possible vote on resolution regarding application by owners of 5020 Belt Road, NW, for an area variance from rear yard requirements to build a one story shed in the rear of a detached house**

The applicant presented a request for an area variance related to construction of a one-story, 10x10 Tuff Shed in the rear yard of a detached residence. The applicant explained that zoning requirements associated with alley access would significantly constrain placement of the shed. He stated that relocating the proposed structure to comply fully with the setback requirements would require removal of a mature Japanese maple tree. The shed is being proposed primarily for household storage purposes and would be placed on an existing stone driveway, resulting in no reduction in permeable surface area. The applicant also reported that surrounding neighbors had indicated they did not oppose the proposal.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- Ben Nussdorf, across the street neighbor, spoke in favor of the application and indicated his support for the resolution.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

- No comments.

With no comments or questions from Commissioners, Chairperson Bender moved to pass the resolution as written. Hall seconded and all voted in favor, 6-0-0.

**Agenda Item 4: Discussion of and possible vote on resolution regarding application by owners of 4610 Verplanck Place, NW, for a special exception from rear yard requirements to build a rear and side addition to an existing detached house.**

The commissioners reviewed an application for seeking a special exception associated with a rear and side addition to an existing detached house. Commissioner Gianinno explained that repeated attempts to obtain information from the applicant about this application were unsuccessful.

The commissioners discussed the unusual circumstances around the application. Commissioner Gianinno explained that while the primary work for the application relates to a desire to do a rear addition, because the side yard condition is currently in violation, the special exception is being sought for the side yard. Commissioners expressed concern that they had insufficient information to consider the application and there is no known outreach to the neighbors about the application. As a result, commissioners stated that they were reluctant to support the request without more information.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- A constituent neighbor, Ann Vinson, stated that she has contact information for the residents and offered to assist Commissioner Gianinno in connecting with the applicants.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

Commissioner Bender moved to authorize Commissioners Cohen and Gianinno to take additional time to resolve outstanding questions and obtain additional information from the applicant, and then to send a letter expressing the Commission's position in light of new information. Commissioner Quinn seconded it, and it passed unanimously 6-0-0.

**Agenda Item 5: Presentation by Montgomery County Planning regarding the Friendship Heights Sector**

Atara Margolies, Lead Planner for the Friendship Heights Sector Plan, presented an update regarding Montgomery County's ongoing planning effort. She began with outlining the planning process timeline, which began in Fall 2024 and is expected to continue through consideration and adoption in Spring 2027. She explained that extensive community engagement had informed the planning effort and that many participants emphasized the importance of preserving Friendship Heights as a mixed-use commercial center rather than allowing it to evolve into a primarily residential neighborhood.

Ms. Margolies reviewed proposed recommendations relating to land use, zoning, affordable housing, transportation, urban design, public spaces, environmental sustainability, and historic resources. She explained that the plan seeks to encourage redevelopment and mixed-use activity while preserving nearby single-family neighborhoods. Proposed recommendations include increased density near Metro stations, additional affordable housing, improved parks and public spaces, enhanced pedestrian safety improvements, bicycle infrastructure, and transit investments.

She discussed proposed improvements to Brookdale Park, recommendations involving the Saks site, potential changes to Wisconsin Avenue, improved transit facilities, and protected bicycle infrastructure.

She also described efforts to improve accessibility to the Friendship Heights Metro station and reposition existing bus facilities.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- Constituents discussed parking availability and the importance of maintaining accessibility to businesses and medical offices.
- Questions were raised regarding WMATA's involvement in transportation planning, and in particular, any changes to the current bus depot, and opportunities for public participation in future discussions. In Friendship Heights, engaging on public transport would require being in touch with private developers and WMATA.
- Members of the public were encouraged to review planning materials and participate in future outreach efforts.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

- Commissioners asked numerous questions regarding zoning, density, bicycle infrastructure, transportation improvements, and redevelopment opportunities.
- Commissioners discussed the relationship between the sector plan and the proposed EYA redevelopment of the GEICO property.
- Questions were also raised regarding building heights, parking policy, bike lanes on River Road, redevelopment of major commercial properties, and transitions between higher-density development and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Commissioners asked about what the precipitating event would be to have bike lanes expanded down River Road. The response is that River Road is a state highway and therefore managed by the State Highway Administration (SHA), not the county. However, SHA is doing some bike lanes further down on River Road due to incidents.
- Commissioners remarked that in their opinion, it would not be an example of good public policy to put subsidized parking in Friendship Heights because there is already so much public parking.
- Several commissioners expressed enthusiasm regarding the long-term vision while recognizing that implementation would occur over many years.

Following discussion, Commissioner Quinn moved approval of a resolution related to the planning effort, Commissioner Hall seconded, and the resolution was approved unanimously by a vote of 6-0-0.

**Agenda Item 6: Presentation by EYA about plans to redevelop the GEICO site on Western Avenue, NW**

Jack Lester of EYA presented a detailed overview of the proposed redevelopment of the former GEICO headquarters property. He explained that EYA had been selected by GEICO as its redevelopment partner following the company's relocation to Bethesda and described the project as an opportunity to implement many of the planning concepts long envisioned for Friendship Heights. EYA is a Bethesda-based company, with 35 years in business. The founder’s vision for development was focused on building infill housing. They typically take on two to three projects annually.

The proposal includes a mix of residential housing types, retail space, affordable housing, pedestrian infrastructure, open space, and recreational amenities. EYA reported that affordable housing would exceed Montgomery County minimum requirements and that the project would include approximately 8.3 acres of open space in addition to contributions for Brookdale Park improvements. The project also

proposes new bicycle and pedestrian facilities designed to connect surrounding neighborhoods and increase accessibility.

The development team discussed sustainability features, tree preservation efforts, geothermal energy opportunities, and strategies to accommodate residents across different stages of life through a combination of rental apartments, condominiums, and townhouses.

- Key Plan Attributes:
    - Increasing amount of affordable housing more than required by law – 12.5% up to 17%
    - 8.32 acres of open space
    - Cash contribution in the amount of $1.65 million to Montgomery County Parks to improve Brookdale Park. The park itself will be conveyed to Montgomery County Parks.
    - Looking at feasibility of a Montgomery County Library Branch
    - Creating a one-mile pedestrian loop along the promenade, aligned with DC plan to increase walking/bike lanes.
- Community benefits:
    - Significant environmental benefits and& sustainability, despite the removal of trees. There are 152 specimen trees on the site. A total of 36 will be removed from that building site; 31 will be removed along promenade.
    - A total of 15 trees will be removed for the grading and for the development – of those 5 are deemed to be in poor health. They will be protecting 60 trees and planting hundreds of trees to compensate for those that will need to be removed due to poor health or because the root systems will be sufficiently disturbed that they won't survive.
    - Enhancement to Brookdale Park – contributed through the cash donation.
- Multigeneration housing:
    - Intentional design to have rentals, condominiums, narrow townhouses, and wider townhouses to meet the needs of all types of residents – to support aging in place and young families.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- Constituents asked detailed questions regarding affordable housing levels, traffic impacts, tree preservation, housing prices, trail design, recreational facilities, and library opportunities.
- There will be two forms of affordable housing levels: For sale units will follow the county's moderately priced dwelling units (MPDU) requirements which are 65% of the area median income (AMI) level. In the plan, townhouses for sale to house a family of four, income of $75,000; house price of $250,000. For rental units, they will be offering below MPDU levels – 50% AMI level and then 65% AMI level.
- In response to questions about pricing, EYA stated that there will be a range of price points between condominiums to townhouses, ranging from under $1M for condos almost to $2M for townhouses. Rentals will range in size from studios to two bedroom/den and one bedroom and four bedroom units, all at market rents.
- Residents sought assurances that tree loss would be minimized and requested additional information regarding replacement plantings.
- Questions were raised regarding the number of vehicle trips expected after redevelopment and whether nearby intersections would require improvements. Their studies show that they will generate less traffic than the current traffic use of the GEICO office of today. There are no offsite

improvements required because traffic will be lower, but they are doing some things to ensure safe traffic flow, including a new on Willard Ave.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

- Multiple commissioners advocated for greater density, arguing that additional housing could create more open space and community amenities.
- Commissioners encouraged EYA to consider more active recreation facilities and additional placemaking features, including public gathering spaces.
- Questions were raised regarding tree preservation, sustainability standards, long-term affordability restrictions, recreational programming, and activation of public spaces.
- While generally supportive of the project, commissioners emphasized a desire to see a more ambitious vision for one of the largest redevelopment sites remaining in Friendship Heights. Commissioner Hall expressed dismay at the townhouse plan, given the size of the site and the proximity to a metro station, that the increased density could make the buildings between 10-15 stories, just like on Willard, and make better use of the space, which would allow for more amenities like a soccer field.
- Commissioner Quinn asked several questions regarding the amount of open space, level of retail, response to the Little Falls Watershed Alliance, who say that EYA could save more trees, and how affordability will be maintained. EYA responded that they will do LEED certification, their motivation is to maintain the mature trees, as both MD and DC law requires that if a tree is removed an increased number must be planted to replace, and that affordability level will be maintained by a 99 year covenant in the sale of the units. They would like to develop this space with a streetscape and a 'placemaking' that is like the redeveloped Westbard site in Bethesda.

**Agenda Item 7: Presentation by artist seeking to install an interactive sculpture in the vicinity of American University and possible vote on a letter regarding same**.

Sarah Rodgers Morris, curator and artist who lives in ANC 3A and works in 3E, presented a proposal for a temporary public art installation entitled "A Seating for Civic Engagement." The group, Democracy as Form, consists of Lindsey May, architect; Ben Luzzatto Lead Artist; Evan Roche, Lead Designer; and DR. Morris, Curator. Dr. Morris explained that the group is submitting a proposal for this project to the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities public art grant. The installation is intended to encourage public dialogue, civic engagement, and community interaction. The installation would be located on the plaza outside the Katzen Arts Center and would function as both a public art piece and a gathering space.

Ms. Morris explained that the seating arrangement was intentionally designed without privileged seating positions or hierarchy. The circular design is intended to encourage open conversation and provide opportunities for community meetings, artistic programming, and civic discussions. She stated that the project's broader goal is to explore how physical design can foster civic participation and strengthen democratic engagement.

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**

- There were no constituent questions or comments.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**

- Commissioners expressed strong support for the concept and praised its focus on community dialogue and civic engagement and the value of creating intentional community gathering

spaces and opportunities for intergenerational interaction. Commissioners appreciated the installation as a potential gathering place for youth, as there are not as many places for youth to gather safely in public areas of 3E.
- Commissioners asked about the project's relationship with the Katzen Arts Center and future plans for relocation or replication of the installation.
- Commissioners noted that the concept could serve as a model for similar installations elsewhere in the District.

Chairperson Bender moved to authorize Commissioners Graff and Quinn to write a letter of support to the DC Commission on Arts and the Humanities. Commissioner Quinn seconded, all voted in favor, 6-0-0.

**Agenda Item 8: Presentation by Friends of Bus Transit regarding changes to bus schedules serving the area**

Cal Simone, Co-Chair of the Friends of Bus Transit, provided an overview of recent WMATA bus network changes that took effect on June 21. The presentation summarized route modifications affecting the ANC 3E area, including changes to the C81 and C83 routes, C81, C85, and C87 for school day trips, and temporary operational adjustments associated with Red Line construction activities.

The presenter reviewed changes to route alignments, school-service routes, shuttle service operations, and rider information resources. The discussion also highlighted the WMATA Pulse application and other tools available to help riders navigate service changes. For questions or any other recommended advocacy related to bus transit or routes, please contact FOBT at **fobus-input@groups.io.**

**Constituent Comments / Questions:**
- There were no constituent questions or comments.

**Commissioner Comments / Questions:**
- Commissioner Quinn appreciated the presentation and asked if FOBT understood why WMATA made changes to stop spacing around Harrison Street.

**ANC Business**
- Approval of June 2026 meeting minutes
    - Commissioner Bender moved to pass the June minutes as amended. Quinn seconded and the motion was approved by 6-0-0.
- Approval of expenditures:
    - Check to Sarah Nugent for administrative services; Invoice #104: $685.42 covering June 10-July 20.
    - Check to Sarah Nugent for expenses related to webhosting in the amount of $180.00 w; and then a third check in the amount of $14.88 renewal of the email box associated with the anc3E.org domain name.
    - Commissioner Quinn moved to approve, Commissioner Bender seconded, and the motion was approved by 6-0-0.
- Commissioner Bender moved to notify BZA and the 4401 Garrison Street parties that ANC maintains its approval for side yard relief, despite a survey showing the property line is 1.74 feet

closer to the building than indicated. Commissioner Quinn seconded, and the motion passed, 6-0-0.

- Q3 Financial Report and budget narrative
    - Commissioner Quinn moved to approve, Commissioner Bender seconded, and the motion was approved by 6-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned by acclimation at 11:01 p.m.

/s/:
Prepared by: Sarah Nugent
Approved on: September 10, 2026
Attested by: /s/ Tom Quinn