

## **MEETING NOTES for the GW/COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

(As called for in the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan, Condition P-7)

Meeting #29/Quarter 4/November 17, 2014 – 6:30 pm in Duques Hall (2201 G Street) Room 553

### **1) WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Britany Waddell of The George Washington University opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with introductions of individuals appointed by GW as members of this Advisory Committee, including herself and: Susi Cora, GW Director of Campus Planning; Alicia Knight, Senior Associate Vice President for Operations; Peter Konwerski, GW Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, and; Andrew Goretsky who oversees GW's off-campus student affairs in GW's Center for Student Engagement. Following this, attendees introduced themselves, including: West End Citizen Association members Barbara Kahlow and Sara Maddux; Foggy Bottom Association President Marina Streznewski; Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) Peter Sacco; Foggy Bottom neighbors Susan Armbruster and George Arnstein; Ari Masefski, President of GW's Residence Hall Association; GW staff members Kurt Hiatt, Richard Livingstone, John Ralls, and Eric Selbst.

### **2) CAMPUS PLAN AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**

#### **2a) Other 2007 FBCP initiatives:**

***Historic Preservation Plan:*** Cora said the university has complied with historic preservation requirements as part of the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan (2007 FBCP), including providing background information to the DC Historic Preservation Office for its work in recent years to create Historic District Guidelines and the successful adoption by HPRB in October of this year.

***Streetscape Plan:*** Cora said GW has commenced streetscape work on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street between Eye Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Work on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street between Eye Street and Washington Circle is awaiting permit approvals and is expected to commence in early December. The west side sidewalk of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street will be closed to ensure the project timeline is reduced and lessen the length of impact on pedestrians. Pedestrian traffic will be routed to along 24<sup>th</sup> Street thru Eye Street Mall or the east side of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Kahlow asked how long this work will last and Cora said it should be a short period of time (the university is still waiting to hear final requests from DDOT re this project) and also confirmed that metro access would remain at all times. Armbruster asked if the new sidewalks would be concrete or brick paved and Cora confirmed that, per GW's Streetscape Plan (a component of the 2007 FBCP), north and south streets will be replaced with concrete and east/west streets will be replaced with brick pavers. However, if a north/south sidewalk already has brick pavers, then its continued use of brick is grandfathered.

Kahlow asked about the segmented bench that had been removed from the park adjacent to the new Milken School of Public Health. Kahlow requested that the bench be re-installed facing another bench so people using the bench can face one another when using the bench. Knight said the university had already made changes to the benches to accommodate concerns of adjacent neighbors including moving the benches into different configurations and no further changes would be made since the university is in compliance with the Zoning Commission order for this site as well as its campus plan. Kahlow also asked about a non-segmented bench close to the park along New Hampshire Avenue. It was confirmed with Kahlow via a subsequent email that while the university agreed to deviate from its streetscape plan (a component of the 2007 FBCP) standard of non-segmented bench and to special order and install segmented benches in the park; it would not extend this deviation beyond this park and would continue to conform with its approved streetscape plan. The bench in question was included in the approved plans approved by the Zoning Commission and DDOT public space.

## **2b) Updates on campus development projects:**

**2b i) Science and Engineering Hall/Square 55 (Completion Spring 2015):** Cora said the project site (bounded by 22nd, 23rd, H, and Eye Streets) will serve as an academic center for the incubation of new research and learning and is expected to be completed and open for classes in January 2015. Streetscape work associated with this site is expected to be completed shortly. Kahlow asked about status of the finishing the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street entrance to this building and Cora said it would likely take place in conjunction with landscaping. Kahlow also asked if there would be benches near the John A. Wilson memorial plaque which will be relocated to the pocket park on the 23rd Street side of this project. Cora later confirmed that the boulder will be installed by month's end and Clark is providing the seating. Knight confirmed the building is anticipated to get a certificate of occupancy this week but stressed that this is not the same as 100% completion of the project which will take several more months. That said, equipment moves will start the beginning of December and classes will begin in January. Regarding the build-out of the retail space on the Eye Street side of the façade which will be leased by (a new fast-casual restaurant from Jose Andres, Beefsteak), Knight said she was not certain as to if it would still open in January but anticipated it would open soon thereafter.

**2b ii) Site 75A on Square 75 (Completion TBD per developer):** Cora said this site is a commercial investment property located on Pennsylvania Avenue between 21st and 22nd Streets. The site was approved in the 2007 FBCP and identified as a site for either a future commercial/investment or academic/administrative/medical use. It was announced this past spring that Skanska is the developer for this site. Kahlow asked if Skanska would meet with the community as to its desires for retail on the space and Knight agreed the university would provide a contact but stressed the company is not be ready to have retail discussions at this time. Knight stressed that Skanska has signed an agreement to lease but the ground lease won't be officially signed until the late summer of 2015 at the earliest.

**2b iii) District House on Site 77A on Square 77 (Completion summer 2016 for Fall move-in):** Cora said this residence hall, located in the center of campus between H, I, 20th and 21st Streets and is expected to open for students in fall 2016. The historic facades of West End, Schenley and Crawford Halls on the 2100 block of H and I Streets will be retained while incorporating a new infill structure between the three historic buildings (in what was previously an alley). Cora said construction work is ongoing. Kahlow asked which of the remaining development sites within the 2007 FBCP would be developed after completing the current above noted projects and Cora said that has not been decided at this time.

## **2c General Campus Development Updates**

**2c i) Ross Hall new stair tower and utility upgrades (Completion Nov14/commissioning early 2015):** The new Research Center for Neglected Diseases of Poverty on floors 5 and 6 are complete. Work on the Central Utility Plant (CUP) in the basement levels is scheduled for substantial completion in late November and commissioning activities will likely continue into the beginning of next year.

**2c ii) GW Hillel building including associated zoning and regulatory approvals associated with GW's proposed long-term tenancy in newly proposed redeveloped GW Hillel building:** Cora said GW Hillel intends to develop its property located on 23rd and H Streets to better serve its mission, and this group approached GW to lease space in the new building to support development costs for the project. The university's application is for further processing of the 2007 FBCP and minor modification to its first stage PUD (part of the 2007 FBCP) to assign a campus life use designation to the Hillel site. GW's application will be heard along with Hillel's own requests for zoning relief. Hillel is currently working with adjacent property owners and expects to be return to the Zoning Commission with GW in early in 2015.

**2c iii) Hall on Virginia Avenue (HOVA) rehabilitation plan (Completion 2017):** Cora said GW intends to rehabilitate the existing Hall on Virginia Avenue (HOVA) residence hall for

graduate housing and to provide a new faculty housing program to help recruit and retain highly talented faculty. Design work is continuing as scope options are explored and construction is anticipated to begin in 2015, with completion in 2017. Cora said the university would follow-up with the ANC once the design work and other project details were confirmed. Kahlow asked for confirmation as to project's design – specifically related to the balconies and facade. Cora said DCRA has signed off on enclosing a number of the balconies and that the enclosed balconies do not increase the FAR since the balconies are in public space (projecting past the property line). Knight said the goal was to enclose the lower balconies where graduate student housing is anticipated to be on the lower levels. Kahlow said she recalls a written agreement between the university and Watergate West residents when it purchased HOVA that stipulated balconies would never be used by students. Knight said that university staff is unaware of such agreement and have looked extensively but found no record of this agreement. Kahlow asked if GW's Office of General Counsel had also checked with DCRA and Office of Zoning Commission records and Knight said she would confirm if these records had been checked.

Knight also reiterated that the building no longer houses undergraduates so its occupancy will have less of an impact and the university does not anticipate balcony use to be a problem. It was confirmed after the meeting and shared with Kahlow that since this issue was before the DC Courts and neither Zoning Commission nor DCRA, it was not necessary to check those records and that GW's Office of General Counsel was confident that they had sufficiently checked records for any evidence of such an agreement and it was not found. Finally, Arnstein asked if the GW shuttle currently stops at HOVA and Cora confirmed that it stops there upon request. And, on a different topic, Arnstein asked when the sidewalk on 24<sup>th</sup> Street between H and Eye Streets would reopen.

**2c iv) GW Corcoran School of Arts and Design:** Knight gave an extended overview of this project including:

Last August, GW took ownership of the Corcoran buildings, including the main property on 17th Street and a smaller facility in Georgetown, and established the GW Corcoran School of the Arts and Design. The university admitted students who were enrolled in the Corcoran College at the time of the transaction. There are approximately 400 Corcoran students, equally divided between undergraduate and graduate. Since that time, GW has been working to integrate the Corcoran property and students into the university with much work on the academic side. Academic programs continue in the 17<sup>th</sup> Street building.

With respect to transition of the Corcoran property, the university's efforts include: working with the National Gallery of Art, which is moving the art from the building into temporary storage; continuing academic use in the Corcoran facilities; planning for the consolidation of classes in the Georgetown facility at the end of the academic year into the 17th Street building, or in existing GW facilities; assessing the physical condition of the 17th Street building and planning repairs and renovations, and; planning on converting some former gallery space into arts academic space. GW and the National Gallery of Art have entered into an agreement for NGA's use of space on the second floor of the 17th Street building as art exhibition space.

As future students are admitted in the Corcoran School, GW expects that undergraduates will begin to take some of their courses on the Foggy Bottom campus as part of a core curriculum but many of the Corcoran School students will continue to take the bulk of their classes at the 17th Street building. The university has shared at previous Community Advisory Committee meetings how DC's campus plan regulations apply to this situation: the 17th Street Corcoran building's use as a college predates the current zoning regulations, and therefore does not require campus plan approval. As such, GW will continue to use this building for education and art exhibition purposes consistent with the established existing uses that are permitted by zoning. Also previously shared with the Community Advisory Committee is that the 17th Street

building falls outside of the boundaries of the Foggy Bottom campus as well as the “Foggy Bottom/West End Area,” each as defined in the 2007 FBCP. The eastern boundary of the area is 19th Street and, thus, this building on 17<sup>th</sup> Street is not covered by the 2007 FBCP. Kahlow noted WECA's disagreement with this interpretation of the campus plan and that they intend to file for party status in opposition of the minor modification.

Notwithstanding, GW wants to be transparent in how we will account for those Corcoran students who may take classes at the Foggy Bottom Campus. GW proposes to treat Corcoran students consistent with the methodologies outlined in the campus plan for counting students – much like it does with its students at the Mount Vernon Campus. In the 2007 FBCP, the Zoning Commission approved a methodology for students who split their time between the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon campuses. A similar approach will apply to students who will split their time between the Corcoran and the Foggy Bottom Campus. GW will clearly state in the 2007 FBCP that any Corcoran student who also takes a class on the Foggy Bottom campus will be counted as a Foggy Bottom student and will work with DC agencies such as the Office of Planning to develop this methodology.

GW also plans to extend the requirement that Foggy Bottom freshmen and sophomores reside on campus to future Corcoran School undergraduate students. Thus, these students will be covered by the condition that is intended to direct most of the younger undergraduates to on campus housing. GW proposes to begin this requirement in Fall 2015, with the first class of Corcoran students that will apply for and matriculate after GW integrated the Corcoran college. The university does not believe that it would be fair to apply this requirement to students who were admitted before GW took control of the Corcoran College, since they had no knowledge of this condition at the time of their admission. As a practical matter, the housing requirement is not necessary for these students. More than 80% of these students have permanent addresses in the D.C., MD and VA area and thus would be exempted from the Foggy Bottom housing requirement in any event. Maddux suggested this may change as the university attracts different students to the Corcoran. The university agreed and expects this may change for future Corcoran students, and they will be required to live on campus consistent with the housing condition and GW policies. Sacco asked if future Corcoran students would also be required to live their third year on campus and Knight clarified that the third year requirement is not a Campus Plan requirement but an additional step the university has taken so it wouldn't be required per the 2007 FBCP but likely GW would continue its policy of treating Corcoran students similar to GW students and having them also abide by this policy. Cora and Knight also confirmed that the university is confident it has an adequate stock of student beds to accommodate future Corcoran residents.

With this expanded residency requirement, GW wants to ensure that Corcoran students who live on the Foggy Bottom campus are counted under the Foggy Bottom enrollment cap as well. Currently, students who take all of their classes on the Corcoran campus technically do not count toward the Foggy Bottom enrollment cap. As such, the university will file a minor modification to the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan —similar to the minor modification to the Campus Plan Advisory Committee condition that was approved a couple of years ago – to make it clear that a student who resides on the Foggy Bottom campus (but takes no classes there) will still be counted as a Foggy Bottom student.

GW plans to file this minor amendment to the 2007 FBCP sometime in coming months but a date has not been set – Knight said there will be a better idea of timeframe after the university makes its presentation to ANC 2A on Wednesday night. The changes will be limited to the above additional language to the enrollment, housing requirement, and employment conditions. The changes will not affect neither any other campus plan condition, nor will they affect the first stage Planned Unit Development that was adopted with the 2007 FBCP. GW is not asking for anything in exchange for these changes; they are simply being proposed to better

clarify the relationship of the Corcoran to the Foggy Bottom campus and continue the university's commitment to clear, enforceable campus plan conditions.

**2c v) City Hall:** Kahlow said the contractors were parking along 24<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and put out orange cones in the street to reserve spaces. She asked if these workers could be asked to park in Kennedy Center as GW has done in the past and Knight clarified that these contractors are not hired by GW but she would contact the building owner's representative (GW does not own this building) to convey this concern. Kahlow also shared concerns about traffic flow along 24<sup>th</sup> Street between this site and south to H Street. Knight shared a schedule update that the work which has been postponed from this academic year and into next summer which means that the remaining work would be completed at that time.

#### **4) OTHER CAMPUS UPDATES**

Goretsky gave an overview of upcoming campus activities, including: December 6 is the last day of fall classes; GW's annual "midnight breakfast" for students is December 8; reading days are December 8-9; finals are December 10-18; GW's residence halls close for winter break on December 19 and reopen January 10; first day of spring classes is January 12; law school students follow a different academic schedule which has earlier end and start of semester dates.

#### **5) PUBLIC COMMENT /) SELECTION OF NEXT MEETING DATE**

With no additional comments, Waddell asked attendees for potential dates to have the next meeting of this group and it was agreed that the first quarter meeting of this group will be Monday February 9, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. With no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.