



Department of Human Services
Office of the Director | 64 New York Avenue N.E., Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20002

Ward 5 Short-term Family Housing Advisory Team Meeting
Tuesday, November 15, 2016
Woodridge Library, Conference Room B
1801 Hamlin St NE, Washington, DC 20018
7 pm – 8:30pm

Ward 5 Advisory Team Members

Name	Inviting Organization	Affiliations	Attendance
Michael Morrison	ANC 5B	Commissioner 5B03 (site location); Advisory Team Co-Chair	Present
Ursula Higgins	ANC 5B	Chairperson ANC 5B; Commissioner 5B02	Not Present
Edward M. Johnson	ANC 5B	President, Edward M. Johnson & Associates, P.C. (Architects, Planners and Zoning Consultants)	Not Present
Kyle Todd	ANC 5B	Rhode Island Ave. Main St., Executive Director; Woodridge resident	Present
Henri Makembe	ANC 5B	Ward 5 Council on Education 3rd Vice President; 5B03 Commissioner-Elect	Present
Daniel Schramm	Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association	Acting President, Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association	Present
Sherri Morgan	Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association	Community Member	Present
Jeff Steen	Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association	Community Member	Present
Ronan Gulstone	Councilmember McDuffie's Office	Chief of Staff, Councilmember McDuffie's Office	Present
Amber Harding	Councilmember McDuffie's Office	Community Member, Staff Attorney, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless	Present
Jamila Larson	DC Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)	Executive Director and Co-Founder, Homeless Children's Playtime Project	Not Present
Fayette Vaughn-Lee	Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)	5D Community Outreach Coordinator	Present
Kristy Greenwalt	DC Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)	Executive Director, DC Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH); Team Co-Chair	Present
Wanda Sherrod	Department of General Services (DGS)	Program Manager: Health and Human Services Cluster	Present

Additional Support Staff Present

Amoy McGhee	R. McGhee & Associates (Architects)	R. McGhee & Associates (Architects)
Raqueeb Albaari	R. McGhee & Associates (Architects)	R. McGhee & Associates (Architects)
Lionell Gains	Mayor's Office of Community Relations & Services (MOCRS)	Ward 5 Outreach & Services Specialist
Hakeem Rogers	Mayor's Office of Community Relations & Services (MOCRS)	Ward 5 Outreach & Services Specialist
Henry Miller	Department of General Services (DGS)	Project Manager, DGS
Kathy Haines	Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS)	Capital City Fellow

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)
2. Introduction of Architects and Listening Session – DGS (65 minutes)
3. Outreach Strategy and Communications (15 minutes)
4. Summary of Next Steps & Adjourn (5 minutes)

Meeting Minutes**1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The meeting began at 7:15 pm.
- Introductions were made of the Advisory Team Members
 - Former Co-Chair Jay Melder accepted a new position in the Mayor's office. The new Administration Co-Chair for our Ward 5 Advisory Team is now Kristy Greenwalt, Executive Director of the DC Interagency Council on Homelessness.

2. Introduction of Architects and Listening Session – DGS

- Co-Chair Greenwalt invited the group to ask the architects any questions about the site. Community Representatives' Questions for the Architects (with responses from the architects, unless otherwise noted):
 - **Are there any design restrictions due to historic preservation rules?**
According to research from a historic preservation consultant, the low-rise part of the existing building may need to be maintained. Part of the design will try to acknowledge the historic building and put a new, connecting structure next to it.
 - **Should the new building match the historic building?**
Replicating historic buildings is rarely done. Sometimes old and new buildings are bridged using glass. The proposed design will need to pass several different review boards that ensure that it recognizes the existing building. The historic building would remain on the site. At 12,000 square feet, this building alone is not sufficient for the program, which needs 30,000 square feet. Remember this number is total square area, not the footprint area of the building base. The footprint of the historic building is roughly 3,000 square feet.
 - **What is the current status of the design?**
We are working through the test fit now. The Department of Human Services asked for substantial changes regarding how people move through the building.
 - **What does the current zoning allow?**
MU-4, allows up to 50 feet, which is roughly a 5-story structure.

- **Will there be an outdoor play area?**

Yes.

- **How will parking work?**

Wanda Sherrod's Response: These facilities do not require the same amount of parking as a typical residential building. Most of the families do not have cars and we do need parking for food delivery. The typical amount of spaces for a Short-term Family Housing site is 10-12. Ward 7 has no on-site parking, but the traffic study supported this finding.

Community Representative's Comment: Please ensure that delivery vehicles do not block the alley.

Community Representatives' Preferences

The following section provides the discussion questions asked and the Community Representatives responses.

- **What don't you like in design features?**

- Fake stone (Rhode Island Row/metro stop)
- Fake town home look (Rhode Island Row)
- We are thrilled that the main historic building will be saved, but concerned that the new part might be too modern.

- **What do you like in design features?**

- Real brick, real stone.
- Girard Street Senior Citizen Development (a few blocks from the Woodridge Library, 16th and Girard Streets NE).
- Monroe Street Market/Michigan Ave.
- Home-like look, not an institutional facility look
- Brookland has a lot of nice architecture, red brick homes

- **Do you want the building design to look quiet, or to be vibrant, like a beacon?**

- Something that blends in, since Brookland is a neighborhood. Even one block away from Rhode Island Avenue has a suburban feel.
- Perhaps this should be a quieter building, since the Woodridge Library is more of a beacon.
- Many families there have experienced trauma; a calm retreat and a safe space would be a good vibe. Perhaps include gardening and something soothing for the residents.
- Coordinate colors with the condos across the street.
- Pay attention to landscaping on the side street. We have some quiet neighbors that enjoy gardening, and it would be great to bring in that same "home-like" feel.
- *Architect's Comment:* We're not envisioning a K Street style building. We're trying to make it "fit," and to be a significant building in the community. These buildings become catalysts.
- *Community Representative's Comment:* It would be great to know what the overall design for Rhode Island Ave NE is going to look like. There are some new condos that are keeping the historic façade; perhaps coordinate with them to have some consistency. There is a new building going up across the street from the Ward 5 Short-term Family Housing site- perhaps coordinate with them.
- *Architect's Comment:* We want to make sure that the building both fits the site and this urban area.

- **Can you talk more about balancing these different ideas? Do you have any ideas on fencing?**
 - Residents near the site prefer to limit noise pollution, both from people gathering and vehicles.
 - Include designated smoking areas that are respectful to neighbors.
 - Bushes or trees could buffer noise and clean the air, especially on Rhode Island Avenue.
 - There is some difference in opinion as to whether the entrance should be situated on Rhode Island Avenue NE or on the side street. People close by don't want a lot of foot traffic on the street and would prefer to see foot traffic on the Rhode Island Ave NE side, not 17th Street.
 - Preference for natural fencing boundaries such as trees or bushes. Look at what is used in the neighborhood. Avoid metallic or "jail-like" materials such as chain-link. Perhaps a wooden fence or a combination wooden fence with vine. Something of regular height, not an 8 foot fence.
 - Green walls are popular. There is one on 12th Street NE. The more you can integrate plants, the better. It's attractive for neighbors, and for the people that live there – as long as it is maintained. Perhaps this could be a community service hours opportunity for high school students.
 - The development across the street will be incorporating lots of plants. Maybe coordinate with them.

The following section provides additional Community Representatives' feedback, organized by topic.

- **Historic "look" of the site**
 - Have it blend with nearby buildings.
 - I agree and disagree; I like that there is architectural diversity in Brookland - a bungalow next to a Texas-style house next to a brick house, and then a Spanish villa. There is also a great deal of architectural diversity on Hamlin Street from 12th to 18th. Some consistency is good, but not too much.
 - It bothers me that the Jackson Flats condos all look the same (12th street between Jackson and Lawrence Streets). The construction is fine, but the look is, "meh"; so are the ones at 12th and Otis.
 - Any design should be consistent with the current historic building – this is the primary feedback.
 - **Henry Miller's Response:** *It will be challenging, but the architects will try to make something that transitions well from the existing structure, and maintain a homey feel.*
- **Child safety**
 - Traffic on Rhode Island Avenue NE is a safety concern. Protect kids from running in the road, perhaps with a contained playground. The Summit on T Street NE is a good example of a housing development that has a contained courtyard.
 - The communications tower on the site uses a high voltage backup generator; if it must stay on the site, please ensure that it is safe for children.

Community Representative's General Site Questions and Recommendations

- **Can the city acquire the tire market next door? The current parcel looks small. There is an alley that separates this parcel from the Short-term family housing site. Consider the possibility of closing the alley since there is still a drivable alley from the back.**
 - *Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:* all sites needed to make our programming needs, but we can check and bring the answer back.
- **Have you considered the use of roof space for green roofing or a courtyard? Some DC Public Charter Schools have playgrounds on the roofs.**
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* We tend to avoid play space on the roof, considering safety. We prefer to put these on the ground.
- **Will you be digging below grade?**
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* Probably not. We will dig to accommodate an elevator and stairs down to the existing basement level, but it would be very expensive to put a basement under the new building.
- **Will DGS maintain the building and exterior?**
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* Yes.
- **Do we know anything in terms of psychology and building design, especially for children who may have experienced trauma?**
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* Yes, we consider textures, color, and lighting.
 - *Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:* Control over your environment is extremely important.
 - *Community Representative's Response:* The Interagency Council on Homelessness held a design group last year. Some suggestions came from a domestic violence treatment group in Boston that uses choices for trauma-informed care.
- **Are there any concerns about the program not working on this site?**
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* The test fit, which is almost finished, assesses whether it meets the programmatic needs and it does. We believe this will be a successful site.
 - *Community Representative's Response:* Every site has trade-offs; part of our job is to talk about what we think when there are choices, such as a line of trees vs. a larger playground.
- **It would be great to include some activities for the larger community. Maybe outdoor movies for both people living at the site and the neighborhood. This could make it an exciting.**
- **Who are we designing for? Older kids? Younger kids?**
 - *Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:* Most of the households are young parents; about 40% are under 24, with young children.
 - *Henry Miller's Response:* But we are designing for teens too; so there will be study space, computers, even in the play area there is a range of ages accommodated.
 - *Community Representative's Comment:* Might be beneficial to have teens playing basketball with others in the community.
- **What would clients rate as their number one needs? Play space? Movie space?**
 - *Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:* Both past experience and customer feedback have informed our current programmatic design.

- **Henry Miller's Response:** *We are also considering neighboring assets such as parks and playgrounds. We want community at the site, but there are tradeoffs.*

3. Outreach Strategy and Communications (15 minutes)

Co-Chair Greenwalt's Comments: We'd like to spend some time discussing outreach and how we can help you to share this information with your neighbors. Is there anything else you need from us? Anything we should consider in preparing for the public design meeting?

- No one knows what is going on. Jeff has done a good job of sending out information on neighborhood list serves. I created a Google form, and received some questions from neighbors.
- We find that people don't understand that family shelter is a 24-hour/day program; there are no long lines to get in.
- It would be great to see a presentation package with design options, similar to what was done for the original site.
- Many people don't know that this project coming. Those who do have very specific opinions.
 - **Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:** *This advisory group is very helpful for just that reason. We will try to get as much information out to the community as possible and we will rely on you to help us do that*
- In the first meeting for the prior site, people were disappointed that they could only pick grass or fencing options. It would be great to have pictures at the next meeting.
- What is the healing methodology behind the program? Which studies, research, facts went into the program? We are still at a place where we can shape how the community views the shelter. We are missing out on time to educate the community about these issues, before the design is publicly available.
- Talk about the difference in the approach and services in a smaller setting, such as in the apartment-style models that already exist in the District, and how these compare to the DC General Family Shelter
- Perhaps focus on the programs and resources provided.
- The initial conversation should discuss the Homeward DC strategic plan to end homelessness.
- It would be better to engage the community when there is a building footprint to share
- Will there be a separate meeting for those who live close to the site?
 - I disagree; there should not be a separate meeting for close neighbors. Sometimes a small number of people can slow down a project that impacts many more.
 - Remember that there will be a good neighbor agreement; if you don't take close neighbors into consideration, there could be resistance to building operations later on.
- What does a typical day look like at the site? This would be helpful for neighbors to know.
 - **Co-Chair Greenwalt's Response:** *I will commit to identifying resources that would be important and helpful to share.*

- **Ronan Gulstone's Comments:** We should emphasize the facts of the project, such as how many units can fit in the existing structure. Talking about the Homeward DC plan in general is also beneficial. Most of the people that know the plan believe in it. Emphasize that smaller, family shelters already exist- we don't realize they are there because they are well functioning. Also, remember that a specific budget was passed for this plan and funds allocated for each site. The value of Rhode Island Ave. NE is going up, which may make it difficult to obtain additional capital funding.
 - ***Community Representative's Response:*** *A new site would also require a legislative change.*
 - ***Community Representative's Response:*** *It could be more expensive to build up and around the existing historic structure than to acquire the tire site next door.*

4. Summary of Next Steps & Adjourn (5 minutes)

Co-Chair Greenwalt's Comments:

- We have a few reminders for the group. Please send any comments or changes to the notes from our last meeting by Friday so that we can post them on the website. Also, look at the Frequently Asked Questions that we distributed in hard copy form this evening and let us know if there are any more to add. We will also e-mail a copy to you. Please help us push the date out about the public design meeting on Monday, December 12, 2016. We are still working on a location but will send a "save the date." Thanks so much for participating, and remember that at our next Advisory Team meeting we will review and discuss the draft designs.