

FOXHALL News

Newsletter of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association

March 2013

Open floor discussion with our Ward 3 Council Woman, Mary Cheh

Our next membership meeting, Wednesday March 20, will feature Ward 3 Council member Mary Cheh making her annual visit to the FCCA. This is your opportunity to come and have your voice heard on issues like the proposed changes in DC Zoning laws, DC schools, the DC budget, or any other issue large or small. If you have issues that you would like researched in advance please email Bob Avery at ravery@starpower.net and they will be passed on to Councilmember Cheh or otherwise bring your questions/concerns to the meeting. This is our opportunity to voice the concerns of our community to someone who can potentially do something about them.

The membership meeting will also feature a brief update on the FCCA Board's reaction to the DC Office of Planning proposed Zoning changes as presented to the FCCA membership at the January FCCA meeting (see page 2).

Celebrate Spring with your Neighbors Saturday, April 20th at Hardy Park & Recreation Center

9:00 am – 12:00
pm

HARDY CLEAN- UP

Trim Trees & Bushes
Weed & Mulch Planting
Beds
Add new sand to Sand
Box
General Park Cleanup
Clear Community Garden
Plots

12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Spring Fling

Live Music by Palisades
Community Band
BBQ
Dessert Potluck
Moonbounce
And more!

Volunteers needed
to help. Please sign up
at:

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C0A49ADA82FA64-fcca

CALENDAR

FCCA General Meeting
Wednesday, March 20 at 7PM

- Discussion with Mary Cheh, Ward 3 Council Member
- Update FCCA Board Response to Proposed Zoning Changes
- Update on Georgetown Community Partnership

4500 Q Street NW in the Hardy Rec Center

Save the Date
Saturday, April 20
Hardy Clean Up, 9am – Noon
Spring Fling, Noon – 3pm

FCCA Yard Sale Helpers Needed

Have items you'd like to sell? For many years, the FCCA has sponsored a community Yard Sale. Residents rent space for a nominal fee and the FCCA handles advertising and publicity. It's a great social event, as well as being profitable for the sellers. We'd like to sponsor the Annual Yard Sale again this year, but we need more people to help coordinate the event. Interested? Contact Lisa Maco at lisa.maco@me.com.

Excerpts of Letter from FCCA Board to the DC Office of Planning

At the January FCCA membership meeting former ANC-member Alma Gates presented the DC Office of Planning's proposed revision of the DC Zoning laws. Alma's presentation provoked significant discussion at the meeting about the impact of several proposals on the FCCA neighborhood. In response to this, the FCCA Board at its February meeting voted to send the following letter to the Office of Planning:

The FCCA Board has discussed a number of the proposals and has serious concerns about certain provisions. Below are a few of those concerns. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but simply a few topline issues that have been at the forefront of our discussions:

1. **Corner shops** – The historic character of the row-house portion of our community (which is zoned R4 and is mostly protected as an historic district) would be significantly impacted by the allowance of corner stores or other commercial uses. As a community there is near universal opposition to allowing retail establishments on our residential streets. In fact, our community was well designed to include specific retail zones (e.g. – the small retail building at Foxhall Road and Q Street) and we would be opposed to allowing the encroachment of additional retail.
2. **Reducing parking requirements** – As a community that faces parking issues from local employers (such as Georgetown University employees) regularly parking on our residential streets combined with the large number of group houses (again, due to our proximity to two universities) we already have an overabundance of cars. Increasing density as a matter of right would only make that problem worse.
3. **Apartments over Garages** – We understand that the new plan would allow apartments garages to be built as a "matter of right" (or, at minimum, be made to be significantly easier to gain approval.) One of our major concerns being in close proximity to a university is oversaturation by group houses. This allowance seems like a back door way to pack more students into rental housing. Would a "garage apartment" mean a house with a max of 6 students would suddenly add additional residents over a "garage" - increasing the max to say 8? This would clearly negatively impact our quality of life.
4. **Making basement apartments a "matter of right"** - We understand that the new plan would allow basement apartments to be built as a "matter of right" (or, at minimum, be made to be significantly easier to gain approval.) Clearly this would lead to pressure for additional front entrances as well as full height basement egress windows on front facades. This allowance would be a significant threat to the character defining elements of our historic district. Additionally, we fear this would allow investors to divide houses into multiple units and thereby increase the number of unrelated individuals who could legally live in a house, thereby increasing pressure to create more group houses and negatively impacting our quality of life.

These are just a few of our potential concerns. No doubt as the more than 1000 page Zoning plan rewrite becomes available we may have additional concerns. But overall, we oppose any plan or any element of a plan which threatens the historic character of our neighborhood, which threatens to force out owner-occupants and long-time residents in favor of investors in group houses, or which causes the encroachment of commercial establishments on our residential streets.

FCCA Dues and List Serve

If you haven't joined or renewed your FCCA membership for 2013, you can do so by going to www.foxhall.org. In the left column, click on "Join the FCCA". Either print a membership form and mail it with a check or use a credit card on PayPal.

While on the website, also join the FCCA List Serve!