

FOXHALL News

foxhall.org

April General Zoom Meeting

The FCCA will hold a general meeting via zoom on **Tuesday, April 27 @ 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.** Please check the FCCA Listserv or foxhall.org for link and login details for Zoom and call-in number.

The meeting will include updates, a traffic and crime report, and a discussion on DC proposal to build a new

April 27 FCCA Meeting to Focus on DC Proposal to Build a New Elementary School on Hardy Park

Last Spring Mayor Bowser announced that DC public schools (DCPS) intended to build a new 75,000 square foot \$56 million “Foxhall” elementary school somewhere on the Hardy Park/Lab School (the old Hardy school house on the corner of Q and MacArthur) property. Initially, the city said the school would be built next to the Lab School on the 1.1 acre school lot, would accommodate between 450 and 550 students, and would not use Hardy Park or Rec Center. Construction on the school would start in 2023 and the school would open in the fall of 2024.

Since then a lot has happened. First, the Hardy Park and Rec Center are now in the middle of long-planned extensive renovations expected to be completed by June; second, a month ago DCPS finalized the purchase of the GDS K-8 school on MacArthur

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Spring is here and tulips are blooming in Foxhall Village. Photo credit: Edward Ponzi.

Spring Activities in the DMV

Nicole Farison

It was such a beautiful early spring with all the cherry trees in bloom, crocuses popping up, and daffodils everywhere. Azaleas are in bloom and so are the redbud trees and dogwoods. If you are a nature lover, I have a few places I recommend seeing this time of year.

The azalea forest at the National Arboretum in northeast D.C. is in full bloom. You can take a picnic lunch and sit in the field near the old columns that once were a part of the U.S. Capitol to enjoy the wonderful weather.

Take a walk along the Potomac River, parking at Fletcher’s Boathouse off of Canal Road. The American shad, fish that were once abundant in the Potomac but then faced a great decline in the 20th Century, are now return-

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Foxhall Community Discusses Options for GDS Site

Cari Borrás

On March 31, 2021, the FCCA held an open meeting to discuss the conversion of the old GDS site into a public school. The meeting was attended by 100 neighbors. Among the guests were Mary Cheh, Ward 3 Council member; Ruth Wattenberg, Ward 3 Member of DC State Board of Education, and two ANC commissioners, Jason Rao (ANC3D-06) and J.P. Szymkowitz (ANC3D-09).

Robert Avery, FCCA President, made a slide presentation on the overcrowding in the DCPS, focusing on Ward 3 and the DCPS proposals of having a ‘Foxhall School’ at the Hardy Recreation site and a ‘MacArthur School’ at the old GDS site. After clarifying a few points on how GDS had served as a combination elementary school (ES) and middle school (MS), he invited the meeting attendees, especially those living near the GDS site, to express their opinions regarding the best use of the GDS site as a public school.

Thirty-five neighbors spoke at the meeting, who introduced themselves by name and address. Many stated how pleased they were with having public schools in the neighborhood. The most recommended action was to have a traffic impact study before any construction starts to ensure that operation of the GDS site as a public school would not negatively impact

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When possible, please contact the appropriate FCCA Board Member directly to discuss issues and concerns—Focus Areas are listed after the board member's name. General issues can go to Bob Avery.

FCCA Board

Bob Avery, President and Police Liaison

338-3834, raverydc@gmail.com

Carter Beach, Clark Place Liaison

301-523-7207, cartermbeach@gmail.com

Vipul Bhagat, Treasurer

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Leo Blyth, Hardy Park Liaison

763-6020, leoblyth@gmail.com

Cari Borrás, Vice President & Bylaws Committee

borrasca2008@gmail.com

Liz Davis, Membership & Young Families Liaison

liz.mustin@gmail.com

Michael Delaney, Special Projects

michael.w.delaney1@gmail.com

Conrad J. DeWitte, Jr., Secretary and GCP Steering Committee Representative

321-1700, cjdewitte@hotmail.com

Brian Donahue, FCCA Listserv Administrator

Paul DonVito, Historic Preservation & Listserv Liaison

375-4662, pauldonvitodc@gmail.com

Nikki Farison, Community Events & Welcome Committee

nikkifarison@gmail.com

Ann Haas, Hardy School Renovation Committee Chair

333-2635, ahaas212@comcast.net

Michael O'Connell, GU/Medstar Construction Liaison

342-8165, JMConnell3@gmail.com

Sara Paulson, Aging-in-Place, Palisades Village Liaison, & Chair of the Foxhall Call Box Restoration Committee

333-0797, sara.paulson@gmail.com

Edward Ponzi, Lab School Representative & Neighborhood Beautification

378-3284, e_ponzi@hotmail.com

John Szymkowicz, Bylaws Committee

john@szymkowicz.com

Peter Van Allen, DC Fair Skies & Colony Hill Liaison

333-0586, peter@vanallen.org

FCCA Administrator

Brittany Aguilar, Administrator

britt.aggie@gmail.com

FCCA Listserv

FCCAlistserv+subscribe@groups.io

Who Do You Call?

City-Wide Call Center

Go to 311.dc.gov or call 311 to request free bulk trash and yard waste pickups, and to report burned out street lights, illegal dumping, graffiti, cars obstructing sidewalks or displaying suspicious guest parking permits, and other issues.

DC Animal Shelter 576-6664

Police and Fire Departments

Call 911 for both emergency and non-emergency Police matters.

Georgetown 24/7 Community Hotline

Report student activities that negatively impact our community including noise after 10 pm at GU's 24/7 Hotline, 687-8413

PEPCO

Power Outages 877-737-2662

Street Lights Out 269-0855

Washington Gas 624-6049

Ward 3 City Council Member

Mary Cheh, mcch@dccouncil.us

Ward 3 Mayor's Liaison

Emir Gur-Ravantab, emir.gur-ravantab@dc.gov

Our ANC Commissioners, Jason Rao

(ANC 3D06) 3D06@anc.dc.gov, J.P.

Szymkowicz (ANC 3D09) jp.szymkowicz@anc.dc.gov. For more information,

go to anc3d.org.

Foxhall Village Historic District

Planning to work on the exterior of your Foxhall Village home? See work going on that seems contrary to our Historic District guidelines? Please call or email our DCHPO rep, Anne Brockett, (202) 442-7600 or anne.brockett@dc.gov. Historic District Guidelines can be found at http://foxhall.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/FVHD_Design-Guidelines.pdf

Going out of town?

Email MPD Officer Tony McElwee to check on your home periodically, anthony.mcelwee@dc.gov.

Join the FCCA Listserv!!

Keep up-to-date with all happenings in your community by joining the FCCA Listserv. For more information and to join, check out: groups.io/g/FCCAlistserv

Scheduled Meetings with Local Private Schools

Share comments and concerns so they can be aired at these public meetings that institutions are required to schedule with local communities according to their agreements with the Board of Zoning Adjustment.

Meetings listed below are to provide info to the community regarding the use of the campus.

Georgetown Day School

Zoom June 16, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

Lab School

Zoom May 10, 2021 @ 6:00 PM

St. Patrick's

Zoom July 20, 2021 @ 7:30 PM

FCCA Newsletter Submissions

Send to cjdewitte@hotmail.com for the next newsletter. Generally submissions should be under 300 words, but longer pieces may run by advance arrangement.

DPW did not take my large trash away on trash day. What do I do?

Go to 311.dc.gov and select "residential bulk collection"

Use this service request to schedule pick up of up to 7 bulk items, such as household furniture, appliances, water heaters, mattresses, bed frames and tree limbs. Prohibited items include hazardous materials, construction debris and tires. (You can take hazardous materials to the Ft. Totten Transfer Station which is located at 4900 John F. McCormack Road, N.E.)

PRO TIP: You can request a bulk pickup for your neighbor's bulk trash that hasn't been picked up.

Request Yard Waste Pickup from DC 311

Foxhall Villagers: Thank you for doing yard work in the circles and medians on Greenwich Parkway and Q Street keeping our neighborhood magical.

But there is no trash fairy that makes trash and yard waste disappear. If cut up branches, old bushes, sticks, twigs, weeds, and other yard waste that is left in the circles or tree boxes in front of our houses or elsewhere in public space is gone, that means a neighbor bagged it and took it away.

Bag yard waste and take the bags to where your trash is normally picked up. But remember that DPW will not take the bags away unless you specifically request a yard waste pickup via DC 311. DC will pick up to seven bags of yard waste at a time. Usually, the pickup occurs on the next trash day. Yard waste pick up happens at the same place other trash pickup happens.

DC's (very good) 311 webpage is here: <https://311.dc.gov/citizen/home>

If you witness a lawn crew dumping yard waste in a circle, Glover Archbold Park, or elsewhere, please take a picture, note of the license plate, and notify DC through the same 311 webpage.

Remember: DC only collects leaves in the fall. And even then, DPW only collects leaves, not branches or other yard waste.

Extreme Cleanup in Glover Archbold Park a Success

Thank you to the fifteen people who volunteered on April 10 to help clean out trash from Glover Archbold Park. Everyone's efforts yielded two big piles of trash that will be removed this week with special thanks to Mike Delaney and the Foxhall Community Citizens Association. One pile was at Canal Road at Glover Archbold Park, and the other was next to the abandoned trolley right of way at the intersection of Foxhall Road and MacArthur Blvd.

Also, thank you to the ten volunteers who came out on April 3 to cut down invasive wisteria in the section of Glover Archbold Park below Reservoir Road.

We will be having a follow up invasive species removals and trash pickups soon. Details will be posted to the FCCA listserv. Don't miss out---join the FCCA listserv today.



Trash collection is important because trash from Glover Archbold Park will make its way into the Potomac River. Photo credit Leo Blyth.

AN ODE TO THE CICADAS

Patti Harburger

For seventeen years they lived under the ground.
 Nobody saw them. They made not a sound.
 Then during one night while all of us slept
 An army of brown bugs silently crept.

A wiggle, a squirm, their shells left behind
 Our orange eyed friends had one thing in mind.
 They needed to walk to a tree very soon
 And climb to the top to hum out their tune.

Their voices are heard wherever we are,
 At home or at school or even the car.
 Cicadas are fun, but what I like best
 For seventeen years our ears get a rest!

Did the Designation of Hardy School as a Historic Landmark Prevent Its Use as a Public School? Here Are the Facts.

As someone who has attended a number of community meetings and followed the news closely about DCPS plans to build a new school on Hardy Park, I have been disheartened that a false narrative has been repeated over and over. That narrative is this: The FCCA, by sponsoring and supporting the application to designate the Rose Lees Hardy School a DC historic landmark, prevented the building from being repurposed as a public school.

This narrative has been put forward by current and former ANC commissioners, by officials of neighboring community groups, even posted anonymously on online forums. But this narrative could not be further from the truth.

Here are the facts:

CLAIM ONE: The FCCA sponsored and supported the historic designation of Hardy School to prevent its use as a public school.

THIS CLAIM IS FALSE. Historic designation says nothing about use. Hardy School can (and currently is) used as a school. Additionally, historic designation does not prevent expansion. In fact, a virtually identical building, the Horace Mann School, was significantly expanded without damaging the historic fabric of the original building. We knew then and know now that a similar expansion could be done at Hardy School.

CLAIM TWO: The FCCA's process of submitting the application to designate Hardy School as a historic landmark was secretive and lacked public input or discussion.

THIS CLAIM IS FALSE. The process by which the FCCA made the decision to sponsor the historic application was transparent, prolonged, discussed in a number of public meetings and in our newsletter. Moreover, the final community vote to designate Hardy was open and fully noticed to everyone in the surrounding area. The vote to support was overwhelming.

Additionally, Hardy School had long been on a DC Historic Preservation Office list of historic DCPS buildings awaiting official designation. DCHPO assured us that even without designation Hardy School would have been treated as a historic landmark and, as was done at Horace Mann School, all changes would be reviewed by DC Historic Preservation Review Board.

In reality, historic designation was nothing more than a formality.

CLAIM THREE: The FCCA worked in collaboration with the Lab School to designate Hardy as a historic landmark to thwart the building's use as a public school.

THIS CLAIM IS FALSE. The FCCA has formed a positive relationship with the Lab School over many years, as we have with most of the nearly dozen major institutions in or near our boundaries. We respect their work with special needs children and we appreciate that they have been good neighbors when it comes to building and grounds maintenance, traffic control, and sharing our park.

The FCCA supports both public and private organizations that do good work and are good neighbors. Lab School fits that bill.

CLAIM FOUR: The FCCA was brought into the planning process for the new Foxhall School, but tried to undermine that process through historic designation.

THIS CLAIM IS FALSE. Both current and former ANC commissioners have pointed to an article in our newsletter stating that we had heard (albeit through indirect sources) that an 75,000 square foot school was being proposed in our only neighborhood park. Unfortunately, this argument conflates "hearing a rumor and reporting it" with being given a seat at the table at the discussions. The fact is, until ANC commissioner JP Szymkowicz intervened, the FCCA was not even included (although Palisades Citizen Association was) in the current DCPS working group on the schools.

The rumors and misinformation surrounding the historic designation of Rose Lees Hardy School have been used repeatedly against the FCCA. The phrase has been used that "we have no one to blame but ourselves for the loss of our only park." I say it is time to set the record straight, and put an end to this slanderous campaign.

Sincerely,

Paul DonVito

Chairman, Historic Preservation Committee of the FCCA

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Bldv which had unexpectedly come on the market (see article on page 1); third, in December DCPS extended its lease with the Lab School until 2038 (eliminating consideration of using the Lab School as part of a new school); and fourth, in February DCPS formed a working group to evaluate proposals for how to use both the GDS site and a new Foxhall elementary. Bob Avery is the FCCA representative on the working group which has met five times.

The working group is now seeking input from the community on how to use these two sites. During our last FCCA meeting local residents gave their views on the use of the GDS site. The purpose of the April 27 meeting is to do the same for a proposed Foxhall School. Currently the working group has two proposals: (1) a new elementary school carved out of neighboring areas; and (2) a third to fifth grade school fed by Key, Mann and Stoddert schools. A third proposal has been advanced to make the school an early childhood center (e.g. pre-K).

It also became apparent in the working group that there was not enough room on the parking lots next to the Lab School for a 75,000 square foot school so DCPS has assumed that the school would be built on Hardy Park.

The April 27 Zoom meeting will solicit community input on these proposals, including whether or not the school should be built. Groups outside the FCCA area are weighing in on the same issues. This is the opportunity for the FCCA community, which is the one most impacted, to have our own voice. If you have a view on the Park or the School it is critical that you join the April 27 meeting.

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ing in large numbers due to efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These fish can be seen swimming upstream, and with them comes many interesting birds.

And speaking of birds, we are fast approaching May, the peak season for birders interested in seeing the migratory birds coming through the area as they move north. The Nature Center off of Military Road in Rock Creek Park has some great trailheads that lead to bird viewing hot spots. This is a great morning trip.

If you are willing to cross the water, in Virginia there is an eagle’s nest in the median between George Washington Parkway’s east and west highways. Take Lee Highway to Mom’s Organic Market, turn right on North Veitch Street and then left on North Taft Street. Park at the Dawson Terrace Community Center and follow the trailhead behind the children’s park to the castle remains, walk toward the Parkway and look out in the trees and you will see a huge Eagle’s nest. Bring binoculars and maybe you will see one of the eagles!

Bishop’s Gardens at National Cathedral is another beautiful garden close by. The gardens are full of many beautiful flowers with the back drop of the Cathedral. Always a pretty site.

Hillwood, Marjorie Merriweather Post’s former home in Rock Creek, is also magnificent in spring. The grounds have many gardens and flowering trees. This is always a fun place to bring visiting guests, especially if they have seen most of the usual Washington sites.

Spring is such a pleasant time to hike before the weather gets hot and the bugs come. Sugarloaf Mountain is

off I-270 and has some scenic trails. The Catoctin Mountains are about an hour away and never disappoint. There are also many day trips for those who love to hike.

Strawberry picking starts around mid-May, Homestead Farm is one of my favorite farms. It’s a beautiful drive out past Potomac Maryland into Poolesville.

Middleburg is another great day trip. My favorite English pub out there is Hunter’s Head Tavern. It has a great ambiance and the food is delicious. The Upperville Horse Show is June 7-13 for those who love horses and want something fun to do. This show also attracts quite a few pop up shops.

For the kids, one of my very favorite outdoor activities is Adventure Park at Sandy Springs. There are 15 separate trails with different levels of difficulty. Each trail has zip lines but primarily consist of rope bridges between tree platforms. This is great for children 5 to 18. Tickets are booking two weeks in advance currently.

Happy Spring!

...‘GDS Site’ con’t from Page 1

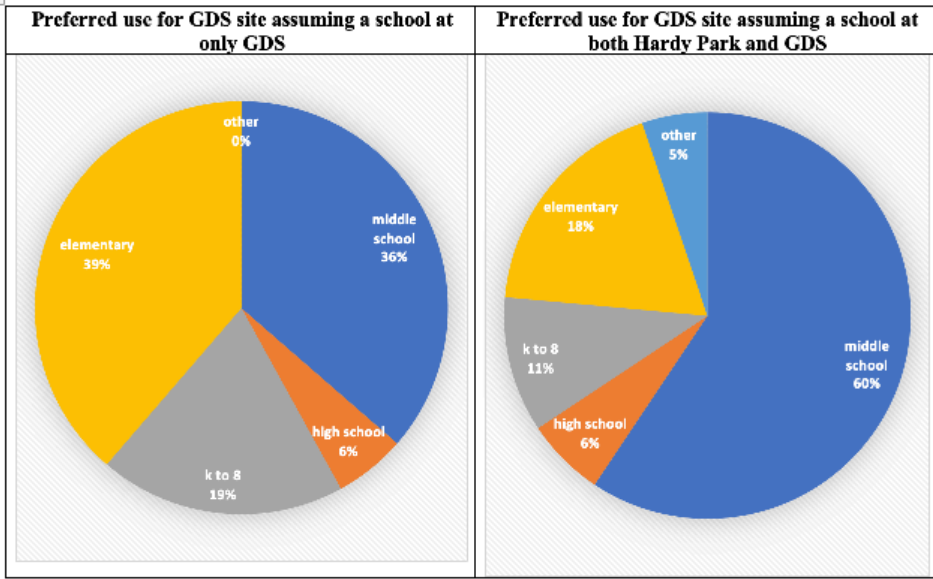
traffic and parking for nearby residents. Parking, kids’ drop-off and pick up and public transportation issues were also heavily discussed and parking restrictions as well as improved bus services were suggested. A straw poll of 67 attendees taken at the end of the meeting (votes were proportioned if multiple choices were made) showed that the majority of the attendees thought GDS should be either an Elementary School or Middle School, but not a High School (HS).

students driving to school. There is no place for these students to park. School staff will also have parking problems.

- A different type of parking restriction would need to be imposed around the GDS site because many parkers at the school would likely have a Ward 3 parking sticker.
- Reserved School Parking Spaces could be set up next to the school, but that would reduce the parking available for residents, who already have a problem with parking.

Building Use

- A high school in GDS would not only impact the neighborhood because of increased traffic and parking, but also on the kids going to that school; there is nothing exciting in the neighborhood; it is not a good place for a high school. Poor transportations options. There are no close by eateries and retail as exist on Wisconsin Avenue near both Wilson HS and Hardy MS.
- If we set up a MS at GDS, things will not change very much. However, what is really needed in the neighborhood is an ES, because the Key School is 1.9 miles away. Perhaps in Ward 3 we cannot have another middle school, and some kids will go to a middle school in Ward 2.
- If the GDS site is expanded, will the parks surrounding the site become the de-facto playground for the students? This will add to wear and tear on the parks and erosion on NPS property, which right now is not heavily trafficked. High School students could use the surrounding woods for drinking.



At the end, Mary Cheh said that the meeting had been very informative and that she would try to put money in the budget for a traffic study as soon as possible. Ruth Wattenberg added that we should look out for a survey on DCPS issues the city is going to send in the immediate future.

Other comments from people at the meeting included:

Transportation

- DCPS should utilize a pick-up and drop off system similar to that used by GDS where kids are dropped off and picked up within the campus. The on-campus area should also be large enough to keep queuing cars off of MacArthur.
- The abandoned trolley right of way that runs behind GDS could be paved and expanded with construction of major additional bridges to provide a way for students and others to walk and bike to the new school all the way from Sherier.
- Overcrowding in Ward three schools should be studied comprehensively; it does not make sense to have so many schools in this remote area of the Ward, which already receives a huge amount of commuter traffic. School issues in Ward 3 should be studied together.
- Perhaps staggering the school schedules could spread the impact of traffic over the course of the day.

Parking

- There was still a parking problem when GDS was in operation even though GDS increased its on-site parking area enough to accommodate all staff. If the GDS site became a high school, it would generate a huge amount of car traffic from