

# FOXHALL News

<https://foxhall.org>

## **ELECTION SPECIAL – WARD 3 COUNCIL PRIMARY**

***The City is proposing a new Elementary School on Hardy Park and a new High School at the GDS site. You can Vote and have your voice heard!***

### *Where to Vote*

You may drop your voted mail-in-ballot in ANY Ballot Drop Box at ANY time beginning Friday, May 27 until 8:00 pm on Election Day, Tuesday, June 21, 2022. The closest Drop Box is outside the Palisades Library, 4901 V St

Election Day Vote Centers for the 2022 Primary Election will open Tuesday, June 21, 2022, from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm. The closest Vote Centers are the Horace Mann School (4430 Newark St) and Palisades Rec Center (5200 Sherier Place). The Hardy Rec Center is no longer a Vote Center.

On Tuesday June 21st the District will have a primary election. For the first time in 16 years there will be an “open” Council seat for Ward 3 as Council member Mary Cheh is retiring. The Democratic primary has nine contenders for the seat. The Republican has one. One of the ten will be the Council member. Many community organizations have held Zoom debates. Because of our overwhelming focus on the two proposed schools in the neighborhood, the FCCA though it would be informative to seek the views of the candidates on the school issues.

We solicited all candidates with the same question and agreed to distribute their statements unedited and without commentary. Here is the question and below are the responses in the order in which they were received.

### **Question Put to all Candidates. *The candidates positions on the schools in their own words.***

By all accounts, Foxhall is a “single issue” neighborhood as far as this election goes—the issue being the future of the

proposed Foxhall and MacArthur schools. As a future Councilmember your major impact on both proposals is likely to be through the budget.

At present as we understand it, the capital budget for Foxhall (as recently adjusted by the Council) proposes a 550-student elementary school, with planning funds for FY23 (September 2022-August 2023), Construction for FY24 and FY25, presumably with the school opening in September 2025. For MacArthur, DCPS is proposing a 1,000-student high school split between Hardy Middle School feeders and a city-wide magnet enrollment. The school would be modernized in two phases in FY24 and FY25 (delayed from the Mayor’s budget) but would open in September 2023 with one class of students who are currently 7th graders at Hardy.

Our ask of each of you is: “If you were elected and voting on the budget a year from now and the Mayor proposes Foxhall and MacArthur budgets identical to what is shown above, would you want to change them, if so, how?”

### **David Krucoff (the only Republican)**

Preserving Hardy Park and Use of the GDS Site Jackson Reed (formerly Wilson) High School and Alice Deal Middle School are overcrowded. We need a new public middle school and high school in Ward 3. However, it is not clear, that a new elementary school is needed now, particularly in Foxhall Village. The combined population of Foxhall and Palisades is not increasing and both Key School and Stoddert Elementary can be expanded as was previously planned. The following points in the complicated story must be made:

- (1) The Department of General Services (“DGS”) should not have renewed its lease with the Lab School through

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### **Join the FCCA Listserv!!**

Keep up-to-date with all happenings in your community, such as developments with the schools, issues before ANC, community parties, recommendations for repairment, etc. by joining the FCCA Listserv. For more information and to join, check out: [groups.io/g/FCCAlistserv](https://groups.io/g/FCCAlistserv)

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**

**Vipul Bhagat, Treasurer**

725-0144, vipbhagdc@gmail.com

**Michael Delaney, Special Projects**

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

321-1700, cjdewitte@hotmail.com

**Brian Donahue, FCCA Listserv Administrator**

**Paul DonVito, Historic Preservation & Listserve Liaison**

**Nikki Farison, Community Events & Welcome Committee**

**Ann Haas, At Large**

**Janet Nash, At Large**

**Michael O’Connell, GU/ Medstar Construction Liaison**

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

**John Szymkowicz, Bylaws Committee**

**Peter Van Allen, DC Fair Skies & Colony Hill Liaison**

**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](mailto:mcch@dccouncil.us)

**Ward 3 Mayor’s Liaison**

Emir Gur-Ravantab, [emir.gur-ravantab@dc.gov](mailto:emir.gur-ravantab@dc.gov)

**Our ANC Commissioners**, Jason Rao

(ANC 3D06) [3D06@anc.dc.gov](mailto:3D06@anc.dc.gov), J.P. Szymkowicz (ANC 3D09) [jp.szymkowicz@anc.dc.gov](mailto:jp.szymkowicz@anc.dc.gov). For more information, go to [anc3d.org](http://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](mailto:anne.brockett@dc.gov). Historic District Guidelines can be found at [http://foxhall.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/FVHD\\_Design-Guidelines.pdf](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](mailto: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](http://groups.io/g/FCCAlistserv)

2038 without a landlord’s right to terminate with a proper written notice provision, say 24 months. The agency transacted on Christmas Eve 2020 with the Lab School in an opaque manner for a lease term just short of the requirement for Council review and did not provide itself the option to rebuild Hardy at Foxhall as an elementary school if needed.

(2) Hardy Park, located next to the Lab School, was completely renovated in 2021 at a taxpayer cost of over \$5 million after being closed for 9 months. Now the District wishes to add insult to injury in Foxhall by building an elementary school on the Park, destroying the beautifully designed space.

(3) There is not enough room on the parcel for a 500-person elementary school with all the associated land requirements for such a facility and proper road access to the proposed school does not exist.

(4) Indeed, DGS, most likely knows these details, and plans for the new Foxhall elementary may just be a convenient budgetary place holder.

As a candidate for Ward 3 Council, I oppose the development of a new Elementary School on Hardy Park and I will work to see that the park is well maintained as is, where is. In the unlikely event that need for a new elementary school for Palisades and Foxhall arises the mayor supported by the Council should negotiate title for the parcel presently occupied by the Center for Urban Ecology, located at MacArthur and Ellicott, to DGS and build a school there.

DCPS also has plans to build a new high school on the Georgetown Day Lower School site on MacArthur Blvd, one block to the west of Hardy Park. I support this acquisition and development of a new high school although I believe the school should have no greater than 750 students, not the 1,000 as planned, and that it should be 65/35 neighborhood to lottery, not 50/50, as planned.

Where to locate and build a new middle school in Ward 3 remains an open question.

**Phil Thomas**

As Ward 3 Councilmember, I support the budget proposal for a new high school on the GDS property. I will continue to make sure funding is available for the completion of the high school and have tough oversight to ensure the money is being spent and work is being completed in the designated time frame. As a

...Continued on page 3

bridge builder I will continue to work with the DCPS working group and make sure the transportation study is transparent and that feedback is heard from the community and the working group. I am also in favor of leveraging other modes of transportation like bringing the Circulator to the community and the completion of the Trolley trail.

I support saving Hardy Park and am the only candidate opposed to putting a school there. As someone who worked with the Foxhall community and delivered a remodeled park including a long overdue dog park, I will be a vocal advocate for a different location for a new school in Ward 3 to address overcrowding in our elementary and middle schools. As Ward 3 Councilmember, I will continue to keep the money in the budget but find alternate locations for a new elementary school.

I also support the expansion of Stoddert Elementary I which would mitigate the need for the trailers from behind the building. My campaign has continued to knock on 3,000 doors a week and I have heard from the Glover Park community that they do not want an elementary school to split up their neighborhood.

As a former Elementary School teacher and bridge builder, the most important perspective I would bring to the Council is my ground level experience on education and my decade of experience working in the community. Currently there are no Councilmembers who taught in the District which is a fresh perspective we need on the Council.

### **Eric Goulet**

There is an opportunity to make substantial improvements to the current proposals for the new MacArthur Blvd. High School, the Foxhall School, and Stoddert Elementary School in the next year's budget due to the fact that the Council wisely delayed the majority of the funding for these projects by one fiscal year. The Council also allocated \$850,000 to fund an Attendance Zone Boundary Study, beginning October 1, 2022. This study is crucially important for Ward 3 because of the school overcrowding issues we face. We must insist on a data-driven school boundary process that resolves overcrowding issues and allows for Pre-K slots for all three-and-four-year-olds to be available in a student's by-right neighborhood school. If the voters select me as their choice in the Democratic Primary on June 21st, I intend to immediately assemble a team of parents and educational experts in our Ward to work on boundary and feeder pattern issues and guide the District's process. I support the following changes to these school projects:

#### The MacArthur High School

The former site of the Georgetown Day School is the wrong site to build a citywide high school with a proposed 750 - 1,000 seats. First, from a traffic perspective the site can barely accommodate 500 students. Second, there is no convenient way for citywide students to take public transportation to reach this school. I will use the one year delay to find another site for the new high school, or possibly, propose a better location for the Duke Ellington School of the Arts that is METRO accessible, and then propose to make Ellington a by-right school serving the residents of Ward 2 and southern Ward 3. During this year, there will be the opportunity to identify additional sites, but two possible sites include the former Intelsat site and the University of the District of Columbia campus. I believe that the former Wardman Park site and the former Lord & Taylor site are less likely at this point, because they have proceeded forward past initial stages of planning. There will be some interim use of the high school for swing space in the 2022-2023 school year, but I would hope to redirect the \$38,020,000 allocated for this project towards the construction of a new high school on another site.

#### The Foxhall School & Saving Hardy Park

When we find another site for the new high school, we can shift the students designated for the new Foxhall School to the former Georgetown Day School site and reopen this school as a Pre-K 3 to 8th grade school serving the Foxhall neighborhood, which is what it was already designed for when GDS occupied the site. This proposal would drastically reduce parking and traffic issues because the school accommodates roughly 500 students, many of which would be walking or biking from within the neighborhood. This also allows us to Save Hardy Park, which we just spent millions to renovate, because there would be no need to build on the park, which would have resulted in the destruction of Heritage trees and the loss of valuable green space. I would propose shifting the \$17,025,000 in FY23 for the construction of the new Foxhall School to the new high school construction project.

#### Stoddert Elementary School

Additionally, I would ensure that we also keep the Stoddert Elementary School together. Stoddert is a cohesive, livable-walkable school community, and it doesn't make sense to arbitrarily split the Stoddert community to send children to the Foxhall Elementary School. Currently, \$20.5 million is allocated to fund the expansion of Stoddert Elementary in Fiscal Year 2023 and Fiscal Year 2024. I would determine if

additional funds need to be added to the modernization of Stoddert to build it large enough for Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 and to ensure that we don't need to split the Stoddert School community.

### **Matt Frumin**

I do expect we need elementary school capacity in the area of Foxhall. But the right answer is to recover Old Hardy now leased to the Lab School. I would like to see us use carrots and sticks to move the Lab School. The funding in the budget now would allow for enough money to do a renovation of Old Hardy to meet community needs and provide an incentive for Lab to move. I would do all I could to make that happen. If there were no way to move Lab, I would be tracking enrollment and capacity at the neighboring schools to determine whether after seeing post-COVID enrollment trends, additional capacity was called for and if so, how much. There is no way 550 seats would be required. I expect the number would be under 300. If need be, after exhausting Lab options and assessing needs taking account post-COVID enrollment trends, I could support adding capacity tailored to need near Old Hardy and would look for ways to do it that had minimal or no adverse impacts on the park. I would also be open to exploring other sites.

If the Hardy community including from the feeder elementary schools embrace the idea of a MacArthur High School, which presumably would mean they were empowered to play a lead role in shaping the new school, then it would be a good idea and should be pursued. That said, the current proposal for a 1000 student school with a heavy citywide component does not make sense for many reasons. MacArthur is an irredeemably terrible site for a citywide school or program. As the Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators (SHAPPE) an alliance of advocates for high schools around the city has suggested, MacArthur High School should be no more than 750 and narrowly tailored to address overcrowding at Jackson-Reed (formerly Wilson) High School. I would oppose a 1000 student school at MacArthur, but could support a 750 student one there if the idea were embraced generally by the Hardy community. Jackson Reed High School suffers from particularly acute overcrowding. It is important that that be addressed. The MacArthur High School will not fully address the Jackson Reed issues, but will help.

The idea has been raised that the MacArthur site be used as a PK-8 school. While apparently tantalizingly attractive to the nearby neighbors, it is important to try to think through how and if that would work. Siting schools and drawing

boundaries are fraught and input and buy-in are key, hence the importance of Hardy community buy-in for a MacArthur High School. What boundary would the contemplated PK-8 cover? Will the families in the boundary embrace it? If it were to serve the students who might naturally have gone to Foxhall, it would be no more than 45 students a grade, so middle grades with 135 students total. There has been a move away from PK-8 because of the challenge of delivering full middle school services to the small cohorts in such schools. Would DCPS do this while they are converting PK-8's elsewhere in the city to PK-5's? Would families in the area give up rights to Hardy and their current elementary school for this option? Move the model up to 72 students a grade. Now the catchment area would need to be significantly larger and you would have 216 middle schoolers and around 750 students overall. Where would all of those students come from? Would those families give up Hardy and their current elementary school to go there? What would the ramifications be for other schools in the area? Would a 216 student middle school cohort be sufficient? While neighbors may like the idea of a very small PK-8, does that work, literally for anyone else? Does it even work for the neighbors? A significantly higher percentage of PK-8 students are likely to be dropped off and picked up by car than high school students. Is that what neighbors and others who use MacArthur Boulevard seek?

I have not been on the front lines of the recent debates in your community on these subjects, but it seems clear to me that the problem is a breakdown in openness to assess needs in the context of the needs of others. From my perspective, it does not matter where fault lay in that breakdown. What matters is that the discussion shift so folks on all sides are looking at how they can make it work for all. In that space, a 1,000 student high school and a 550 student elementary school would be off the table, but a discussion about how to make it work so the park is preserved, there is not an undue imposition on neighbors and very serious school overcrowding issues are addressed in a way that meets the needs and expectations of families and school communities would be very much on the table. I may not tell any of the stakeholders in this conversation exactly what they want to hear, indeed I know full well that I do not and take pride in my willingness to be open, candid and creative. But I am very knowledgeable and experienced on these issues, respectful and determined to work with others to come up with durable solutions that succeed (and have a long track record of doing just that). This has been and will be a hard conversation for your community, and I am the best choice to try to work with



you to change the tenor of the conversation and come to a resolution that can succeed for all.

### **Beau Finley**

We have substantial overcrowding at Key, Mann, and Stoddert elementary schools, which we have to address both through expansion (e.g., Stoddert) and through building a new school. A neighborhood school in Foxhall would alleviate overcrowding for these three Ward 3 elementary schools, which DCPS projects will be 433 students overcapacity by School Year 2028, combined. While a new school on Hardy Park is not ideal given the disruption to a wonderful community asset (fortunately only taking up 10% of the current park space), I would support the \$55 million for the project, though I would seek additional funding to mitigate the effects of traffic on the community, leveraging the likely results of the traffic study. Aside from having a walkable neighborhood school in Foxhall, there is also the added benefit of the additional educational space: universal pre-k3 classes, which are not currently available at Key, Mann, and Stoddert due to overcrowding.

My fellow candidate, Henry Cohen, has spoken passionately and firmly about overcrowding and its negative effects at Jackson-Reed. We are in desperate need of an additional high school. Upon announcement of the MacArthur school, I wondered how students from across the District will make it to the campus. It is not readily accessible by transit, and will make for an incredibly long trek for students from Wards 1, 4-8. I have proposed an Acquisition Fund that would allow the District to move nimbly to procure private property for sale in order to fill critical needs. Had one been in place, perhaps the Intelsat site or the Wardman Park Marriott could have filled the role of the GDS campus. I hope a more centrally located 50/50 local/District-magnet site can be found near transit, but absent the sudden availability of a new site, I would support the proposed budget for the MacArthur school.

### **Ben Bergmann**

As an ANC Commissioner and the current Chair of ANC3D, I am very familiar with the school proposals, the arguments for and against, and the toxic tone that has defined discussion of these issues in our community. While I acknowledge that the sites are not ideal, I support the school plans for the reasons discussed below. We need to act aggressively to increase school capacity to meet existing and project demand. I completely understand the concerns about increased traffic and lack of reliable public transit (both ob-

viously linked). Speaking personally as a parent of children that will one day attend the MacArthur High School, I have no idea how they will get there. But this problem is solvable and we would be wise to capitalize on the concerns relating to lack of transit connectivity to the schools by finally making real investments in public transit in Palisades, Foxhall, and Georgetown. A huge focus of my campaign is the need to invest in transit (more bus lanes and signal priority, building out a Home Rule transit network using the Circulator and the Streetcar to fill in gaps in the existing system, and pushing long-term for Metrorail expansion on Wisconsin Avenue from Tenleytown to Georgetown).

Everyone who has followed this issue closely is aware that overcrowding is a major problem in the Jackson-Reed (Wilson) feeder pattern, which includes Ward 3. Investing in expanding existing school buildings to meet future and not just present demand will be critical. It is important that we get it right at Stoddert and not repeat the pattern of renovating school facilities to meet current demand rather than planning effectively for future growth. But we cannot just renovate and expand our way out of the problem. We need to build more public schools in Ward 3. Overcrowding flows from chronic underinvestment, yes, but it is also a reflection of the confidence many families feel in the quality of education their child will receive at our local schools. At the same time, we need to invest in ensuring that every family in every ward has confidence in the quality of their neighborhood school, just as families in Ward 3 clearly do.

Like school renovation (essential but not the solution by itself), the proposed schools on MacArthur and Foxhall are necessary to reduce overcrowding, but not sufficient, by themselves. We will need to identify other sites, especially to reduce overcrowding at Deal, which isn't reduced at all by the MacArthur and Foxhall plans.

On Hardy Park, I certainly understand why neighbors are so passionate about this issue. One of the great things about DC is that we have so much parkland and a neighborhood park is more than just green space, it is a focal point for the community. As an ANC Commissioner I have supported the Foxhall Elementary plans and I will continue to do so as a Councilmember. In both roles, I have been consistent that the District should commit to a plan that minimizes impact on Hardy Park as much as possible. Building a taller than typical school, for example, or exploring the feasibility of moving some existing parking underground in order to further minimize reduction of actual parkland. I think that this is feasible, although it will make the project more expensive. Accomplishing the project with limited impact on the park

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will be easier if we work to re-negotiate the lease for the Old Hardy School, either to fully relocate Lab or to design a colocated school site that efficiently uses/shares space (e.g. consolidated faculty parking, coordinated dropoff/pickup, etc.). (On the lease, I have said at debates that I think the lease extension was outrageous and a perfect example of what happens when there is a culture allergic to aggressive oversight on the Council, i.e. people think they will never be held accountable or forced to answer hard questions.)

However, I want to acknowledge that my support for the school sites is not dependent on the District and WMATA making all of the transit investments that I want to see in the ANC 3D area, nor will I caveat my support for the proposed Foxhall Elementary with redlines about the amount of parkland I am willing to see repurposed for school use. This is a hard public policy problem because there are compelling policy goals on both sides. For me, ensuring our public school system has sufficient resources and capacity to deliver an excellent education to every child will always be a top priority. I would prefer to see zero impact on greenspace at Hardy Park. I am not gleeful at the prospect that parkland could be repurposed so shortly after completion of the recent renovation. But while reducing the park's footprint isn't ideal, it is worth it if we are doing so as part of a major investment in our local public schools. We aren't building a parking lot or a shopping mall or a post office, we are building a public school, a building that will be an anchor of the neighborhood for decades to come, just like Hardy Park. In fact, I dare say that 1 or 2 decades from now (maybe even sooner) a majority of Foxhall residents will be grateful that the local school is colocated with the park and that there is an elementary and high school so close to home.

To conclude, I want to say that I have been disappointed with how the debate over the schools has devolved into bitter acrimony. I am optimistic that we can chart a better path as the process progresses. We all stand to gain by working together

to make these projects successful. Doing that means taking the concerns about the schools, from the Foxhall community, from Stoddert families, and others, seriously and working to address them as much as we can without backsliding on the need to build both schools.

**The following Candidates did not respond to the request: Tricia Duncan, Henry Cohen, Deirdre Brown, and Monte Monash.** Based on their responses in the Palisades/Chevy Chase debate where a question about Foxhall was asked directly and their websites, these appear to be their positions:

**Tricia Duncan**

Strongly supports both schools as a central point of her campaign. She claims to "instrumental in securing over \$150 million ..." in funding for both schools. Wants to have the Lab lease rescinded. Has stated that at least some Stoddert students should be redistricted to Foxhall.

**Henry Cohen**

Strongly supports any new schools regardless of location including specifically, Foxhall and MacArthur. Wants to rescind lease but says it is hard to do.

**Deirdre Brown**

Favors using MacArthur. Says it is unlikely that Lab lease could be rescinded. Unclear on Foxhall.

**Monte Monash**

Supports high school at MacArthur. Says Lab School lease is hard to rescind but would look into it. Appears to have no position on what to do with Foxhall if Lab stays.

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**Thank you for your support!**

If you would like to talk about how your interests might mesh with the FCCA's current needs for volunteers - including newsletter delivery and attending ANC meetings - let us know!

Sure, call me!

**Membership Form for the Calendar Year**

Members must reside within FCCA area, be present, and be over 18 years of age to vote at meetings. Memberships are for the calendar year. Please make checks out to the Foxhall Community Citizens Association. Send to FCCA c/o Conrad J DeWitte Jr, Secretary, 1613 44th St NW, Washington, DC 20007 or bring to a meeting!

**Standard Memberships**

- \$25 Household
- \$15 Senior Household
- \$25 Non-Resident

**Booster Memberships**

- \$250 Patron
- \$100 Advocate
- \$50 Sponsor
- Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names (LAST, First, as you wish listing to appear, Ex: DOW, Jane & John Smith)

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