Testimony prepared for Zoning Commission
Emergency Rule Making & Text Amendments to Permit Public Recreation & Community Centers as a Matter of Right Use in the R1 Zone
By Jane Lincoln
July 1, 2002

I appreciate this opportunity to testify in this case. I am Jane Lincoln, a DC native. I live with my husband and children a half block from Turkey Thicket Playground in the Greater Brookland neighborhood. I understand that each of you are volunteers and I deeply appreciate your dedication to our city. This is the first time I have ever testified so please forgive my nervousness.

I wouldn't be here taking your time if an extraordinary series of events hadn't taken place in my neighborhood beginning on April 9 of this year. That day, a neighbor sent an email to our Brookland listserv, which has over 200 members and generally discusses things like "does anybody know a good plumber?" This email announced: "Meeting at Turkey Thicket Recreation Center, April 10, 2002 7PM. Subject: Latest construction plans on recreation center and progress report. A representative from Parks & Rec to answer questions. Please attend." There had been rumors for years that the rec center would be renovated. Here was notice, less than 24 hours before an important meeting, by means of email, which many of my Turkey Thicket neighbors do not have. The next day, another neighbor expressed her outrage on the listserv: "As a homeowner who lives nearly across the street from Turkey Thicket... I think Turkey Thicket could use some improvements, but shoving [them] down neighboring homeowners' throats like this is NOT the proper way for public planning to be done ... Why has the neighborhood not been presented the plans with adequate time to discuss traffic, parking, congestion, noise and other legitimate concerns?"

What does this have to do with Matter of Right? It's taken the neighborhood weeks to figure out the connection between those first public meetings and the amendments before you. Brookland is lucky indeed to have one neighbor who happens to be a transportation policy expert and another who publishes The Common Denominator. Through documents obtained with Freedom of Information Act requests and posted to the Brookland email group, we've learned that the Turkey Thicket project is a test case to promote a hasty, wasteful, and undemocratic process throughout D.C.

Please vote against these amendments. Please do not give the Department of Parks and Recreation a "matter of right" to build whatever it wants to throughout the city without proper planning, coordination, or public involvement. The DPR asks for this "emergency" change because it did not do its homework and wants to proceed with contracts & construction anyway. I'm no expert, but I think that matter of right means that no zoning variance would be necessary (and also no community input or transportation studies or environmental impact studies either).

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 02-15
EXHIBIT NO. 24
Case 02-15
Exhibit 24

As I stated, the Turkey Thicket neighbors first learned of the plans for construction on April 9th, and a groundbreaking was held on May 3rd!

Since then, we have learned via the listserv that the Department of Parks and Recreation was cited in September of 2001 for its contracting and procurement practices. In his cover letter to the report, Inspector General Maddox states: "Failure to address these deficiencies will continue to create the potential for waste, fraud, and abuse at the agency." These concerns do not inspire confidence.

The DPR organized a series of public meetings. And when dozens of us dutifully showed up, we were shown plans that were hours old and that the presenters could not even read. As one neighbor put it: "I would hate to make a 8 million dollar decision based on 8 cents worth of information." And we were lied to: transportation and environmental studies would be made available to us when in fact none had been performed. We became alarmed.

In addition to my testimony, I am submitting for the record 100 pages of discussion of the Turkey Thicket construction project on the Brookland listserv to illustrate a couple of points:

- Community discussion and vigorous participation in meetings DOES NOT IMPLY community endorsement, as DPR claims it does;
- The community meetings held by the DPR were confusing: part single member district, part DPR, part Mayor's Office. Who IS in charge, we wonder; and lastly,
- Our community is FULL of ideas on how to improve Turkey Thicket to truly serve the community that surrounds it. I'm sure this is true of all the communities that surround the recreation centers of this city. Community input early on is critical to success. If anyone is interested in actual planning, BEFORE zoning issues and site plans are drawn up, come on down!

This process has also created hard feelings, which have to do with race and class, as is often the case in this town. The voices on the listserv that have raised questions about this process are equally African American and European American, with a few Latino and Asian voices as well. Yet, there are people in our neighborhood who would have you believe that only white newcomers are raising questions. The hasty process pushed on us by the Department of Parks & Rec has led to pain and ugliness. I predict that this divisive process will play out throughout this city, if the text amendments are adopted and DPR proceeds as it has.

Let my neighbors speak through me:

"If there are codes or a particular process to follow please don't give us any less consideration than the people in Ward 3, Georgetown, or Upper NW. [I can't imagine that the neighbors surrounding Lafayette or Macomb Rec Centers in Ward 3 would put up with this!] .... Such a thing would not happen in the aforementioned areas or else there would be a major lawsuit. Why should we in Ward 5 demand anything less than the same due respect?"

"I'm really torn about whether a pool should be built at all. Is this a good use of DC money? When summer school has been slashed, Duke Ellington School can't make payroll, and a fabulous Olympic pool open to the community is going up at Trinity? Langdon pool is open in the summer and the under-utilized Ft Lincoln pool the rest of the year? I know the rec center needs to be improved upon, and the programs supported and expanded, but a huge new building is not necessary for that. Is there anyone in the DC government looking at the big picture?"

"I do NOT want this discussion about a rec center to degenerate into "newcomers" versus "the community" when in fact some of the longest residents were the most critical of the process. Yet I fear this could turn into a very divisive issue. There are class and racial tensions just below the surface."

"It strikes me as inordinately odd--and irresponsible--that we would build pools every few blocks in this community, odder still that this planning and construction would be done by people under investigation and the eye of the inspector general, and oddest of all that the political leadership of the ward would waste this amount of the public's money. We now know that $8 million isn't nearly enough for the proposed facility-- if it is to have any equipment at all--so ask yourself what this is all about."

"The zoning issues make this a test case. If the citizens of Brookland don't insist on respectful communication and process, the rest of the city is sunk. "

"No matter what happens, we must be about building community across race and class lines."

I will end with this voice from my neighborhood, which echoes our hopes for a positive outcome:

"When we get beyond the current difficulties, and even before, I urge us to imagine a new Turkey Thicket:

* constructed from the ground up by the combined wisdom of its local caretakers and lovers of this community.
* contained within the ecological limits of its place: using only so much air, water, space as ... its particular situation dictate.
* designed to reflect the past present and future spirit of this neighborhood, its hopes and ambitions, reflected in its architecture, landscape and friendly capabilities open to the neighborhood in which it is a commons to be shared peacefully by all."

Thank you.

For submission to the DC Zoning Commission on occasion of hearings regarding "Emergency Rulemaking and Setdown for Text Amendments to Permit Public Recreation and Public Community Center uses as a matter of right in the R-1 zone", July 1, 2002

DISCUSSION ON BROOKLAND LISTSERV
RE: PROPOSED TURKEY THICKET CONSTRUCTION
APRIL 9, 2002 TO JUNE 25, 2002
Collected from and italics added to Brookland@yahoogroups.com by Jane Lincoln.

The notice below is the first awareness that most of the neighborhood had regarding this project, sent on behalf of the ANC Commissioner for 5A-06 by a neighbor.
Date: Tue Apr 9, 2002 8:44 pm
Subject: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center

Meeting at Turkey Thicket Recreation Center Date: **April 10**, 2002 Time: 7PM
Subject: Latest construction plans on recreation center and progress report.
A representative from Parks & Recreation to answer questions.
Please attend.
JW

From: NewsDC@a...
Date: Thu Apr 11, 2002 10:58 pm
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Recreation Center

Is anybody else among my Turkey Thicket neighbors as upset as I am about the apparent last-minute rush for heaven only knows what reason to have the neighborhood weigh in on the Turkey Thicket development project?
I'm just seeing the below message this evening about a meeting that was apparently held yesterday (I note that the message was sent less than 24 hours before the meeting was held).
Tonight, I arrived home at nearly 10 p.m. to find a neighbor's note in my front door and another neighbor's telephone message on my machine to inform me about a meeting and "neighborhood vote" to be held at 6 p.m. Friday, April 12th, to select one of two Turkey Thicket development plans.
As a homeowner who lives nearly across the street from Turkey Thicket, I am extremely angry. Yes, I think Turkey Thicket could use some improvements, but shoving improvements down neighboring homeowners' throats like this is NOT the proper way for public planning to be done -- especially when it involves the expenditure of large sums of public tax dollars and when EXTREMELY POOR (passive) attempts are made by the government to inform neighboring property owners of how their property will be affected.
Why has the neighborhood not been presented the plans with adequate time to discuss traffic, parking, congestion, noise and other legitimate concerns?
And what genius decided that a Friday night was a good time to hold an important neighborhood meeting and vote?
Regardless of how supportive I might be of a Turkey Thicket development plan if I were given a legitimate chance for input, I am inclined to oppose anything that someone expects me to simply rubber stamp.
Why has so little effort been made to inform Turkey Thickets' neighbors about the details of this project?
KS, 10th Street homeowner
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Date: Fri Apr 12, 2002 7:10 am
Subject: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center

In last night meeting Mr. Cornelius Haynes of the Department of Parks & Recreation had introduced us to the Mr. Bob Oudit who is the Project Manager of the Construction of facility. The firm that will be doing the Civil Design is Joe Jackson Associates and the Contractor RK Contractors and the architectural firm 2 conceptual plans were presented to us **both of which had 2 Entrances on facing 10th Street and the other facing Michigan Avenue**. The both building was approximately 39000 square foot. Also they had indoor pool 25'x75', toddler, & therapeutic pools, indoor basketball court, (2) 500 square foot classrooms with removable partitions, exercise room, office, etc.. There is a parking lot with entrance from Michigan Avenue. Also the dominant entrance to the building is from Michigan Avenue. **Within 5 days a final concept must be decided upon. The completion of facility must be within 420 days from March 18, 2002.** Because of a major sewer line and setbacks requirements the location and floor plan of building is very restricted. As K has indicated a short 30 minute meeting will be at Brookland Elementary be Friday, April 12, 2002 at 6:00pm to chose one of the two plans. During last Wednesday's meeting most people liked plan #2 the more contemporary plan.

In the future I agree with K that there needs to be better communication between the people and the government. The only reason I found out about Wednesday's meeting was because I emailed council members, the mayors office and whoever else would listen about the community not privy development information on Turkey Thicket Recreation Center. After talking to Velda Bell of Council members Orange's office and constantly calling Parks & Recreation and even going to Parks & Recreation to view current plans on April 5, 2002 Ms. Johnson from Mr. Haynes' office, Parks & Recreation, called me on Monday April 8, 2002 at 10:16 AM to inform me there was a meeting on Wednesday to View the 2 concept plans. I keep wondering how the Turkey Thicket Recreation planning committee was chosen and when.

People we must find a better way to communicated the people and the government. There needs to be more accountability especial for disbursement of what should be public information.
JW

Date: Sat Apr 13, 2002 10:52 am
Subject: Turkey Thicket Park
Last night was the vote on the Building plans but I could not really vote. I am very perplexed about the whole thing. I had kind of decided at one point to be neutral on this issue and to just collect and disperse information. I really don't mind a new facility but I do care about crime, trash, maintenance, and staffing. These are issues that we who lived in close proximity will have to live with for the next 100 years. It's very embarrassing to have guest be afraid to send their children to the park because they see negative activity on 10th Street. I am very dissatisfied with not being informed. I don't understand why the board of education and parks & recreations will not collaborate on Brookland & Turkey Thicket Recreation Center and create a plan in which so much green place is taken up. I really don't understand why they close the original Brookland Elementary and later reopen it and add on to it. **That's bad planning.** My

mother used to say best sense is bought sense. But in the case of bought sense who will pay the price. We that pay taxes do. My mother used to also say haste makes waste. I feel that we, not me, we the tax payer and voters need more information before making concrete such decision. **A lot of people feel they haven't been informed of meetings etc. and do believe that this is nothing to lie about. I have lived here for only a year and a half and I was informed only once about any Single Member District meetings and basically the meetings with all of the 5A I have been notified via email.** Because I am one of the new kids on the block I have had to do a lot of homework to find out about the true status of the Park and not to except just sound bites. **Asked Mrs. Currie if there was a planning committee and told me that there was. Well who are they, how were they selected, when and are any persons on the committee in the immediate vicinity of the park? Also I asked Mrs. Currie if the was an architect or engineers on the committee she said yes, who is he?** There is song out called "Put it Paper" By Anne Nesby and Al Green. Our elected officials need to put it paper to make it legitimate and publicize it. **She told me that she and her community had taken field trips to several different recreation facilities in Maryland for research purposes. Was there a presentation of there research results and when? Has anyone presented numbers and schedules? Has anyone had an operations manager from other updated facilities educate the public on the management, cost and maintenance of their facilities? If the city willing to foot the bill for adequate staffing, security and maintenance on the new facility put it on paper and show us how. After talking to a few residents who live across the street from the North Michigan Park Recreation Center under construction they were very outraged they were not informed of any type of plans on North Michigan Park Recreation. The number one thing that they had told was to make sure all planning meeting minutes are written up and publicize and that all research, etc. is publicize.**

Also I wonder if the activities have been planned out this will also have big impact on the design of a new facility. I have been the member of quite a few health & fitness clubs, YMCAs and rec centers (http://www.pwcparks.org/chinn/, http://www.ymca.net/index.jsp, http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/rec/wakerec.htm, http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/rec/shillrec.htm, and I wonder if within the planning of the new recreation center that not only wants are considered but also our needs. I have siblings that aren't even in their 40s yet and they are dealing with hypertension. As someone who is into the promotion of health and fitness, I am not a guru though, I would like to see a recreation center that would promote that within our community. As Americans we deal with obesity, heart disease, and STRESS. As an African American health and fitness education because we deal with higher levels of heart disease, sugar diabetes, breast and prostate cancers. With health care benefit being cut and the rising cost of health prevention, awareness, and education should be promoted. We should not wait until we are old or until we are forced to take care of our fitness especially us parents. Parents spend so much time taking care of family, homes and careers that often neglect their health. I am sorry for the health over kill.

Also it is sad that more people will not run for these ANC positions. Our ANCs need to be challenged. Most of the time they don't have challengers. For people who hold so much political weight in our communities the Legislative and Executive branches should consider that a lot people will not run for these position because the can not afford to be. I noticed that a large number of ANCs are retirees or have jobs that have a lot of flexibility.

From: Brookland@yahoogroups.com
Date: Tue Apr 30, 2002 7:02 am
Subject: Reminder - ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)

We would like to remind you of this upcoming event.
ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)
Date: Tuesday, April 30, 2002 Time: 7:00PM EDT (GMT-04:00)

Meeting at Turkey Thicket Recreation Center. Items on Agenda:
* Metropolitan Day School
* Turkey Thickets Rec.
* Other items

Date: Tue Apr 30, 2002 11:02 am
Subject: RE: [Brookland] Reminder - ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)

First, I want to thank whoever posted this meeting notice about the 5A-06 meeting that will be held tonight at Turkey Thicket. This is the first time--EVER--that anything resembling public notice has been given about a meeting about Turkey Thicket. (There's no description about what "Turkey Thicket" means, however. It could mean cutting the grass, moving the drug boys away for a few minutes, scheduling soccer teams, or building oversized and insufficiently planned facilities.) Because that agenda item is included, however, I would like to add the following comments and hope someone will raise them at tonight's meeting.

1. The notice comes with less than 24 hours notice, no prepared materials for review, and, as such, cannot reasonably be called a "public" meeting.
2. The meeting interferes directly with other meetings occurring tonight in the community that demand the attention of other residents. One, being held at Providence Hospital, involves actions to (attempt to)fix traffic problems created by development and leaders, including the ANC, who failed to think through the consequences of the projects they advocate. (It would be wonderful if ANC 5A-06 looked at Turkey Thicket and Metropolitan Day School in that context, i.e., thought through the down-stream effects of what is being proposed instead of wasting time, mental energy, and money later.)
3. **Because I had heard nothing (except the years-long imminent groundbreaking announcements--there have been dozens) about Turkey Thicket, I wrote the following message to Neil Albert on April 9, 2002:**

"I've just searched, without success, the two most recent capital improvement plans and your website and cannot find an update for Turkey Thicket's planned re-construction. The community has received only incomplete and incorrect information about this project for several years now. What is its status? Exactly what is proposed? (How can we see a copy of the actual plans?) How have these efforts been coordinated with other projects and plans proposed for the area or is this yet another isolated, independent attempt? How is the community to be informed (please do not say ANC, this is wholly inadequate). How much will this cost taxpayers? How are the now present gangs that operate on this playground being dealt with? Has DPR anything in its plans to just do landscaping and clean-up? How will DPR compensate us for lost open space? This site is supposed to a regional park, not a semi-private facility."

On April 10, 2002, Mr. Albert replied:

"We've presented plans for this site to ANC groups and Civic Associations on many occasions. I'm sorry if you missed these meetings. Please call Connie Haynes at 673-7170 for a comprehensive update."

You will note Mr. Albert answers exactly none of my questions, but the real irony of his reply is that Mr. Albert did not bother to mention that on April 10, i.e., the very day of his e-mail, a DPR-sponsored meeting was scheduled (of which most of the neighborhood received no notice--apparently a few homes that front the park got a flyer late in the day of the meeting) to vote on two proposed plans. Hello!!!! This is a large project that requires a DC Register Notice and possibly even hearings, not a stealth meeting where a straw poll from hand-selected participants is taken.

4. 17 people (I think that's the number I read on the e-group, but it could be fewer) who just happened to hear about that April 10 meeting should not be making decisions that affect a whole community. **Go back and do this right. Explain how this project fits in with other plans and projects proposed for the community. What does the transportation study reveal? (Did you even bother to do one?) Could this whole project be better executed by working with the Public School Facilities coordinator and looking to downstream public school needs.** Failing to do this is how Brookland got in trouble with building a school on this playground and opening what became Luke C. Moore in the first place--both decisions of questionable merit.

One does have to wonder about what is being covered up, doesn't one? (Perhaps Mr. Orange could ask questions about this at his May 1 hearing.) I'm reminded that when the DC Vector Control team came to the neighborhood last year we were told that the primary rat hole that was 'supplying' the neighborhood was at Turkey Thicket. What a metaphor!
DP

Date: Tue Apr 30, 2002 11:49 am
Subject: Turkey Thicket Construction/announced rat problem.

Brooklanders,
There is a very important ANC meeting at Turkey Thicket Field House tonight at 7:00PM regarding the construction of the new center. The groundbreaking has been sped up to May 3 from June. At the previous meeting officials from Parks and Recreation stated there would be a major parking and rat problem once construction begins. Commissioner Currie chose not to address that issue at that time but from what I understood, welcomed all concerns at this April 30 ANC meeting.
These issues should be addressed before digging begins.
All residents that live, play, or work near the Turkey Thicket playground should definitely attend. If issues are not addressed tonight the individuals that live in this area will be dealing with major health issues, namely the multiplication of rats from underground infestation. Please try to attend and have your voice heard so the commissioner can properly represent the public.
PO
Brookland Pride Inc.

Date: Wed May 1, 2002 4:46 pm
Subject: Re: Reminder - ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)
I am just wondering if there was any other announcement made about this meeting. It was in my mailbox yesterday and unfortunately I did not get a chance to check my mail yesterday. Was this the only reminder (on the day of the meeting) or did I miss something? I would have liked to have attended. Did anyone go and if so what was discussed?
LH

From: DottiePink@a...
Date: Wed May 1, 2002 4:51 pm
Subject: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center

Ground breaking for the new Turkey Thicket Recreation Center will be held Friday, May 3, 2002, 3:30 p.m. ALL ARE INVITED

Date: Wed, 01 May 2002 16:46:08 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center
I think it is an outrage that the ground breaking will be May 3 at 3:30 with my signs in hand. This is a huge project that should be coordinated with the rebuilding of Brookland Elementary School. SG

Date: Wed, 1 May 2002 18:39:31 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02
from AH
It seems to me that the moment for action is here, past the time for discussion. Although I can't participate physically, I think Susan should be joined by a lot of angry citizens with homemade signs, form a picket line at the ground-breaking, and put out a news release to the media beforehand. I will be glad to help from my home. I can prepare a flyer with, e.g, DP's info which can become a list of demands: "Stop the Digging" , best if they get on people's doorsteps. I recommend that this should be an ad-hoc group, not under any organization's leadership, especially that of elected official's for the reason that this puts glue in the wheels. Two days to pull it together, but it can be done.
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from DP:
The stickler with this one is violation of the law, among other things:
Section 10-137.01 of the DC Code states in part, that the Director of the Department of Recreation shall inform the public of certain changes that "require a long-term or significant modification in the resource management objective of the unit, or is of a highly controversial nature, by publishing such changes as rulemaking in the District of Columbia Register and a major Washington, D.C. metropolitan newspaper."
The Mayor, Albert, and others are violating the city's laws--and they know it!
Re it being a regional park: Turkey Thicket, at least the playground/park part of it, is classified as "regional" by DC Parks and Recreation and is used by teams (soccer leagues mostly) from the District, Maryland, and Virginia. If you'll drive by on any evening, and absolutely all day and night on weekends, you'll find mostly non-District license plates on cars. On Sunday, there's a lady who sells hot food (yes, also in violation of the law) right out the back of her truck. Of

course, all the garbage is left behind for us to pick up and parking is often unavailable for blocks. The District makes money from these games, so they don't want to 'fess up to knowledge about what's going on. Enforcement seems to be a luxury the District can't afford. People tell me the proposed facilities are so big and use up so much of the playground that two sports need to share space on the playground. Parks and Recreation (note this is a name change, it used to be Recreation and Parks) has not dealt with any of these problems. I think the new facilities will actually attract lots of cars from the neighborhood, probably lots of them, as well as from Maryland and Virginia. Having said that, I know the school is full of Maryland kids, so why should I expect that out-of-staters won't get more freebees from the District. **The problem is that not at any level has DPR planned for what's coming: no EIS, no public notice, no plans for traffic or vermin. No added staffing for managing the facility, etc. I haven't seen the plans, so don't know what they propose for parking and other things.** I think it's best to think of this facility as the palace for the drug boys in a rat field.
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Date: Wed, 01 May 2002 23:19:42 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02

I hate to disappoint but I probably won't be there complaining about the groundbreaking despite my original typo filled email. I think a lot of public grumbling about the lack of process will be more effective. It doesn't seem like the worst thing the mayor is doing and I don't want to burn out. I mean there is underfunding the schools, trying to get the Olympics here, developing, developing, developing... I just hope people realize that the lack of process around this kind of building should not be tolerated . The planning of this rec center to meet the regions' and the immediate neighborhoods' needs could have been a great opportunity to get people together to talk about something that could enhance our community. Ah well... There are always some people who are opposed to all change but I do not count myself among them. SG

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 9:06:45 -0400
Subject: Re: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02
S, I appreciate your thoughtful response to my concerns about the Rec Center. I agree, while the planning process could certainly have been more open, that this is not something I would actively oppose as an individual neighborhood resident or as a Ward 5 member. There are many other real battles to be fought such as over health care, affordable housing, etc. LH

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 09:23:41 -0400
Subject: RE: Re: Reminder - ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)
Hi all, I have a query about the notices for ANC meetings....
I've NEVER received a notice about any of the ANC meetings in my mailbox, under my door, nada. My sources are this medium or the information tacked on telephone poles around the neighborhood. Are these notices distributed to all homes in Brookland? If not, is there a place where persons who are not a part of this electronic forum can get information on upcoming meetings? Just curious.
PA, Otis Street

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 09:11:26 -0400

Subject: RE: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02
I would suggest to have a meeting with officials from DC Parks and Recreation to request answers to the many questions that some of us have regarding this new recreation center.
I would also suggest that the Common Denominator investigates this issue and publishes both sides of the controversy.
PG From Sigsbee

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 10:09:52 -0400
Subject: Turkey Thicket Meeting

Dear friends: I attended the Turkey Thicket Meeting Tuesday evening after receiving the email informing us of the event from a neighbor. I had no other notice of it nor did I see a sign anywhere advertising it. As it turned out, the meeting started at 6:30 PM rather than 7:00 PM and a large pile of flyers was sitting on a table outside the meeting room. The meeting was held in the dark - a very apt metaphor - as there was a Pepco problem that got fixed only as the meeting wound down. **As it stands, apparently there have been several meetings of which many of us were totally unaware - possibly because it was known that we would raise objections? We are now faced with a seemingly "done deal." A plan for a building has been adopted - but the specs were not available at the time of this meeting.** - It has been decided to build a small parking lot - 89 spaces only - that will enter/exit on Michigan Avenue. Unfortunately, there is much talk of tennis tournaments - so the amount of parking is totally inadequate in light of plans like that.
There is hope that a deal will be cut with Brookland School to use their parking lot after school hours - but that lot isn't very big either. No real plan is in place to deal with the rats - although Ms. Currie did indicate she would invite Vector control to the next meeting - the time of which will be announced at the groundbreaking on Friday - 3:30 PM at the field.
As the focus of this meeting was to deal with the groundbreaking - there was no occasion to raise issues of additional trash receptacles/collection or security. Estimates of starting time ranged from 2 weeks to unknown.
MEK Since I'm not a member of the group, please forward. MK

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 10:14:10 EDT
Subject: Re: Re: Reminder - ANC 5A06 Meeting (Turkey Thicket)
I don't receive notices about anc meetings either, it seems like you have to
already be in the loop to know what is going on or make a considerable effort
to find out. It probably costs too much to mail to everyone but I wish there
were some way to include more people or disseminate the info more broadly.
just my 5cents! HB

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 17:03:20 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Meeting
Thanks to M.E. K for her report.
Why the haste, why the secrecy, why the speeding-up of deadlines? I suspect that what we may have here is not a neighborhood recreation development, nor even a regional swimming facility for sweaty kids in the summer, but, just possibly a Sports Complex for the Olympics.

But, who knows? Not us.
AH
Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 15:37:05 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Meeting

Thank you for relaying the meeting information. I was also at the meeting and agree with Mary's assessment. As someone who lives in the immediate vicinity of the Park my concern is the lack of notification and community input, maintenance, staffing and security. Like I have said in the past whatever is built we might have to live with for the next 100 years. Although this may be a minor subject to some **we must let our elected officials know that we are a community intact and involved. If there are codes or a particular process to follow please don't give us any less consideration than the people in Ward 3, Georgetown, or Upper NW. Within the Mayor's 2002 Budget and Proposed 2003 Budget for Parks and Recreation Turkey Thicket isn't mentioned although quite a few other facilities are.** In the committee of the whole meetings I see the council debate legislation for Ward 3's parking dilemma yet proper notification of major developments, especially when code is not followed, in the greater Brookland area is not an issue. **Such a thing would not happen in the aforementioned areas or else there would be a major lawsuit. Why should we in ward 5 demand anything less than the same due respect.** I do believe in accountability. Also my motto for DC is you pay more for less, more taxes less services, although I have seen drastic improvements the last few years. I lived in Fairfax, Virginia 1 ½ years before moving to the District and my state withholding is a whole lot more here. Whenever there is an special exception, preliminary plan submittal or rezoning all property owners in the immediate vicinity of the project are notified by the developer via certified mail per the Fairfax County Code. No item is approved within 30 days of the postmark date of the mailing. I feel the district need to give their citizen's the same consideration when it comes to notification of a development within their communities. JW

Date: Thu, 2 May 2002 22:24:00 -0400
Subject: Turkey thicket ground-breaking
For anyone interested: I will have a pile of flyers protesting the illegalities of the Turkey Thicket development available for anyone who cares to stop here tomorrow, Friday, and pick some up to take to the ground-breaking at 3:30 at Turkey Thicket, to pass out to all comers. politicians, Media, whoever.
AH

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 09:54:03 -0400
Subject: RE: Turkey thicket ground-breaking
What exactly are we protesting?
I am a huge fan of civic action and one of the things I love about Brookland is the informed and involved citizenry. However, I'm still confused about the rec center and what exactly folks want to protest. I got the impression that most of us were upset about how the city government handled the process of informing and involving the citizens of Brookland about the plans for building the center (poor publicizing of meetings etc)and the impact the construction will have on our community and daily lives (rats, traffic issues, garbage etc) -- i.e. bad process.
or

Are folks upset about having a rec center in the neighborhood in general. If so, why? I am personally not opposed to having a facility where young and old can meet up and engage in some much needed physical activity. I'd love quick access to a pool, b-ball and tennis courts, exercise classes etc. If this is what the center is about I'll shrug off my irritation w/ the city government about the bad process. However, I really don't know exactly what services the center will offer, who will have access to these services, fees, management etc. I'd love some more information from anyone who knows the real deal in order to make an informed decision about whether to join the protests. Look forward to hearing from you. Thanks.
PA, Otis Street

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 11:09:24 EDT
Subject: turkey thicket
P,
I think the concern here is the lack of information and organization during the process of planning this project. Meetings were set and not publicized and crucial decisions were made without a quorum. Issues such as design of building, plan for eliminating greenspace, plan for existing greenspace, control of major rat problem which parks and recreation stated will exist, and the lack of a transportation study are all issues that have the community concerned. The fact that these issues were never addressed and the project rushed to groundbreaking is what has the community concerned and upset.
I do not believe the consensus does not want this facility, it's more like....if you are going to build something with this great an impact on the surrounding areas it should be done right.....and that means before.....not after.....ground is broken.
Hope these concerns, as described here, allows you to understand better the issue and the sense of urgency at hand.
PO

Date: Fri, 03 May 2002 17:27:34 -0000
Subject: Re: Turkey thicket ground-breaking
MOST PEOPLE THAT I SPEAK ARE UPSET BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND NOT BEING INFORMED. IT SEEMS AS THOUGH A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE, MOST OF WHOM THE IDENTITIES ARE UNKNOWN, HAVE MADE A DECISION FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. HOW THIS GROUP WAS SELECTED TO REPRESENT US IS ALSO UNKNOWN. PRETTY MUCH YOUR FIRST OBSERVATION IS HOW MOST PEOPLE THAT I HAVE SPOKEN TO FEEL. JW

--- In Brookland@y..., PA...> wrote:
> What exactly are we protesting?

Date: Fri, 03 May 2002 14:27:03 -0400
Subject: why oppose the rec center?
You ask good questions, P. I live a block from Turkey Thicket and I want to add a couple of concerns to the ones PO, DP, JW and others have raised, and I don't think it is ill-tempered to do so. There is a budget crunch coming: will this project be well-designed and well-executed? There are already basket ball courts and they are apparently historic. Will the staffing allow for 6

am til 11pm use? The design "voted" on by the few neighbors present is "modern" (which can be great or really tacky, see the new Brookland School) and has at least two outdoor alcoves that look like perfect set ups for the expansion of the current "pharmaceutical distribution" business that already exists by the old rec center. **There is a lovely and underused and free pool at Ft. Lincoln that is part of the Thurgood Marshall Elementary School. If young people want to join a swim team that is well coached I understand they are begging for Swimmers over there. You can pay to join Catholic U's pool or go for a couple of bucks to Rollingcrest Pool near K-Mart in PG. Providence Hospital used to have inexpensive water aerobics at their pool. There is a new rec center by Lincoln Road that I hear is only one year old yet already having problems. There's a new rec center being built in Michigan Park.**
I think there could be many more programs that could operate out of the little brick center that exists if folks would join hands and support it instead of schlepping to the west part of the city for T ball, soccer, etc. It would take some real effort, by me included. Meanwhile we lose some of the most beautiful open space in our area (that is not private like CUA quad or the Franciscan Monastery).The new rec center could be a good thing and if it goes forward I will try to stay in the loop and see if there's a way to demand proper security, staffing, maintenance, lighting, etc. The track record of Parks & Rec, and the way this has been brought about makes me highly suspicious. The ANC rep for the Turkey Thicket area made it clear to me, when I brought up issues like parking & transportation, that the only thing that is perfect is a cemetery. Hmm. Democracy is messy. I'm sorry but it is. Process is tedious, but its there for a reason. And this neighborhood isn't NEARLY as well organized as it needs to be. I think this egroup is helping a lot. (Continuous thanks to SG for starting & moderating it.)
My 2 cents du jour.
JL

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 15:38:29 -0400
Subject: RE: why oppose the rec center?
Thanks J. I appreciate your thoughts. They absolutely help to clarify things. **I agree that if DC Parks Service is responsible for this project it will likely be a disaster -- they have a terrible record.** I've already called V. Orange and complained and plan to continue to do so until he picks up the phone or returns a phone call. Thanks also for the tips on places to swim and work out etc. I've lived in the neighborhood for close to 2 yrs and didn't know about these.
P-

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 16:01:37 -0400
Subject: RE: why oppose the rec center?
I could not agree more. P on Sigsbee

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 16:50:21 EDT
From: BrooklandPride
Subject: just returned from groundbreaking
Had to be there to believe it.
Really no one from community was present. Crowd on hand included Commissioner Currie and a small group of friends that were at her side during all last minute meetings. Bob Artist

spoke of the history of Turkey Thicket which mainly consisted of the slaves hunting and than cleaning Turkeys to feed President Jefferson and Col. Brooks up in the "big house".
Rest of crowd made up of government officials, developers, and the mayor's body guards.
Dino Drudi? was on the podium representing the support of Michigan Park citizens.
Did the citizen's association give him permission to do that?
PARKS AND RECREATION SET A MEETING FOR MAY,9 TO ANSWER ALL COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND INPUT AT TURKEY THICKET BUILDING. AFTER THE FACT BUT THE ATTENDENCE OF THE COMMUNITY THAT DESERVES ANSWERS ON ALL THESE ISSUES, INCLUDING THE CONTROL OF RATS IN THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS, MUST BE THERE! Please mark date and set time aside. 6:30 sharp! The organizers have been known to cover important issues early.
P0, Brookland Pride Inc.

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 18:14:13 -0400
Subject: RE: why oppose the rec center?
Thank you JL and others for all your insights and information. A couple more thoughts...
I live on 10th and Perry and go running at Turkey Thicket park frequently. I am really concerned with how frequent community park-goers (kids, adults, teenagers, basketball players, rugby teams, tennis players, etc) will be disturbed and or displaced by this huge project that they were not consulted about or involved in creating.
The very little information most of us know about this (last minute email postings the day of meetings?) is b/c we are on the list serve, neighbors informing each other. Imagine how many folks in the neighborhood who use the park aren't on the list serve. They will be taken by complete surprise!

I agree with concerns that have been raised about this process. For development to be sustainable, the community being "developed" must have active participation and determination of its own needs, goals and quality of life definitions in any project planned. I can't make it to the may 9th meeting but I would like to participate in whatever actions/steps that people may pursue to gain more involvement in present or future decision-making. One of the bigger myths of top-down development is when those carrying it out say it is "too late" to change the steps that have been taken. If only to prevent this from happening again, I agree that we need to insist that pertinent authorities be held accountable to the community for the project in turkey thicket.
Take Care,
CB, Perry St NE

Date: Fri, 3 May 2002 18:47:16 EDT
Subject: Re: why oppose the rec center?
You know, I've read all the postings about the "proposed" rec center, and it certainly does seem that Parks and Recreation have an obligation to include our neighborhood in the planning process. **Are there other entities and officials who should also be informing us? Vincent Orange? Any of the at-large city council members? ANC commissioners? Is there some way for us to avoid this happening again?** MZ

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 08:07:22 EDT
Subject: Turkey Thicket
Has anyone on this list heard any discussion about the construction logistics for the new rec center? I was surprised to find out at the groundbreaking yesterday that the building itself will be sited on 10th Street, rather than Michigan Avenue.
Connie Haynes, the guy in charge of capital projects for Parks & Rec, tells me that construction is expected to start this summer and last 12-14 months. I wonder if the "neighborhood task force" that has supposedly been working for four years with Parks & Rec on this project can tell us what was discussed about construction logistics. **And could someone PLEASE identify for us who the people are in our neighborhood who were a part of this neighborhood task force, so that we know who we can ask for details of the planning that was done? If there was a task force, there should be more people to speak about this than just our ANC commissioner.**

I think all of us who live within spitting distance of Turkey Thicket need to know such things as the construction hours (noise), whether any of the work has potential to affect the foundations of our homes, how on-street parking in the neighborhood will be affected both during and after construction, where the entry point to Turkey Thicket will be located for heavy construction equipment and how this will affect traffic patterns in the neighborhood (i.e., will we need to alter our commute pattern to get to work on time?). These are just a few of the questions I have about the planning. Does anyone have any answers?
As a footnote, I also am disappointed that Parks & Rec brought flyers about the May 9th meeting to the groundbreaking -- attended by few of our neighbors, since it was held during the work day -- but no one from Parks & Rec seemed to think it was a good idea to spend part of their time while in the neighborhood actually walking around and putting flyers in the neighbors' doors. Seems to have been a perfect opportunity wasted. The meeting already is less than seven days away -- so how much notice does the city plan to give to neighborhood residents and property owners for this meeting? As a taxpayer, I think it is incumbent upon Parks & Rec -- part of the executive branch of our government -- to notify property owners about this. Are they delegating to civic associations (which are dues-paying membership organizations) and ANCs again?
--KS
10th Street homeowner

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 09:27:33 EDT
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket
Also, does anyone know whether D.C. law requires that an environmental impact study be done for a project such as this, which will have a tremendous effect on the neighborhood? I know the city's failure sometimes to perform these studies has in the past caused great controversy in some of the wealthier neighborhoods in D.C. I haven't heard anyone mention an EIS on the Turkey Thicket project.
--KS

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 09:40:24 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket
"Curioser and curioser" said someone to Alice (in Wonderland)I offer my house for a meeting on Tuesday evening at 7:00pm for anyone, either on this list or known to people on this list, who want to discuss

together just what we know of the plans for the new Sports Complex, the implications of the changes in the use of Turkey Thicket entailed therein, who is responsible, what plan of action we should begin to form in response to what looks to be a significant change, indeed, a "done deal" in our neighborhood? The date and time are arbitrary: the best I could figure before the 9th.. I just feel that we had better act now or let things drift out of our control as citizens.
AH

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 11:04:46 EDT
Subject: Re: why oppose the rec center?

Is everyone in government from top down in the information loop? If members in the chain of government don't all have the same information, how can they take an informed stand themselves? Who is making the ultimate decision that they can capriciously go ahead with a groundbreaking, and is given the authority to do so, without informing the community on public record in advance, because they're so concerned about what long-term qualitative concerns the community might have? This sounds like a mistake in history repeating itself; that a government thinks its indigent community is too stupid to know what's good for itself. **What is government worried about the community exposing by having more advance discussion about the issue, and what is it gaining in the long term out of operating without notifying the community?** Whose interests are being served? Zip code 20017 only has two public parks; Turkey Thicket and Fort Bunker Hill, administered by the Federal government; the National Park Service. Turkey Thicket is the only recreation area for sports. The organized groups who come, either from in town or the suburbs, to use it will frown on the lack of advance notice, consequently giving the city a bad name. Soccer moms need to have time in advance to plan and organize these group outings for the health of their kids, and other parks' spaces are reserved and schedules are backed up. I have jogged through the busy sidewalk area there by myself and had suggestive remarks made by people hanging out in their cars. The kinds of people making those remarks aren't the only ones I, personally, want to see using the Turkey Thicket facilities, or be around and feel safe, especially as it gets dark. A recreation area is something all community members should be able to gravitate to, not stay away from. There are also plans to put the bicycle trail through, but the trail doesn't exist yet. It exists all around Brookland, however. How can the city live up to its "magnificent intentions" as the founding fathers wanted if the wisdom of the community is not brought into play? PV

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 21:07:12 EDT
Subject: Re: why oppose the rec center?
I am new to the "listserve" and also a real estate agent doing business here in Brookland, as well as a 30+ year resident of Brookland. I am excited and think it is wonderful to have so much information available to all of us. I look forward to having a modern, up-to-date recreation facility in our neighborhood. However, as Brookland residents, it will be extremely important that we stay involved throughout the entire development. I was not able to attend the meeting; however, can you tell me if there is a community group that has been allowed to be a part of the planning.
MW

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 22:01:52 -0400
Subject: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli

CB is right when she says that it is not too late to change development plans. One of the sights of San Francisco when I lived there in the 70's was a section of freeway onramp that was built by officials who hoped to railroad citizens into approving a freeway through the center of the city. They were never able to fund the rest of the highway. They had banked on people finding the onramp so ugly that they would finish the highway. KS has mentioned a few practical methods for holding up this development until more is known about its true impact on the community. We should use them.
FF

Date: Sat, 4 May 2002 23:08:40 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
F,
Washington , DC went through the same stuff as S.F. and survived it thanks to great organizing. It was a ten-year fight against freeways which were designed to plow through DC, and through Brookland, obliterating everything between the R.R. tracks and 12th St, from Michigan Avenue to Rhode Island Ave, in a huge swath of destruction of neighborhoods, not only Brookland. As far as I know, DC and San Francisco were the only two cities who survived the onslaught. But what we have to learn is that the unconscionable powers-that-be are never content to leave neighborhoods alone. Brookland's fate is to be in a location that is always at risk, just because it is where it is. We are a neighborhood, a community, and not the only one, where greedy eyes are always watching. So, I repeat my earlier invite: open house at my house on Tuesday, May 7, starting at 7:00pm so that we can discuss the Turkey Thicket thing, and organize. It is never too late. I am going to compile a list of questions, objections, even facts that people have contributed on this list- serve, and have multiple copies ready for the meeting. But anyone, bring anything. We need each other's talents.
AH

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 00:15:37 -0400
Subject: RE: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
If you're new to the neighborhood, you might want to walk a few blocks up 14th Street and talk to Tom and Angela Rooney (the Queen Anne house with the sculpture in the yard), among others freeway fighters who succeeded in stopping 1500 miles of freeway in this city. When I moved to Brookland in the 1970s, many houses near the railroad tracks were boarded up, having been condemned for freeway construction. But, I-95, in fact, stops at New York Avenue, and it doesn't go directly over the house I bought on Perry Place (directly across from Turkey Thicket Park.) You may also want to read an instructive interview of Angela on this topic at http://www.igc.org/icc370/FreewayFighter.htm. It will provide real context for what's going on right now in our neighborhoods and what's going on at Turkey Thicket specifically. I think people new to Brookland will find it extremely interesting. At the top of the list is organizing and educating, especially the latter.

It ain't over 'til its over. Within just the last four years in this neighborhood: they told us it was over with the Brooks Mansion, once the Ronald Brown Foundation (as did many, many others less successfully) set its sites on the building, but it was DCTV that celebrated its grand opening at Brooks last weekend--the only group that met the community's criteria and received its

endorsement. They said it was a done deal when Eakin Youngentrob presented its ill-conceived plan about building 120 houses at the Brookland Metro stop--on the bus pads. Didn't happen. Catholic University's attempts to inflict its will on the neighborhood virtually always ends up being nothing more than time wasted. **In the Turkey Thicket case, the residents of this community must demand that officials of the District of Columbia obey the District's own laws and perform the due diligence required before the undertaking all major construction projects. At this point, everything else is irrelevant--regardless of DPRs attempt to bulldoze it way through on this project.** The community must not allow itself to get lost in the weeds of distraction about the rats and construction equipment. It's a well known tactic, and actually quite tiring, to distract people with little stuff rather than focus in on the big issues. These officials are exhibiting exactly the same behavior, hubris, and cover-up that those now caught in the current array of scandals (pick one), once exhibited. It ain't pretty. Don't participate in the cover-up about this project.
DP

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 01:27:44 -0400
Subject: RE: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
Thanks, D
Would somebody good at being bold please call DC tv at the Brooks Mansion and ask them to track this story, right under their noses? It's not that media attention will solve anything, but it has its advantages for them to be informed. If we keep this up, it will be worth their effort, and ours. ...this Turkey Thicket thing is a wonderful opportunity to address issues that have perked below the surface forever. Foremost in my mind: How do we do maximum notification of people in Brookland, Michigan Park, Turkey Thicket, (I am geographically challenged) on what is happening with serious issues like crime, this development, life and business on 12th St,...I have fretted over this for years: everything hinges on adequate communication: without that glue, we can have no larger community, beyond the wonderful pockets of friends, neighbors, church-goers, that now exist, including this e-list..
My own choice would be for a flyer distribution system, based on block captains, but that would be a humongous organizing job. Beyond that, I would love to see a real Town Meeting structure developed. I am referring to the traditional Town Meeting, direct democracy, developed principally in New England. The citizens are the legislature. The citizens also elect Selectmen, usually 3 at a time, to serve as organizers and conveners,. Such a structure would not replace existing governmental apparatuses, but could serve as the voice of the people on matters of common concern. But right now, we will need to deal with the ongoing situation at Turkey Thicket, in a more positive, persistent and organized way than has so far been possible. Personally, I like JL's thinking about this in her letter.

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 10:08:44 EDT
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
As most of you know, people in Ward 3 stopped the huge cell phone tower over by Wisconsin Ave., at a great financial cost to the District, by organizing the community, and legal action.

From what I've read on this list, it appears that the District has not followed its own regulations and procedures in planning the rec center. That subjects the District to legal action. I want to be clear that I would love a rec center in the neighborhood that I could use. However, if it is ill-conceived, a haven for drug dealers, with parking problems, and creating chaos for my neighbors in Turkey Thicket, I doubt I would use it very often. **That said, what about exploring the idea of legal action?** Although I'm an attorney, I don't do this kind of work, but I think it would be possible to find someone to do this for free, probably in the neighborhood. **Bottom line, this is one approach that gets government attention. MZ**

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 11:47:50 -0400
Subject: RE: Request to DCTV
A, I have forwarded this e-mail string to personnel at DCTV. They are a training and telecommunications center, not a staffed television station, so your request may not be appropriate, but I will let them speak for themselves. DP

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 14:50:55 EDT
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02
SG,
Please take a stand on this project. Written DC laws have been broken with the development of this project and the authorities will be held accountable. You have a responsibility as a citizen to demand accountability. Please don't ever think one injustice is more important than the other. Show the these officials that the citizens will let them get away with this and you can forget any respect shown towards these same citizens on these other issues that are on your priority list. There is no burn out when it comes to holding elected officials accountable for breaking laws. This is no joke and no small matter. Stay strong...be at the meeting Thursday at Turkey Thicket and see how our leaders respond to the community's questions
PO
Brookland Pride Inc.

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 19:46:16 EDT
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
Thanks for the responses. I am not new to the neighborhood -- new to the "listserve." The fact is, my husband and I looked at several of the houses along 10th Street that were under threat to be lost to the freeway, before buying our house on Lawrence. I am delighted that we have this "Brookland/yahoogroup -- it is a wonderful communicator. I have an appointment Tuesday evening; however, if my client is not able to meet, I will try and make the meeting at 7:00 pm.
MW

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 21:09:11 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
There is a growing awareness here of how we are neighbors.
Thanks, M
AH

Date: Mon, 06 May 2002 06:41:52 -0000

Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ground-breaking/5-3-02
Folks, I'm stunned. I thought we had problems with community process here in Cleveland (the developers are pushing a plan that will allow a enormous land grab along our lakefront, by dangling vague promises of more public lake access while actually snitching some prime frontage). **But a project with the impact of a rec center being built with no legitimate community process?... you cannot let this happen. The issue is not just the quality of the rec center design, but breeding and feeding arrogance and subterfuge - and the impositions will only get worse. A community that doesn't fight shoddy process and design will always get second-best, and attract second-rate practitioners to boot. This is not a pick-your-battles situation - EVERY project sets a precedent and shows developers what they can get away with. Folks who want to build in Brookland - ANYone, developers, government, individuals - should fear the backdraft if they don't do it right.** It is far less expensive and better stewardship in the long run to design in cooperation with users, but it frontloads a lot of the cost and hassle. There is no way an underfunctioning bureaucracy is going to initiate such processes unless they're scared not to. Groundbreaking or no, this IS NOT done. If you can get a lawyer, go for it. At the very least there should be a very uncomfortable meeting at which the design and process are dissected, and some DPR eyebrows get singed big time.
MS

Date: Mon, 06 May 2002 13:24:22 -0000
Subject: rec center
I wish I was more informed about the legal issues surrounding the rec center. If the city violated any rules, regs, or laws in the process of planning the center, we can make them do it again. Does anyone familiar with what laws were broken know any of the issues? At-large city counsel members. Let's get them involved. We might also try to enjoin any action on the rec center until they do it right. Given the lack of green space in this city, I would like to see fields, rather than an expanded center. But I may be in the minority. I spend my weekend life in NW DC where my kids play baseball and soccer. We can not rely on DC to provide safe sporting alternatives. If someone in this group feels they are fully informed about the legal issues, give me a call and I can put him/her in touch with a lawyer who is very connected to city politics. JW

Date: Mon, 06 May 2002 11:18:44 -0400
Subject: Re: Turkey Thicket Rec Center is not a fait accompli
Anne, you wrote:

- Foremost in my mind: How do we do maximum notification of people in Brookland, Michigan Park, Turkey Thicket, (I am geographically challenged) on what is happening with serious issues like crime, this development, life and business on 12th St,...

I am probably very naïve about the nature of DC politics and communication, but it strikes me that this is exactly the sort of void that ANC's are supposed to fill - the local elected 'grass roots' that can inform and generate community involvement. I did a quick websearch for ANC's and came up with the following sites - check them, to see what other neighborhoods are up to:
http://www.anc1c.org/
http://anc3e.org/index.htm
(and in Spanish): http://www.anc1c.org/indexes.html

http://www.hillcrestdc.com/
http://www.shawdc.com/
http://www.dcnet.com/anc/1d/
http://www.dcnet.com/anc/3b/
http://www.bloomingdaledc.org/
http://www.pressroom.com/~anc7b/
http://www.foxhall.org/DCGov/anc.htm
The question of a community newspaper has also come up. I agree that the amount of advertising and subscription work that has to be done exceeds the capacity of the good people who take on the project, and therefore it becomes a difficult thing to sustain. Couldn't there be a hybrid...perhaps a printed version of a website sent or posted to the non-wired...so that the information is accessible to everyone?
JC (new to) Michigan Park

Date: Tue, 07 May 2002 17:31:56 +0000
Subject: Re: Hello, Neighbors,
I am excited about the thoughtful, civic-minded and lively discussions on our listserv, most recently about the Turkey Thicket recreation center! It's gratifying to know so many share an appreciation for the importance of process to outcomes, and I wholeheartedly agree with points raised by JL, AH, DP, CB, KS, FF and others. And . . . in the spirit of including everyone as we move forward into the future, I'd like to challenge us all to be very mindful about the language we use.
If you'll agree to indulge me coming from a base of 9 years-plus of formal studies in communication & culture and many more years of experience, consider that the words excerpted below could easily suggest that some of us (i.e, NOT those who 'hang out in cars' and make suggestive comments as it's growing dark--but RATHER organized groups from the suburbs, 'soccer Moms', joggers and those who align themselves with the 'founding fathers') should be thought of as more worthy users (and definers) of Turkey Thicket. There's a clear subtext here, obviously not conscious or intentional, that appeals to privileging certain people by ethnicity, gender, economic status. Please, please, let's make every effort to avoid the phrasings that, however subtly, lead to exclusion and mutually dangerous tensions. This stuff is so deeply embedded in our society--meaning in our hearts, minds, words and everyday actions--that we often wonder how it is that we came to this place of severe socioeconomic disparities in the wealthiest nation on the planet.
Respectfully, BR

Date: Tue, 07 May 2002 21:38:20 -0000
Subject: Re: language
BR, this is so important. It's also very difficult to create a process so truly inclusive that these tensions can be addressed and mitigated (if not resolved).
As one subjected to an excruciating narration of her imaginary rape while walking home from work along 10th at twilight (among numerous such experiences), I can easily sympathize with those who are angry about profoundly and provocatively antisocial behaviors and exasperated with those who resort to them. I also recognize that tolerance of non-inclusive design as long as

it meets one's own needs is just as antisocial - but privileged. Most of us see the latter as out of our control, although in fact it's not, and the former as the exclusive result of personal choice, albeit from few options. In my neighborhood, a group of teenagers relentlessly vandalized a local playground that had been specifically designed to be inhospitable to them, despite the lack of any other local hangout. The initial redesign again excluded them, but the designers saw potential users in the abusers, got their input, made space for them, and in the process created a cadre of protectors. These young men now keep drug activity out and casually supervise the safety of younger children. Same kids - for once, heard. MS

Date: 7 May 2002 22:32:54 -0000
From: Brookland
Subject: Reminder - MEETING @ TURKEY THICKET REC.

We would like to remind you of this upcoming event.
MEETING @ TURKEY THICKET REC.
Date: Thursday, May 9, 2002 Time: 6:30PM - 8:30PM EDT (GMT-04:00)
MEETING WITH PARK AUTHORITY ON NEW RECREATION CENTER. PLEASE COME AND GIVE YOUR INPUT. ESPECIALLY PEOPLE WHO LIVE AROUND THE PARK.

Date: Wed, 8 May 2002 21:01:57 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Meeting at Turkey Thicket, Thirsday, May 9 at 6:30pm with DC officials

TURKEY THICKET: SOME QUESTIONS THAT CITIZENS NEED ANSWERS TO:

Does the DC require an environmental impact study for new construction that replaces parkland? If so, what were the results? If not, why not?

What amount of green space will be lost to the project? for structures, parking, other uses?

How old is the existing building, and would it qualify for some kind of historic protection? It is a nice example of old-time Washington architecture on a small scale.

Will the new buildings be monolithic and thus overwhelm the small and friendly scale of the neighborhood?

If this is to be an open and inclusive facility, will the architecture reflect that?

Will the facility be more friendly to pedestrians or to vehicular traffic?

Who will maintain the facility? What will the schedule be? (Take a look at school properties to see why this is a good question.)

What are the plans for traffic safety? How will the increased traffic affect the neighborhood?

What will happen to current users of the fields and courts? Where will their

games be played? What provisions are being made for unstructured play at the new facility? That is, how much playground equipment is in the plan?

What does "regional park" mean? What area is included? How will it be administered? Who will fund it? Who is expected to use it? Who will not be welcome?

How many employees will work at the facility, full and part time?

Who is paying for this project? Over what term? How financed?

What is the current state of the permitting process? Are there approved plans? Who designed the facilities? How much did that cost? Who paid for it? Are easements required? Who owns that land? How do we know?

Does the District of Columbia have a tree ordinance? If so, are any trees at all expected to be cut down?

How much of an effort was made to gain citizen input? Were flyers distributed door to door with enough notice for taxpayers to respond?

How long will the project take to complete? What plans are being made for the safety of students at Brookland school during construction?
AH

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 01:25:24 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Renovation (was Re: some good news)

--- In Brookland@y..., JL wrote:
One more thing: it IS gratifying to see all the responses and discussion about the Turkey Thicket situation. I'm going to try to find a sitter so I can go to the May 9th meeting there. I hope some folks were able to go to Anne's house on Tuesday. Maybe we need some fresh ANC leadership: any one want to run?
>
JL
>

Ms. Lincoln and Brooklanders,
I think your comment about our ANC representative is unwarranted since a representative of the DC Parks and Recreation Department made a presentation regarding the Turkey Thicket Renovation at the March ANC meeting. My informant, however, cannot remember all the details.

Reading the newsletter of the Michigan Park Citizens Association (MPCA), it seems that DC Parks and Recreation spokesperson made a substantial presentation to them at one of their recent meetings. (The date of the meeting is unclear.) The members of MPCA were invited to a public meeting at Turkey Thicket on April 10 to view the plans and meet the contractor and project manager.

While I can agree that the Parks and Recreation might have done more to involve the community in this project, it seems that they have made some effort--for which they probably should receive some credit.

KN Kearney St NE

Date: Wed, 8 May 2002 21:44:10 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Due Diligence. Making Wise Decisions

Greater Brookland Neighbors,
Tomorrow evening, the Department of Parks and Recreation asks you to participate in an "information exchange" regarding "final plans for the new Turkey Thicket Recreation and Aquatic Center." **To go from nothing to final in less than a month is a daunting accomplishment indeed. Attendees at this meeting must insist on one thing, and one thing alone: THAT ALL WORK ON THE TURKEY THICKET RECREATION FACILITY STOP UNTIL DUE DILIGENCE HAS BEEN PERFORMED AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION HAS PROVIDED EVIDENCE OF ITS PERFORMANCE ON THIS MATTER.** Officials will attempt to move you away from the central arguments. The information they have provided you, if you have received any at all, is incomplete, confusing, and contradictory. You cannot make a reasonable decision from the information you have been given.

To help those who will attend the meeting (and those who can't but are interested in the broader questions of due diligence),several neighbors with a range of professional skills have gotten together to put together a "packet" of information to shed light on the questions at hand. Our information is not complete-which is why the documents are drafts, but I think you will agree it is a good showing for a less than three-day effort by volunteers. The "packet" contains substantially more information than has been supplied by the District government over many years.

Because of restrictions on attachments to e-mail at this site, I will as soon as I complete this message upload 11 files to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Brookland. If you are not a member of the group you will need to join to see the files. The files are contained in a file named "files." It includes files with these names:

* Due Diligence.5, a thought piece developed by Greater Brookland neighbors on what the DPR should have done and what remains to be done before proceeding with this project.

* Several pdf files that constitute the confusing documents presented at the April 10 meeting. These are titled east-west, elevations, north-south, plan1, plan2, plan3, and schematic-design.

* Two files prepared by a local architect that provide the first look at a site-plan and how the buildings would be sited so that neighbors get a better sense of size and scale. For example, the footprint for the two new facilities are nearly equal those of the Brookland Elementary School and are likely to overwhelm the surrounding buildings.
* Last is a pdf file from a previous incarnation about this project that at least provides a site plan. It is labeled site1.
DP

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 08:44:17 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Due Diligence. Making Wise Decisions

DP,
Thanks very much for posting the plans and elevations of the new complex. It helps to clarify some of the questions posted by AH and concerns voiced by others - in particular regarding the scope of construction, tectonic expression, etc.

I realize that I'm a bit of an outsider on this, living all the way over in Michigan Park, but I have only one serious issue with the proposal, which is the site plan. The placement of the buildings on the site, at least as shown on "Scheme 1", does not fit with my observations of the site and its context. If you want to hit a grand slam and have a center that enhances the area's assets while making illicit activities less welcome, you've got to get the site plan right.

Zippy forms, and curvy lozenges are trademarks of Devrouax & Purnell's works, and seem to be very popular currently. (They did the new PEPCO Building on 9th NW). There's no real room to comment on this because any shape is as good as another when there's no logical structure to ground the forms.
However the site plan MUST be addressed, because this is where the 'Battle of Turkey Thicket' will be won or lost. If you want the rec center to improve the site, I would recommend that this is where you focus your energies....the rest of the stuff is chaff, meant to dilute your energies.
Best and good luck,
JC 22 + Otis NE

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 12:56:52 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Lack of Notification Again

To this day my neighbors and I have not received flyer from Parks and Recreation concerning the meeting tonight. I've been lucky to find out from other sources though. At my own expense my family and I have made flyers and passed them throughout the neighborhood.The current process as it stands, especially notification and community involvement, needs to some fine tuning. Thank God for the egroup and the people within it who want to arouse community awareness and participation.
JW

Date: Thu, 9 May 2002 09:11:09 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] The Importance of a Site Plan

Jim,
The point is that there isn't one and we made some attempts to make sense out of the confusing and contradictory information that was provided by DPR and its contractors. Only the documents labeled DPR are from them. I wouldn't go so far as to agree that the site plan is the ONLY thing that matters--and you won't either after you've lived here a while longer--but it sure is up there in the top three.

And for the record, I would not consider you an "outsider" because you live in (Woodridge, I think rather than Michigan Park, if you live at 22nd and Otis). There is a reason we use the term "Greater Brookland" and you certainly do live there. Thanks for your comments.
DP

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 09:45:11 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] The Importance of a Site Plan

you wrote:
> I wouldn't go so far as to agree that the site plan is the ONLY thing that matters

Correct, however I think it's the biggest chink in the armor. You have to find it and break in. There are SO many issues (as from Anne's list) that a full frontal assault will be exhausting, and not necessarily yield a better project.

Get the bones right - then fight for better staffing, longer hours, all the other stuff. If you get a bad building, badly sited, than you throw money at it for years and don't fix problems.

Best,
JC

Date: Thu, 9 May 2002 09:53:49 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Renovation (was Re: some good news)
Just to add a bit to what Kenneth says here... My husband (DC)is active in the Michigan Park Citizens Association (MPCA) and actually edits the newsletter that Ken refers to. D isn't on this listserv, and only hears about the discussion from me. According to him, the promised Turkey Thicket development has been a topic at community meetings for years, including pointed questions to the Mayor when he made an appearance: "When are we going to get this promised Rec Center at Turkey Thicket?" I have the feeling that there are folks (not on this listserv?) who have been waiting patiently for years, and finally not so patiently, and pestering the powers that be, and are glad to see ground finally broken at Turkey Thicket.

As an aside, MPCA meetings, to my knowledge, are publicized via the newsletter. That newsletter also announces, and occasionally reports on, ANC meetings. Does the Brookland association have a similar newsletter?

As yet another aside, I understand that there are historical tensions between the MPCA and the sister Brookland association. Some of these tensions (surprise!) have to do with race and exclusivity; others might simply revolve around "turf." Might we hold out some hope that the outpouring of community interest around Turkey Thicket could lead to some communication, healing, and growth?
KB 12th Pl. & Upshur

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 16:03:05 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Renovation (was Re: some good news)
K,
Although this project might have been on the table "for years" it seems as though there hasn't been a very good dialogue. In the 18 years I have been in the development arena I have never seen a lack of communication as I have with this project. Like I have stated in my last email people who live directly across the street from the park were not notified of tonight's meeting via DPR nor ANC. In other municipalities that I have worked in CERTIFIED notification letters have been to all property owners in the immediate vicinity of any by the developer\agent especially in the case of a huge

development owned by the Government. I personally am neither against or for this project, but before I can vote on something I would like to see stats. Bigger does not always mean better and quantity does not always mean quality. I heard that the facility needs to be bigger for Daycare. That is really a concern for me since I'm a parent. But there are so many other issues at hand. Good stewardship and accountability is also an issue. Challenge does not feel good but it sometimes causes us to revisit issues that might have been missed. Also hear that Luke C. Moore HS will have a indoor pool. To have 2 pools within 5 blocks of each other doesn't seem feasible to me and it seems to be a waste of the taxpayer's dollars. Aren't our taxes high enough as it is.
Also not everyone receives the MPCA newsletter you have to be a paying member and live within Michigan Park.
K and K, I do agree that would like to see healing begin.
JW

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 16:10:48 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] files, "scheme 1"

First: Thank you to all those who prepared these files - they're very informative.
I'm a bit confused (and apparently not alone). At the one meeting of which I had sufficient notice to be able to attend - I guess it was the 4/10 one - we were told that only one building was planned, and that it could not extend any further north/northeast than the current fieldhouse, b/c of sewer lines, etc. Both the new and old schematics for the whole field show two buildings, with one significantly north/northeast. I won't bother asking if I missed something, b/c I know I missed a few things, but is the plan now to build two buildings, and if so what is the second for?
Thanks,
DT

Date: Thu, 9 May 2002 10:57:53 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] No pool at Luke C. More

Folks:
As I understand it, there won't be a pool at Luke C.Moore Academy. The school was supposed to raise the funds for it and were unable to do so. The projected pool at Turkey Thicket is it. CP

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 19:42:38 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: files, "scheme 1"

D,I'm still waiting for my notice about tonight's meeting. The flyer that DPR gave to a person I know at the groundbreaking. I am sorry, the way people receive notification of major projects seem to be a little unprofessional. Maybe I'm wrong. I've gotten all kinds of excuses "maybe the wind blew it away" when I didn't receive a notice. I believe the postal service may be a little more reliable, especially if it's certified. Also people tend to pay a little more attention to certified mail. At least the sender has proof that the notification was sent. I probably saw you at previous meetings. Maybe I'll meet you tonight.
Cheers, JW

Date: Thu, 09 May 2002 22:15:26 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] tonight's meeting at the rec center

Let the spinning begin.

The upstairs room at the Rec Center at Turkey Thicket was packed tonight, standing room only, maybe a quarter white. **The two gentlemen from the city, one from Office of Property Management and the other from Department of Parks & Recreation, wanted to present drawings that were apparently hours old. We the assembled were told that we would have our input tonight and then the plans were to be final by Monday.**

By the end of the meeting, which was adjourned early, that "final by Monday" statement was retracted, yet another set of plans are to be drawn up, and another community meeting is to be held with the promise that there would be 2 weeks notice. The original request for proposals (RFP) will be obtained, the environmental impact assessment will be obtained (I wonder if it includes mention of rats and traffic) and folks will be notified of where to go look at them. (Thank you RB.) The next meeting will be facilitated by Saundra Hill of the DPR, who was apparently responsible for protecting the trees for over a decade before taking her current position (the exact nature of which I am not clear.) **During the often contentious time between the intros and the adjournment, there was a lot of concern that the plans were very different from the ones "voted" on at one of the poorly advertised meetings in April, with, for example, new basketball courts at the corner of 10th & Shepherd. The gentleman from OPM did not know how to interpret the plans he was supposed to be presenting (to wit, is that square on the drawing a new set of tennis courts or the soccer field? Well, which is it?)**

A young man asked, as a local contractor, why he was not able to place a bid for work on this project? Others asked how this community is supposed to have "requested" this project when so few were aware of it?

My guess is that many more will be trying to attend ANC meetings now. My hope is that the grassroots process that IS the ANC structure in this town will be strengthened.

Didn't there use to be a North East Coalition of sorts that gathered together churches, civic associations, ANCs etc, after the freeway through Brookland/Michigan Park was defeated? Is it time to consider such a thing once again? The ANC process seems in need of updating, at least in terms of getting the word out about meetings.

Questions I wish I could have asked the assembled folks, all of whom were there to find out more:
1. how many folks present were absolutely in favor of a new rec center?
2. how many are absolutely opposed?
3. how many are in favor of it IF IT IS DONE WITH DUE PROCESS, DONE WELL, STAFFED APPROPRIATELY, ETC?
I think there are many who are in favor of a new rec center but question the process, and as I've said before, process can be tedious, but there is obviously hell to pay if it isn't fairly and scrupulously followed. This whole business could divide "the community". And I'm afraid that those who question the process will be seen by those who don't care about the process

as fussy oldtimers (or newcomers), who don't care about "the community."

Is this pool, sized for competition, proposed because large (and NOT DC-based) business interests want to attract the Olympics? I read in the Post that MacDonalds corporation benefited greatly from the Olympics in Atlanta. Oh great. Just what Brookland needs.

One of my neighbors pointed out that, if all of "the community" had been apprised all along, we'd all have bought into this new rec center and we'd be congratulating our ANC representative instead of criticizing the lack of communication. **I feel confident that ALL of the people who've been apparently working hard to make this rec center a reality mean well and have "the community's" best interest at heart. However, legal and legitimate community input was NOT elicited properly and now, I am afraid, there are hard feelings and a set of plans that make little sense.**

I do NOT want this discussion about a rec center to degenerate into "newcomers" versus "the community" when in fact some of the longest residents were the most critical of the process. Yet I fear this could turn into a very divisive issue.

Is there leadership in this community that could bring about a conversation? A town meeting, a series of meetings about the history of activism in Brookland? There are class and racial tensions just below the surface. Do we want to become another gentrified neighborhood, "safe" for Starbucks and the Gap? Do we want to be paved over for the Olympics? Do we want to be the dumping ground for the city? Brookland has the potential to be a truly multi-culti, multi-class community. Or it can be carved up by the investor developers or those who would trash it. It will take hard work to make bridges across the various divides. Hard work.
Anyone up for it?
JL

Date: Thu, 9 May 2002 22:55:39 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] tonight's meeting at the rec center

Yes, Jane, there was for maybe ten years: The Upper Northeast Co-ordinating Council which was composed as a group of groups, It included PTA's (old-fashioned term), Providence Hospital, the religious houses in this Catholic enclave Civic Associations, various churches, etc. ANC's, and did grow out of the freeway struggle, when we had a clear sense that the strength of community building depended on coalitions.

Thanks for the question.
AH

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 04:45:47 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: tonight's meeting at the rec center

J, you are the woman! Thanks for the details.

I'm glad it went so well. I'm glad everyone showed up. The way we get cooperation on good process is by making it much, MUCH easier to do right from the start. MS

Subject: RE: [Brookland] tonight's meeting at the rec center
Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 6:55:40 -0400

Dear J,
Thanks also for the details. And, yes, it will take a lot of work from all of us to maintain our sense of community, even as we deal with the process of change in our neighborhood.
As far as history is concerned, I think that your idea of making sure that people know about the history of activism in Brookland is a good one. One of the things I really loved hearing about when I first moved to Brookland in 1971 was the commitment of a bunch of folks who pooled their funds and bought houses and other buildings in the neighborhood when "block-busters" were trying to come through Brookland with their scare tactics. We have those folks, acting from principle and love, to thank for our current wonderful mix of neighbors. They added stability and a united front against the developers that enabled others to work together to calm down the process.
So, dear neighbors, let's think carefully together about our vision for our neighborhood, communicate with each other (which means listening and understanding as well as talking), and continue to foster the appropriate growth of our excellent neighborhood as a place of comfort and friendliness for everyone.
AA

Subject: to M and others about the 5/9 mtg
Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 10:18:19 -0400

I guess I was trying to put a good light on the meeting last night, but let me NOT give the impression that it was a "good" meeting. It was very painful for me to sit through. There was much shouting, mostly to be heard but some in anger. I feel as though Brookland needs to get its act together so that "outsiders" from downtown (DC govt) or elsewhere (nefarious business / greedy nonprofit interests) don't get the idea that we are either just squabbling over nothing or pushovers to whatever dazzling carrot they've got dangling in front of us. Some of us tried to wear nametags so that we can know who we are in person, not just in meetings or on the listserv. (I am short, white, short brown haired, plump, otherwise nondescript.) We need to meet and build trust above and beyond meetings in which legitimate concerns about WHATEVER is raised. What do WE want? All of us? I'd like stronger local schools, more activities for children in Brookland, thriving businesses on 12th street, safe streets and parks, cops who know us by name, students who live in housing in a respectful and quiet manner (I have not slept through the night since my new student neighbors moved across the street), and more. This is not a bedroom community for me, this is NOT a place I am just passing through hoping to get the most bang for my buck when I sell. I am not selling. For those of you just passing through, I say as I do to tourists visiting DC: Welcome, Spend lots of money here, and Stay out of my way. Anyway, I am pained by what happened but I am ever hopeful. Good things come of struggle. We need all committed hands on deck.
JL

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 10:27:26 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Meeting Last Night (May 9th)

I attended last night's meeting in an attempt to inform myself. In a small meeting which I attended on Tuesday, the Turkey Thicket ANC member, Mary Currie, who seemed quite vague about the details of the project, assured me that a site map and details would be available.

Unfortunately, the meeting was extremely badly run. In fact, in all my misgotten years, working in many exotic locations, I have never seen such a poor presentation.

The site map being presented to the people was drawn in fine pencil on a large sheet of paper, which the organizers held up every once in a while. From 3 feet away, one could see nothing but the paper. From 1 foot away, a very poorly drafted sketch of a site plan was barely visible.

My mother designed and built houses for 40 years in California, and she prepared preliminary sketches that were far more detailed and carefully drawn than this travesty. She would have been ashamed to present such work to a client.

The organizers (?) claimed to interpret these scribblings to us, and indicated that the architect (?) had not followed their (presumably careful?) instructions, so that the site map was inaccurate. As JL has noted, and as JB, who was one of the few neighbors who happened to learn about the earlier meeting, and was able to vote on the competing designs, present, also explained, the "interpretations" of the organizers were inaccurate. Despite this, they claimed that they would take the concerns of the neighbors who wanted changes to this site map to the architect (the one who already had failed to follow instructions) and get him or her to make the necessary changes. They planned to meet with the architect Monday night.

Needless to say, the meeting was completely chaotic. At one point, the implementor, whose agency was never properly identified, declared that he was going ahead with the project (without a proper site plan?). At another point, a local contractor (T.J.M., an extremely talented fellow who did the cement work for our house recently, and has worked on projects for Providence Hospital and Trader Jim's, among others), said that he was invited to bid on the contract for this recreation center, and asked to see the plans. Surprise! There were NO plans! How could he bid, he asked, with no plans? **The implementor had the bad grace to patronize him, explaining that the new methods were to muddle through by continually discussing matters between contractor, client and the community. If last night was an example of this process, it will benefit no one except the people slipping money into their pockets in the confusion.**

Normally, one would expect that a clearly drawn, boldly outlined site plan would be presented, preferably with copies for all of the attendees. Such techniques as overhead projection, pointers and the like would be used. Creative people even might have thought of using detachable units for each of the elements, such as the various playing fields, parking area, picnic Area and the rec center itself. These could then be moved around on the clearly visible outline of the whole area, and a consensus of opinion registered.

As it was, the stupidity of the organizers merely enraged the participants, who could see nothing, & who got no clear answers to any of their questions.

When people asked to have copies of the RFP and the Environmental Impact Study, they were told that they could pick them up at the Reeves Building! In this new cyber-friendly administration of Mayor Anthony Williams, no one offered to put them up on the web site! When this was suggested, a confused mumble was the only response.

It is unbelievable that such bumbling amateurs are in charge of carrying out an 8 million dollar project. One can expect more confusion in the future.

I intend to abstract from this message to send a letter to Mayor Williams with copies to all of the Council Members. This is not good stewardship of resources. Mind you, I am not saying that the recreation center is not a good idea, but I certainly wonder whether the current staff are up to the job.

Perhaps David Catania would like to look into this?

Sincerely, FF

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 12:01:17 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy

I talked to the person in charge of construction for DCPS -Sarah Woodhead- two nights ago and she told there would be no pool at Luke C. Moore because the school had failed to raise the additional million dollars in construction costs. The deadline for raising this money was April 1. What we need as I know you and others have said is accurate information about all these projects IN WRITING! Thanks to everybody for their work. I want a well planned, well constructed, well maintained and well staffed rec center for this community. We should consider this process an opportunity to educate our city employees about how things can and should be done. SG

>Subject: [Brookland] Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy
>Date: Fri, May 10, 2002, 10:35 AM

> This morning I called the school and was told that there will be a
> indoor pool built as part of their renovations which starts within
> the next few months.

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 16:20:53 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] turkey thicket

Thanks to everyone who could attend the meeting. **Sounds like the community should demand no construction until the city has professionals do everything properly.** We can e -mail Williams at mayor@dcgov.org. I really can't believe this pool will have any benefit to the Olympics. Olympic sized pools are what is needed if one is building a new pool so that swim teams can use it, as well as lap swimmers. I love the idea of having an Olympic sized pool in the neighborhood; however, I only went to the Natatorium on Capitol Hill once, and that was enough for me. It was dirty, poorly managed, and overchlorinated. Is there hope that DC can do better here? JW

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 17:01:38 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy

Thanks S:
I just spoke to the project manager on the site at the school and he confirmed what you stated. I believe these are the type of things that need to be research when we decide to spend our hard earned dollars. I agree getting documentation is important. Knowing what projects the government have going on within the Greater Brookland area would help us in our decision making. I was trying to retrack previous email. Sorry folks. Trying to get credible information can sometimes be a bear. As I have stated earlier I live across the street from the Park, so I am very concerned that we don't get something that we'll regret in the future. I thank everyone for their information, research, input and participation. Please, please continue. I have no other intention or motive but to make decisions based on correct data. I'm glad so many show up last night. I hope the participation continues. Oh quite of few of my Neighbor and I never did receive a notice of last nights meeting. Continue the good work and keep us informed.

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 18:46:11 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] North Michigan Park Rec

Does anyone know what is being included in the new facility at North Michigan Park? It would be helpful to know when making decisions, since it is just a few blocks down the road.
LH

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 16:59:51 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Budget guide 2003

Good afternoon Group (TGIF...)

Being disenchanted with work this afternoon, I dug through DCWatch¹s website and found a link to some documents created by the Mayor¹s office as guidebooks to the 2003 budget. After some misfires, I came up with the appropriate ones for Michigan Park /NMP / U Heights, Brookland / Langdon / Brentwood, and Woodridge / Lincoln / Gateway.

I¹ve posted these on the Group website, under the folder ³2003 Budget Guide². They are about .5 meg each, in PDF format. Interesting reading. They outline the budget priorities and how they anticipate spending in each of the neighborhoods.

Others are available at http://www.dcwatch.com/mayor/020318b.htm
But they are organized numerically - not by ward - so you have to keep guessing until you get the right one.

This is the quote from DCWatch:
>>The document designed to sell the Mayor¹s budget to citizens is the ³Citizen¹s Guide to Mayor Anthony A. Williams¹ Proposed FY2003 Budget,² released on March 18, 2002. It was developed by Neighborhood Action and distributed by the Office of Planning, but isn't available at either agency¹s web site. Best and good weekend, J 22 + Otis NE

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 21:09:29 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] re: last night's mtg

To this list at large:

I think that those of us who can, should sit down and talk together about our common interests, and the realities of where we are, especially in relation to the DC government as it impinges on our lives.

Starting on Wednesday, May 22, at 7:00pm I offer my house for a weekly get-together to allow us to forge a renewed vision for this community, especially how we deal with the Powers-That-Be.

That horrific meeting at Turkey Thicket was, indeed an invitation for us to begin to reinvent ourselves.

I firmly believe that we cannot do it on e-mail alone.
I look forward to your responses to this idea,
AH

Date sent: Sat, 11 May 2002 14:07:11 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] on community building

> How to build community: turn off your TV, leave your house, know your
> neighbors, greet people, look up when you're walking, sit on your stoop,
> plant flowers, use your library, play together, buy from local merchants,
> share what you have, help a lost dog, take children to the park, honor
> elders, support neighborhood schools, fix it even if you didn't break it,
> have pot lucks, garden together, pick up litter, read stories aloud, dance
> in the street, talk to the mail carrier, listen to the birds, put up a
> swing, help carry something heavy, barter for your goods, start a
> tradition, ask a question, hire young people for odd jobs, organize a block
> party, bake extra and share, ask for help when you need it, open your
> shades, sing together, share your skills, take back the night, turn up the
> music, turn down the music, listen before you react to anger, mediate a
> conflict, seek to understand, learn from new and uncomfortable angles, know
> that no one is silent though many are not heard, work to change this.
> Syracuse Workers Community 1997
>
JL

Date: Sun, 12 May 2002 01:39:31 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Taft Recreation Center

This morning I was talking to D about community boundaries, etc. and she encouraged me to take a look at Taft Recreation Center. I was really blown away at what I saw, a beautiful park but a building that seemed under utilized. I talked to a father who was watching his sons play and he stated that a large portion of the building wasn't being used. I told that father that I was very jealous of how good their grounds looked. I did noticed the building had broken windows etc. but looked like good boned, but I'm a surveyor not an architect. If I were the city I would consider making that one of my crown jewels as far as recreation/fitness and aquatic centers. I don't know if anyone in DPR has researched this or not. Maybe a worth while

investment. I would love for a group of us go survey the building. I may be crazy but I would like to see building like that turned into something that the YMCA's that my and I have been to. Indoor 200 meter track, raquetball court, indoor pool, weight room, cadiovascular machines, etc.. Maybe I'm in la la land I'll wake up now. Ha ha ha what is life without a little fun and where would we be without dreams. I have seen quite a few schools turned into lofts, recreation centers, gyms (Gold's and Results) etc. One school in the City of Atlanta, Fulton County (rich man's land) was turned into lofts but because of its historic value the lockers, classrooms etc. had to stay intact. The architect was so creative that each classroom was a studio. Even the classroom numbers were used as the condo unit numbers. I believe the name of the school was Roosevelt HS and the school name remained on the building. Plenty of people thought the school had been reopened and former students would visit it.
I some point in the future would like for us to have nice recreation facilities, clean, well maintained and properly staffed like in Maryland and Virginia. At some point we need to invest in our facilities and stop pumping money into MD and VA's recreation centers. Saying all that I don't believe in accepting sub standard as though we are unworthy. Although I do believe investing into DC I don't believe that every SMD should have it's own private indoor pool. Let's watch the dollars, remember earlier I said I was dreaming, being a single parent I have learned the value of not over extending oneself or living within ones means. But if we have a building within the community that is under used that's worth investigating. What y'all think?
Also our recreation centers should promote a sense of community. They just shouldn't be for the children or the elderly but the whole community.
JW

Subject: On community building

J, I was at the meeting and was probably one of the crazy ones screaming. I really get upset when decisions are made in the name of the community when the community is not notified. I'm trying to get over it for the good of the community. I'm not for a lot of drama and I really wanted to work on my house, that's why I bought a fixer upper plus the price was right. **I do intend on staying here for a while but I can't stand being lied to or being taking for stupid. I was going to send a email to the egroup entitled the degrees of separation. My trust in some people has really been destroyed. The things that people will do over a stupid pool. A pool. So ridiculous. I do mind a new facility but I would not want one if it meant creating a larger wedge in our community's communication. The government and some people can find so many ways to divide us SMDs, ANCs, SNAP clusters, group homes, non-profits and the latest recreation centers and pools. JW**

Date: Sun, 12 May 2002 00:24:50 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Taft Recreation Center

from AH,
We, who live here, see more potential in this neighborhood than any City Planner could, forever.
It's just that you gotta get their attention, which ain't easy.

Date: Sun, 12 May 2002 09:25:02 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Taft Recreation Center

Taft is beautiful. It is however designated as swing space for the DCPS as they rebuild schools across the city. I believe it also houses a special ed program. Next year I believe Lincoln middle school students will attend while their school is rebuilt. Since the rebuilding of schools will take ten years that school is not available to be something else.
You should see the auditorium. Absolutely gorgeous! SG

Date: Sun, 12 May 2002 08:18:42 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Taft Recreation Center

S,
It still seems as through that there is some type of recreation program being run through some unoccupied parts of the building Also the special education program doesn't occupy a large portion of the building While talking to the project manager at Luke C. Moore and the chief project manager at Capital Projects last Friday they stated if they could still acquire the funds they may still build a indoor pool I told them that DPR was planning on building an indoor pool at Turkey Thicket 5 blocks away and that it would be stupid to build 2 indoor pools within blocks of each other They wanted names and numbers of people to get in touch with at DPR and OPM. It still seems to be a lack of departments communicating with each other. I am sorry that I didn't relay this in my email on Friday my son was rushing me out of the house. I still think there should be an inventory of the public building within this area, see how they are all utilized, know what is intended for them all and go from there. Also we should take a look at how many Marylanders send their children to our school. It seems as though quite a few kids depart from cares with Maryland license plates. As someone who was a former Virginian I have known of quite a few people from the metropolitan area, Maryland and Virginia, who used DC General because it was "free" and St. Elizabeth's when it was fully utilized. I guy I went to school with in Virginia was housed at St. Elizabeths and last I heard he roams the streets of DC. This guy should be in a facility in Virginia because he has the potential to be dangerous, he almost beat his mom to death while living with her. Also I knew a lady who lived in Oxon HIll, Maryland but would go to DC General to have her children etc. because it was "free". Sorry for tangent. I have plenty more to say but have to see my randdaughter in Virginia.
See ya, JW

Date: Mon, 13 May 2002 16:38:52 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Summer Camp Budget Cut

I heard that the budget for the summer camp program for DPR was going to be cut from 22 million dollars to 8 million, my son said 6 million, is this true and how will it affect our communities?

Date: Mon, 13 May 2002 16:26:46 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Summer Camp Budget Cut

It is the DCPS summer school budget that is being cut from 22 to 6 million.

I think rec may actually be getting extra to provide an afternoon program for kids because DCPS won't have one. I believe Carolyn Graham is in charge of this. It's sad because a well run program could really benefit the children. This large program was first instituted by Arlene Ackerman and has had some real problems. Last summer they planned for a lot and spent enough money for an awful lot of kids but the system broke down when it came time to actually encourage the children to go to summer school. I felt that this year they might actually be getting it right until they decided to cut the funding. SG

Date: Mon, 13 May 2002 18:40:09 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Re: Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy

Brooklanders,
Has anyone secured the documents that were promised for Wednesday Night's Turkey Thicket meeting? That would be the Environmental Impact Statement, RFP, and others mentioned that night. Just interested, what does the environmental impact statement say about the rat problem that will take plac just as it did during the building of Brookland school and what the health status of the children at nearby Brookland School will be during this construction? Will they be allowed to play outside? Please update me.
PO Brookland Pride Inc.

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 12:13:33 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy

P,
RB said that he would get the information from DPR some-time this week. I would like have documents by the end of the week. Will keep you guys up to date.
JW

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 08:22:07 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Re: Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy

J,
What about the meeting tomorrow night? Are they going to try to make another vote? Does everyone know about it. Isn't it May 15?
P

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 12:32:01 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Summer programs

In response to the messages about summer school (DCPS) and summer activities at the Department of Parks and Recreation. I will admit that I no longer closely follow the DPR budget (more on that in a minute) and that I don't follow education as an issue in my work. But what I DO do is monitor the budget.

At the Committee of the Whole hearing (on projected "spending pressures" that were driving the development of the FY 2003 budget) in mid-March before the mayor released his budget, DCPS folks stated that summer school funding was being reduced from $22m to $6m because federal funding was cut nationally for whatever the funding was for

(I don't know whether it was for summer school or something else). Now, having read the article in the Post yesterday, it is unclear whether Steven Seleznow and Peggy Cooper Cafritz were telling the truth now or then.

If you need a place to put your kids this summer, check into what the Children and Youth Investment Trust Corp. will be funding -- their web site is www.cyitc.org. As an FYI, the $6 million to support the Trust was identified quite some time ago; this is nothing new. The RFP (request for proposal) was issued on April 15. The submission deadline was May 10. This goes to what some of you have identified as the issue, why not increase funding for summer school or for rec programs. . .

As for my mention about not following DPR anymore, DC ACT is focusing for the next 3 - 5 years on child health and child welfare issues. On these, we are investing major time and energy. We will partner with others on the remaining issues on which we have traditionally worked -- child care, welfare, homelessness, mental health, juvenile justice, recreation. In addition, of late, our access to DPR has been nil. Attempts we make to get data to support an increased budget are shunned. Finally, anyone interested in budgets for kids should be on the lookout for our annual analysis of the District's budget that should be out in early July. It will be on our web site (www.dckids.org). Perhaps this will answer questions you have about what happened regarding funding for kids in the FY 2003 budget process.
SC
DC Action for Children

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 13:27:56 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] meeting at Brookland school 5/15/02 6:30pm
I just found out today there's another meeting Wednesday night 5/15/02 6:30pm at the Brookland school. Ms Currie is calling this meeting... As usually no notice has been given to the Brookland community. A

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 13:31:34 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Indoor Pool @ Luke C. Moore Academy
The meeting is May 15 at 6:30pm. It's at the Brookland school. Do you have any details?

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 13:56:18 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] DCPS Master Plan
First all I would like to say I really appreciate SG's work and information she has supplied us concerning DCPS. This morning I did speak to Sarah Woodhead from DCPS concerning the Master Plan for DCPS and within the plan there are plans to renovate Brookland ES, when unknown. Later this week I will try to obtain a copy of the Master Plan and post it. If Sue or someone has a copy please inform us and post it. From what I,ve heard the exterior and interior design of the future Brookland ES will be pleasing.
See ya, JW

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 10:06:33 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] meeting at Brookland school 5/15/02 6:30pm
WHAT IS GOING ON? Meeting about what? AH

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 10:07:43 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Re: What meeting?
This e-mail was sent last week. I assume this is the meeting everyone is talking about:

Subject: [Brookland] ANC 5A MEETINGS
Date: Wed, 8 May 2002 13:17:35 EDT
From: anc5adc@aol.com

ANC 5A-06 Single Member District Meeting
Wednesday, May 15, 2002 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Brookland Elementary School 12th Street and Michigan Avenue, NE

THREE VOTING ISSUES

Agenda items include: Turkey Thicket Recreation Center - Discussion; Metropolitan Day School BZA Application No. 16866

Wednesday, May 22, 2002 7:00 p.m.
Hospital for Sick Children 1731 Bunker Hill Road, NE
Agenda includes: Mr. Roderic Woodson, Director ABC Board, Mr. Danny Bellamy, Director of Business Development, Hospital for Sick Children

Date: Tue, 14 May 2002 15:39:10 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] DPR No Master Plan Yet

This morning I spoke to Evelyn Woods @ DPR and she referred me to Karen Meachem-Miller considering their Master Plan. I was told that Mrs. Meachem-Miller (202)673-3565 is helping to develop a master plan for DPR but that there are strategic targets that is located on the Mayor's scorecard. I did not see a break down of projects on this list.
I still think there should be a discussion between DCPS and DPR concerning their master plans and scheduling of projects. We could have had a nice remodeled school with a pool and possibly saved money. Talk about killing 2 birds with 1 stone. Remember this is just my opinion. There might be have been more research to indicate that it may not be feasible.
JW

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 00:34:50 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Rec&Pool meeting(Wed) 5/15/02 6:30pm
I just got a flyer in my door that states:

Come Out & discuss -- PLAN, PARKING, SECURITY etc.
Need to voice concerns NOW or live with consequences -especially -PARKING
Wednesday: 6:30pm-8:30pm 5/15/02 Brookland School...

I'm just passing the information on about the meeting. With hopes that there will be some order at this meeting and discussion about what's next....A

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 08:49:51 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] NO SMD 5A-06 MEETING TONIGHT

I don't understand. Is there a meeting tonight or not? And if there isn't and it's an ANC office error, why haven't they corrected their error?—KS

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 11:24:55 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] NO SMD 5A-06 MEETING TONIGHT

YESTERDAY EVENING I CALLED COMMISIONER CURRIE AT ABOUT 7PM TO CONFIRM THE MEETING FOR TONIGHT. SHE CALLED ME BACK AT 10:45 PM, SHE HAD JUST GOTTEN IN, AND TOLD ME THAT WAS AN ERROR MADE THROUGH ANC OFFICE. I WOULD HAVE POSTED THIS LAST NIGHT I WAS ALREADY IN BED, WAS REALLY OUT FOR THE COUNT. JW

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 13:30:42 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] NO SMD 5A-06 MEETING TONIGHT
I spoke to RB on the way to the metro yesterday and he said that there was a meeting tonight at the Brookland school tonight.
A

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 11:26:25 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] Cancellation of Meeting
The ANC5A-06 meeting scheduled for tonight, May 15th has been cancelled. This message is from Commissioner Mary Baird-Currie.

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 10:26:27 -0500
Subject: [Brookland] 1) tonight's ANC meeting cancelled, 2)PSA 503 meeting tonight, 3) Note re: 5/21 meeting at St. Anthony's
Hi neighbors,
1) I called Ms. Lewis (635-6563), the ANC 5A office manager who emailed the group last week with the announcement for tonight's ANC 5A06 meeting with Commissioner Currie at Turkey Thicket. Ms. Lewis said that Commissioner Currie called this morning to cancel the meeting. Ms. Lewis is having trouble getting online, so I thought I'd pass it on.

2) Lt. Muslim of PSA 503 (i.e. roughly from Otis St. Rhode Island Ave and from the Metro tracks to Eastern Avenue) is hosting his monthly meeting tonight at 7:00 at the Luke Moore Academy, 10th and Monroe.

3) As some of you know, at the 4/23 ANC meeting at St. Anthony's Hall (12th and Monroe) concerning crime, I announced a followup meeting on Tuesday, 5/21, same location. What I failed to do in advance is reserve a room. I called within a few days of the April meeting to reserve one, but both rooms were taken. Many of the people present at the 4/23 meeting are not online, so I can't email them, and I am not able to go door-to-door to inform them of any date changes, so I am inclined to stick with 5/21, hope for good weather, and have a brief, outdoor (i.e. no chairs) meeting just to follow-up with the police and try to keep some momentum going from the previous meeting. In the future, rather than having an ANC meeting separate from the PSA meetings, I'd like to see us coordinate with Lt. Muslim, attend his monthly meetings (the

3rd Wed. of each month), and work out the priorities, etc.
Sincerely, DF
ANC 5A08

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 15:45:57 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: NO SMD 5A-06 MEETING TONIGHT
PO, I called RB @ 7:00AM this morning and told him that there is no meeting tonight. I did tell him the community to have a meeting without DPR and discuss the PROS and CONS of this project. Also we should list of items the community address before any type of construction starts. Our last meeting was more or less a protest. There wasn't really a dialogue because most people felt that was being stuffed down our throats without really having time to process what is going on. Not only would I like to see due diligence but also a break down of cost pre and post construction and is comparable to other rec center cost within the metropolitan area. Also does the 8 million dollars does not include the cost of equipment. I would like to see diagrams and charts. JW

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 15:58:16 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: NO SMD 5A-06 MEETING TONIGHT
J, Do you know when we will have a meeting to discuss the PROS AND CONS of the Turkey Thicket project without DPR? A

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 13:00:25 -0500
Subject: [Brookland] ANC 5C11 Meeting Thurs., 5/16 RE: Noyes Elementary School
Thanks Commissioner Woodland,
I'm forwarding the information concerning your meeting to the Brookland egroup, which I highly recommend your joining. It has over 200 members and is a great way to get the word out for these types of meetings and to find out what other things are happening in the area. If interested, just go to Brookland@yahoogroups.com and sign up.
Sincerely, DF, ANC 5A08

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 18:34:41 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Where do children hang out in the afternoons?
Just out of curiosity, where do the local children play after school or on the weekends. I often take my daughter to Turkey Thicket, but most of the children I see are with the recreation department. Is there somewhere else that people go or do most kids stay at home? I am just curious.
LH

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 20:00:18 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Where do children hang out in the afternoons?
We go to the PG pool. SG

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 02:24:13 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET
SANDRA HILL FROM DPR HAS SELECTED 12 PEOPLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO MEET WITH ON HOW TO PROCEED WITH PRESENTATION OF THE TURKEY THICKET PROJECT AND TO THE COMMUNITY. INCLUDED ARE COMMISSIONER CURRIE, MR. ARTISST, DINO DRUIDI, DIANE PECOR, RALPH BUCKSELL, PARTHENIA PRATT, THE EDITOR TO THE MICHIGAN PARK NEWSLETTER, AND THE OTHERS I DON'T RECALL. WE STILL HAVEN'T RECEIVED TRAFFIC

STUDY AND EIS RESULT. YOU GUYS DRAW YOUR CONCLUSIONS I KNOW I HAVE.
JW

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 02:51:55 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] SMOKING DRUGS ON PARK GROUNDS

WHILE I WAS AT PARK THIS EVENING GUYS WERE SMOKING DRUGS ON STEPS NEAR TENNIS COURTS ABOUT 15 FEET FROM KIDS PLAYING. IF I HAD STAYED LONGER MAYBE I COULD HAVE GOTTEN BUZZED. PARENTS BE ALARMED. AFTER I WALKED AROUND THE AREA FOR A WHILE THEY LEFT. THIS IS SOMETHING NOT JUST UNIQUE TO CITY PARKS IT HAPPENS IN THE BURBS ALSO. HOW SHOULD WE AS A COMMUNITY RESPOND? I BELEIVE THE PARK SHOULD BE FOR ALL WHO RESPECT THE LAW AND OUR CHILDREN. JW

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 09:30:00 -0400
Subject: RE: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET

May the record show that the Department of Parks and Recreation continues to operate illegally. The DC Code is quite clear about projects like Turkey Thicket. They require publication in the DC Register, advance notice for and open meetings, actual plans that people can understand, an environmental impact assessment, etc.

Though JW' e-mail indicates that I have been included in this gang of 12, thankfully, I have NOT been invited and do not care to have my name or reputation associated with it in any way. **This meeting--so far without a date apparently--is an attempt to silence the community, who were (from what I've been told and read on this listserv) less than compliant once they finally heard on May 9 about the insider dealings on Turkey Thicket.**

There's that little matter of "due diligence"--public notice, need for a transportation study and an environmental impact statement,plans--including a site-plan, coordination with other government entities. And, do not forget that last September DPR was sited by the Inspector General for its contracting and procurement practices, in other words, for its contribution to waste, fraud, and abuse. The IGs report is a public document and available on the web. Finally, for those of you who attended the May 9 meeting, I have been told that today is Connie Haynes', who has been the project manager on the Turkey Thicket project, last day at the Department of Parks and Recreation. Whatever is this all about?

With regard to Turkey Thicket, I believe it would be ill advised for anyone to continue with anything that doesn't occur at a public session where the whole of the community receives notice and receives materials for evaluation well in advance of the meeting. Participants should demonstrate an ability to listen and to represent views beyond their own self-interests. Ideally, they would bring competence, analytical skills, and critical judgment skills to the table.

Again, these are public matters before the community and all discussion should occur in open sessions. Oh, and one other small thing if anyone brings up the Mayor's 2003 Budget and the SNAP plans: there doesn't seem to be money attached to the Turkey Thicket project AND its citation is placed in the wrong cluster.
DP

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 14:03:04 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Drugs in Turkey Thicket

Did you call the police immediately and wait until they came? In my view, until the community boldly takes on those who use and/or sell drugs in Brookland, nothing will improve. Can those who live near Turkey Thicket videotape the illegal activity from their homes or cars with a zoom lens and give the tape to the police. We are very aggressive on my street (Lawrence) and have seen some improvement.

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 10:15:13 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET

<< I have been told that today is Connie Haynes', who has been the project manager on the Turkey Thicket project, last day at the Department of Public Works. Whatever is this all about? >>

FYI: For what it's worth, I asked Mary Currie if she had heard about this and she said he's retiring.

Date: Fri, 17 May 2002 14:53:06 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Drugs in Turkey Thicket

I did not call the police this time but I purposely continued doing my task in their immediate area to make them feel uncomfortable. I really haven't noticed officers that patrol the park, especially during peak hours. Remember me mentioning that this activity also happens in the burbs. I am still officially a foster parent, on the books, in Virginia and remember a fews times the police bringing a child home who was getting high in the park. The majority of the kids I worked with were teenagers by the way. But then again the police patrolled the parks, especially if it's known for drug activity. Will call the next time. JW

Date: Sat, 18 May 2002 20:05:17 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: RE: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET

Hi folks, My spouse D, the Editor of the Michigan Park Newsletter, was surprised to hear from me that he was included in this gang of 12. Later, he received a letter of invitation, and wishes to make it clear that this invitation was unsolicited.

The letter states that the purpose of the small group meeting with DPR is to plan a larger community meeting that will take place in June. From what I heard about how everybody (presenters and audience) behaved at the May 9 meeting, it seems to me that some serious planning is a good idea. A productive meeting where everyone can see, hear, and be heard doesn't "just happen."
KB

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 01:31:16 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Thank You Mr. B For Listening To Turkey Thicket Neighbors

Today @ 1PM Mr. RB and Mr. JH organized a meeting to listen and to write down the concerns of citizens who are neighbors of the Park. The meeting consisted of people who opposed a new center and people who were for the center. Mr. B was there to here ours concerns since we are the ones mostly impacted by whatever is there, good or bad. Dialogue happens when you are willing to listen despite your differences. Maybe DPR should call a meeting and listen to concerns of their neighbors. Many around the park feel as though they are

being bullied by DPR. I feel as though Mr. B has done us a great service by taking the time out of his schedule to just listen. I wonder how some people would feel if their neighbor's guest would take up all the parking on the street or would urinate in your back yard. I've told my neighbors to pray to have a parking space when you go grocery shopping, you might have to walk blocks if there's a big event at the park. Who wants a neighbor who totally disregards them? **Although I have my own parking space I have been there. I talked to a representative the other day and she could not understand why people would oppose this project. The art of being a good representative is listening to your constituency even when you disagree.** Thomas Jefferson said that you shouldn't exclude people because they don't understand but you educate them so that they may participate. Although people may find him to be hypocritical but this principle stands true in a real democratic society. Also denying the evident does not make it disappear or resolve the matter but will later worsen the situation.
JW

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 06:49:51 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET
K-
I'm surprised and I'm offended at your comment about how people behaved. If you came to a meeting wouldn't you expect there to be some content-perhaps a document with names, titles and phone numbers of the people addressing you? It is no small matter for people to block out two hours of their time and for the gist of the presentation to be 'we're on your side, we're working together...'
A meeting does not need to be managed by community members. The gentlemen who were at the meeting and Sandra Hill receive salaries to plan and attend meetings. If they don't know how to do such a presentation perhaps the city should hire people who do. The problem at the last meeting was not badly behaved citizens it was city employees who at best were doing a shoddy job and may just be trying to get one by us. SG

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 09:05:09 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET
S,
I'm sorry to give offense. I believe I included the presenters in my comment about behavior. I wasn't able to attend the meeting (Due to parenting responsibilities, only one of us could attend). Thus, I base my comments on what I read here on the listserv, and my husband's report. I understand that some shouting went on. Somebody here mentioned that, "When people are shouting, they aren't listening." Maybe you are right, that there was nothing to listen to. But does that excuse shouting?

It seems to me that if community leaders like Mr. B, who is clearly making an effort to listen (based on JW'S message), are involved in planning a larger meeting, then we are more likely to see a meeting that allows all voices to be heard, and less likely to have professionals try to get one by us. (Which can be pulled off with a slick, well-run meeting as well -- or perhaps better -- than with a chaotic, useless one). K

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 09:45:37 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] The powers that be want a piece of Brookland

We keep hearing everybody wants a piece of Brookland, and I've been learning a bit about the Federal City Council, a group of business leaders, who among other things, 30 years ago, wished to put the freeway (395) through Brookland! Some of the current "trustees" have been around at our restaurants and community meetings lately, so I thought I'd share with you a little history that I found in the common denominator newspaper. The full text is at http://www.thecommondenominator.com/mdp1ir99.html.

THE DISTRICT'S POWER BEHIND THE SCENES
Washington Post-connected business group
wields influence over city's legislative agenda
By KATHRYN SINZINGER
Staff Writer
An exclusive group of largely wealthy Washington area business people has for years been working behind the scenes with the city's political leaders to advance its own agenda for the nation's capital - often without D.C. residents' input and almost always without wide knowledge of its efforts.

Legislative influence of the group, which has close ties to the Washington Post, extends from the D.C. City Council and the mayor's office to the halls of Congress and the White House, according to sources interviewed for this story. Since the Kennedy administration in the early 1960s, even the president's Cabinet and other key federal officials have been considered ex officio advisers.

Membership in the private and generally secretive group, called the Federal City Council, is highly selective. Washington Post Publisher Donald E. Graham serves as nominating committee chairman for the organization, which was founded in 1954 by his father, the late Post Publisher Philip L. Graham. Seed money for the group's formation came from the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, named for the parents of Katharine Graham, chairman of the Washington Post Co. executive committee.

"They're controlling the city and it's a problem," said Sandra Seegars, a longtime Ward 8 activist and recent appointee to the D.C. Taxicab Commission. "It's a secret group that's in the background pushing buttons and pulling strings, but nobody knows who they are."

etc.....

Among the Federal City Council's current projects, according to its annual report:
· the National Music Museum and Performance Center, proposed for the site of the current Washington Convention Center at Ninth and H streets NW;
· the planned $81 million redevelopment of the Douglass and Stanton Dwellings housing projects in Southeast Washington;
· the Washington-Baltimore bid to host the 2012 Olympics;
· and an ongoing education program "to spur long lasting improvements in public education in the District, primarily by supporting the creation and development of first-rate, independent public charter schools."

etc....

Ward 5 activist Angela Rooney, who was among participants at the mayor's recent Citizen Summit, said Mayor Williams' connections to groups like D.C.

Agenda and the Federal City Council concern her.

"They've always been the archenemy," Rooney said of the group she came to know during a 15-year battle she and neighbors waged against the Federal City Council-backed effort to extend Interstate 95 through the heart of Northeast Washington's Brookland community. The plan, if carried out, would have destroyed homes in one of the city's most stable working-class areas.

"If you want to know who runs everything, it's the Federal City Council," she said."They play a wonderful game…They would have a gold plan, a red plan, a blue plan, but the citizens never saw the gold plan, which is what they really wanted to do."
....

This article ends with a complete list of 1999 "trustees", including Max Berry (recently visiting the Brookland CDC), Michele Hagans of Ft Lincoln, who has not addressed the law and the residents' concerns about promises about the development, Maudine Cooper of the Urban League who was at the crime meeting facilitated by Darcy Flynn, etc. I think that we are being watched, scrutinized, and assessed for what kind of backbone we have.

We can and will disagree among ourselves but I hope that we will grow strong as a community so that we can make sure this it is OUR COMMUNITY that is served and not the suburban multimillionaires that would do all kinds of things to Brookland without our knowing. We can squabble over "newcomers" and "gentrifiers" and try to split the community along race and class lines but while we do this, true outsiders will be carving up our land.

Did you catch this in the morning's Washington Post?
Auto Race Planning Ignored Impact
Lawyers Said Study Was Not Required By Serge F. Kovaleski

....Residents also are angry because the commission did not tell neighborhood leaders about the grand prix until June, a month before the final agreement. Residents said they were kept in the dark until the last possible moment to ensure there would be no community opposition.
...
does this sound familiar???
JL

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 09:24:27 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET

K, I can understand your comments about the shouting but the fact of the matter remains that everyone could clearly see what the problem was. In true honesty everyone knows what's going on. Why do people constantly try to play games with words etc. instead of getting to the root of the problem. Is this a case of denial? I think if DPR really wanted to listen they wouldn't need to form a committee of 12 people to decide how they are going to proceed. Maybe DPR needs a good PR person or someone experienced in conflict resolution. What DPR experienced in that meeting was nothing new. **To be honest if someone took a real effort to talk to people who live around the Park before the RFP or any contract were signed we may not be having this discussion right now. You would think that their experience with North Michigan Park neighbors would have taught them something.** Maybe they just don't have a clue. I am not really into drama or trying to attack people but

I do believe in being realistic. Some people are still trying to find out how, why and when this became a Regional Park. Hopefully you read my lines on exclusion and denial. Also I have a huge dog. I asked my neighbors if her barking bothered them. I asked because I'm considerate of the well being of my neighbors. By the way, where are the Park Rangers that our tax dollars are paying for?
Peace JW

Date: Sun, 19 May 2002 16:10:12 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET
Does anybody have a complete list of who the 12 people are who got invited by Parks & Rec to be part of this so-called "Leadership Meeting" on Tuesday about Turkey Thicket?

For the record, I did get a letter from Neal Albert that invited me to attend. But who are the other 11?
KS

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 01:31:15 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Next meeting????
So when can see expect the next public meeting about Turkey Thicket to occur? I am a little confused (as I am sure most people are) about what is going on. I just want to make sure that I did not miss anything.
LH

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 09:26:42 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] 12 PEOPLE TO MEET WITH DPR ON TURKEY THICKET
J:I do appreciate your postings on this issue, and your perspective as a Turkey Thicket neighbor.

I got curious about your comment below, and did a quick "google" search on "Turkey Thicket Park."

On Sun, 19 May 2002, James Watkins wrote:
> Some people are still trying to find out how, why and when this became a Regional Park

According to a Common Denominator article by Luteshia Phillips dated May 31, 1999, the regional park idea was proposed "last winter and was recently presented to the mayor and the budget office." "Last winter" could mean winter 1998-99 or 1997-98. Anyway, if folks care to peruse the article, it is at:
http://www.thecommondenominator.com/053199_news13.html

Quote of the Day (My personal selection from the 1999 article):

"The earlier we meet with everyone, the earlier we can start the design phase," [Michael Williams, special assistant to the recreation department's director of capital projects] said.

Check out the paragraphs regarding meetings with Ward 5 residents. Now, we may ask, "Who were they?" since their ideas seem to have been taken as important to and/or representative of the community.

Just out of interest, some other "hits" that came up on my search:
Schedule for National Capital Soccer League (NCSL)
Washington Women's Rugby Club
Washington Post listing of Parks & Rec Centers
John Carroll High School baseball
DC/Northern Va. Soccer Referees Unit
KB, 12th Pl & Upshur

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 14:27:09 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Community Building
Dear Friends and Neighbors,

First of all would like to apologize for any negativity that I have brought to this table on the Turkey Thicket issue. Frankly I will be glad when there is resolution on this and we can move on as a community. I truly believe something good can come out of all of this if we allow it. We as a community need to come together despite our differences and decide the major needs of our community.

Can we use our diversity as strength rather than a weakness? Was there ever a consensus done on our community? How many of us are willing to participate in future grassroots planning sessions within our community? E.g. Community Development Corporation, etc.

Rather than competing against one another lets band together. Lets draw up our own comprehensive plan, if we haven't, and present it to the government. Let's form our own cluster group, the Greater Brookland Area. In my going from door to door talking to people in the neighborhood I find the we have a group of bright, intelligent, and talented individuals within our community. We are a resource within ourselves. I have plenty of ideas to bring to the table but it's diversity that makes the world a little more interesting to me. Diversity not controversy.

See Ya, J

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 08:01:58 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Takoma DC Growth Plan Website Good Example
Takoma DC Growth Plan website is a perfect example of what we need in our community http://takoma.home.att.net/index.html#links. Also they have a survey/directory form on the site. JW

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 08:36:30 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Takoma: Another Good Example
To: "TakomaDCList" <TakomaDCList@studio405.com>
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2002 9:26 AM
Subject: [TDC] ANC 4B's Small Area Plan Resolution

Here is the resolution adopted by ANC 4B at last night's public meeting. About 700 residents, primarily from ANC 4B01, 4B02, and 4B03, signed a petition asking ANC 4B and the D.C. City Council to reject the plan due to its endorsement of 65-95 townhouses for the Takoma Metro Station site.

--Sara Green, ANC 4B01

ANC 4B Resolution: TAKOMA CENTRAL DISTRICT PLAN Adopted on March 21, 2002
Whereas:
- The Takoma Central District Plan proposed by the D.C. Office of Planning includes an endorsement to add 65-95 townhouse units at the Takoma Metro Station site
- Approximately 100 new units of housing and additional retail space are already in the pipeline for construction within one block of the Metro Station.

- Essential transportation and traffic data about the area have not been presented to the community.

- There are serious concerns about future transit and green space needs.

- The Takoma Metro Station property was purchased with federal tax dollars and is supported by annual subsidies from District of Columbia tax revenues.

- There are no specific site recommendations in the plan to encourage affordable housing construction in the area covered by the plan.

- D.C. law does not permit the D.C. City Council to amend the Office of Planning proposal,

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B, in accordance with provisions in D.C. City law that give it "great weight" in land use issues urges that the

1. D.C. City Council reject the plan or return it to the Office of Planning for necessary transportation planning and for improved site design and planning at the Takoma Metro Station.

2. The Mayor and the D.C. City Council to direct their representatives on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board not to approve any joint development project for the Takoma Metro Station property until the impact of the roughly 300 units projected for the surrounding sites can be assessed.

3. The Mayor and the D.C. City Council to revise land planning procedures and D.C. law to permit Council changes and modifications to proposed land planning documents.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B appoints the Commissioners for Single Member Districts 4B01, 4B02, and 4B03 to represent the Commission on these issues.

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 09:26:27 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Another Idea - Community Building

What I would like to see in our community
http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OACE/classesetc.htm. My former Elementary School, Pimmit Hill

Elementary, they turned into a Senior Citizen Day Care, Community and Adult Education Center. Also my former High School,George C. Marshall HS, in the evening it's used as a Community and Adult Education Center. They have really good home improvement, computer, foreign language and financial planning

courses. Heavily used by the community. Some classes are hard to get into.
JW

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 10:45:59 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Traffic Study Example (Takoma)
Takoma's example of traffic study:Takoma DC Growth Plans www.takomadcplan.org Official Small Area Plan Comments on SAP Developer Plans
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Takoma Traffic Study
Scope of Work
January 2002

Purpose
The District Division of Transportation (DDOT) proposes to investigate traffic management requirements in the Takoma area of Northwest Washington DC. These efforts are in response to citizen concerns regarding speeding traffic, traffic congestion and other safety concerns. The purpose of the study is to examine existing and future traffic conditions in the study area and to determine short-term and long-term traffic management and infrastructure improvements to reduce traffic congestion, especially during peak morning and evening travel hours; improve traffic and pedestrian safety; and protect surrounding residential streets from traffic impacts.
Study Area. The "study area" for this project includes the following area:
Eastern Avenue; Georgia Avenue; Van Buren Street, NW.

Definition of Work
The contractor will examine existing and projected traffic conditions in the study area and make recommendations to improve mobility and traffic safety. Over a 14-week period, the contractor will investigate current and future needs regarding vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, truck movements and safety and work in close coordination with community stakeholders in addressing their traffic and safety concerns.

The contractor shall prepare a proposed study scope of work, project schedule and proposed budget and submit these documents to the project manager at the end of week #1.

Description of Work to be Performed
Task 1: Scoping Meeting
The contractor shall develop a meaningful community participation process that will consist of at least three meetings with community stakeholders in the Takoma study area. The purpose of these meetings shall be to obtain input for development of the traffic management concept designs. The first meeting will be held with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4-B, local community groups and stakeholders to discuss the proposed scope of work and schedule for the traffic study, and receive public comment. This meeting will be scheduled for the second week of the study. The aim of this meeting will be to announce the project to the neighborhood, outline the projected timeframe for the study and introduce the contractor to community stakeholders. This meeting will also allow for community input in refining the study scope of work.

The second public meeting will occur after Task 4. The third public meeting will be held after Task 8 is completed. With the assistance of the Division of Transportation and the Office of Planning, the Contractor shall develop a project contact/mailing list of parties within the study area and other interested parties. The contractor shall also post study information on the DDOT web site.
Task #1 to be completed by the end Week Two
Task 2: Collect and Consolidate Data
The contractor will collect data on the following elements:

Existing traffic volumes and level of service for roadway segments within the study area. This includes mapping, aerial photography, historical research and other materials, including the Takoma Central District Plan available from the DC Office of Planning, DPW Traffic Services and Transportation Planning, and other District and Federal government agencies.

Field reconnaissance of the corridor area noting existing land uses, existing roadway geometric and traffic control conditions, traffic flow patterns, transit facilities and services, pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities (if any), as well as opportunities and constraints pertaining to access from the intersecting sidestreets and driveways.

Collect land use and transportation information from existing reports on proposed future development projects in both the Montgomery County and District of Columbia portions of Takoma and Takoma Park, including number of proposed residences, square footage of commercial and office space, number of proposed parking spaces, and projected vehicle trips per day. The contractor shall utilize existing traffic management plans prepared by project proponents and prepare an analysis of the impact of the projected future traffic of these various proposed future development projects on the existing transportation infrastructure.

Identify turning motions at key intersections during the morning peak period and the afternoon peak period on typical weekdays. These key intersections should include, but are not limited to, the following intersections:
Eastern Avenue and Georgia Avenue
Eastern Avenue and Blair Road
Piney Branch Road and Eastern Avenue
Piney Branch Road and Blair Road
Blair Road, Cedar Street, Carroll Street and 4th Street
Blair Road and Aspen Street
The list of key intersections will be refined during the initial scoping meeting with local ANC and neighborhood citizens.
Mechanical/continuous vehicle volume, speed and classification survey at two locations within the study area, covering a two-week period.
Travel time and delay studies within the study area, during the morning and afternoon peak periods.
Generalized origin-destination observations at key portal points.
Generalized parking inventories and usage surveys for the study area.
Queuing observation of traffic along the major corridors of the study area.

Number and type of truck traffic occurring on the major corridors of the study area.
Investigate bus, vehicle and pedestrian access to the Takoma Metrorail Station.
Prepare a brief report summarizing findings of Task #2.
Task #2 to be completed Week Four
Task 3: Short-term Options
The contractor will analyze the current and projected future vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic conditions and identify short-term options which could be implemented within 12 months to improve mobility, safety and reduce congestion, such as traffic control measures, traffic calming measures, improved signage, signalization, channelization, etc. The contractor shall prepare a brief report summarizing their findings and recommended short-term improvements. As part of this analysis the contractor will calculate the impact of each proposed improvement on mobility, safety, and level of service of the major corridor within the study area. The contractor shall also analyze average delays, queues and travel times along the corridor both with and without the recommended short-term options using a Sychro software-modeling program.
Task #3 to be completed Week 8
Task 4: Long-term Options
The contractor will analyze the current and projected future traffic situation and identify long-term options to improve mobility, safety and reduce congestion, such as road widening, intersection modification and other long-term improvements which would take longer than 12 months to implement. The contractor shall also identify methods of improving pedestrian and bicycle connections. The contractor shall prepare a brief report summarizing their findings and recommended long-term improvements. As part of this analysis the contractor will calculate impact of each proposed improvement on mobility, safety, and level of service. The contractor shall also analyze average delays, queues and travel times along the major corridor both with and without the recommended long-term options using a Synchro software-modeling program.
Task #4 to be completed Week 10
Task 5: Draft Report
The contractor will prepare a draft report of findings and recommendations regarding traffic and safety improvements from Tasks 2, 3 and 4, including budget estimates and schedules for recommended short and long term improvements, and make 20 copies available to District and Federal agencies, and stakeholder groups.
Task #5 to be completed Week 10
Task 6: Public meeting
The contractor will conduct a public meeting to review options with the ANC 4-B, community groups and other stakeholders.
Task #6 to be completed Week 11
Task 7: Final Report
The contractor shall incorporate comments from the public meeting and District and Federal agencies into a final report, including budget estimates and schedules for recommended short and long term improvements, and make 20 copies available to District and Federal agencies, and stakeholder groups.
Task #7 to be completed Week 14
Task 8: Public Meeting
The contractor will conduct a final public meeting to review the final report with the ANC, community groups and stakeholders.

Task #8 to be completed Week 14
Deliverables
#9830; Detailed scope of work and study schedule and project budget.
#9830; Preliminary report on findings and recommended short-term improvements
#9830; Preliminary report on findings and recommended short-term improvements
#9830; Draft report of short-term and long-term improvements
#9830; Final report of short-term and long-term improvements
#9830; Visual aids including maps or aerial photos of study area as needed
#9830; Monthly progress reports
Coordination
Consultant will work closely with the DPW/DDOT/Traffic Services Administration, the ANC from the neighborhood, other community groups, stakeholders and the DC Office of Planning.
Key Dates/Schedule
Week 2: Conduct a scoping meeting with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4-B and community groups.

Week 4: Determine existing traffic volumes and level of service for roadway segments within the study area. Identify turning motions at key intersections.
Week 8: Identify short-term improvements to improve mobility, safety and reduce congestion.
Week 10: Draft Report
Week 11: Public Meeting
Week 14: Final Report and Public Meeting
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Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 13:43:24 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] The intent of my last few emails
My last few emails are not about Turkey Thicket nor how "wonderful Takoma is"
but about community building and using a community website for information. Surveys are a good means to measure community needs, concerns and availability. The opinions of the people who have formed the Takoma website are really irrelevant to me. I'm not going to eat, sleep and talk turkey thicket on a daily basis. Even though I think it is very important issue and we continue to stay involved. See Ya, J

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 21:21:40 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] A question for the chosen 12
For the gentlepersons who were selected to help plan the community meeting in June that is to cover Turkey Thicket plans once again, but more constructively, I ask that you consider the following suggestions.

1. Could you please ask whomever in the DC government is calling this planning meeting whether there is anyone, ANYONE, out there in Vincent Orange's office, in Office of Planning or whatever it's called, in the Department of Parks & Recreation, or some other place, that could help with doing a decent and skilled, diplomatic and constructive job of running a meeting? There are such people. They are trained to do this work. We do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are whole organizations of people who run meetings WELL. They are well paid. We need one or two of them. No amateurs please.

A good meeting won't solve all our problems, but good communication can help a great deal to clear up who's responsibility is who's, what topics belong on the table for discussion and which ones are better discussed elsewhere, with an ear to making sure people feel listened to, and a respectful manner. The now retired C. Haynes who was at the disastrous meeting in early May had the audacity to state that we had to make decisions that night or we'd be out of the loop and the machine would start rolling on the following Monday. Then he took back that statement/threat. We need cool heads to prevail and we need someone who knows how to run a meeting.

2. I'd also suggest that we all wear nametags boldly and proudly, with affiliations if we are in an official capacity. Of course, developers and other snoopers won't reveal themselves, but I'd like to know who is wearing a suit and observing. (I can see the lurkers on this listserv putting in their palm pilots "wear jeans...")

3. Have the meeting held in a large enough place that it fits the many folks who might come. Don't displace any teenaged cheerleaders (ANOTHER travesty of the May meeting.... you had to be there.)

4. Have there be microphones at front and back so that all can line up to ask questions and all leaders heard.

5. Have copies of the latest versions of plans and make 200+++ copies. I request that my taxes pay for this. Please.

In an ideal world, it would be great if folks would identify their interests in why they are taking the position they are (what personal financial gain there might be, what developers are sponsoring them, what knowledge they bring, what history is repeating itself). I am concerned about the distortion of Olympics-posturing that is apparently going on around town, for example. In any case, the more above board everyone is, the better.

My 2 cents. We need to have infinite patience with each other, and mile-wide bullshit detectors on and functioning. I plan to hire a sitter and I'll have "CRANKY JL" on a name tag for all to ignore.
JL

Date: Mon, 20 May 2002 22:23:47 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Leadership Meeting
Dear Mr. Albert,

I am sending this letter by e-mail because there is insufficient time to respond to you using the services of the U.S. Post Office. Late on Friday, May 16, I received a voice message from Linda Perkins in the Mayor's office. She advised me I would receive a letter invitation to attend a leadership meeting to discuss the proposed Turkey Thicket Recreation Facility. She further advised I would be able to speak on behalf of the organization I represent. Imagine my surprise when the next day I received that letter which identified the organization as the Committee of 100 (on the Federal City). While it is true I am a member and trustee of the Committee, I do not speak on behalf of this organization nor have I ever raised Turkey Thicket as an issue before the trustees or the members. I wear many leadership hats and am extremely careful to never smudge the lines between them or between my roles

in them. What I am is a Ward 5 resident and activist and I speak for (though do not represent) scores of Greater Brooklanders who feel under-, un-, or mis-represented by the community's traditional organizations.

For many reasons, including what I noted above, I will not be attending this Tuesday's meeting at the Department of Parks and Recreation. Because I was unable to attend the May 9 meeting as well, prior to that meeting I laid out my concerns, in writing, about due diligence, professional competence and credibility, and failure to engage in processes that are required by law. All these issues remain. It astonishes me that the DPR would so cavalierly put at risk $8 million of the public's money. To do this project right, DPR is more than a year away from any meaningful engagement with the public about this effort.

I have attended exactly one meeting, approximately two years ago, about the proposed Turkey Thicket facility. Robert Newman was present at that meeting and though no specific plan was presented, the notion of one was in the air. Much later I received a one-page copy of that project plan (which bears absolutely no resemblance to the current ones) and I have made this document, along with others, available to people in Greater Brookland so they would have some notion about what "turkey thicket" was all about. As many people will testify, Mr. Newman was clearly uncomfortable in this meeting, especially when told "the whole community is behind this." I asked exactly two questions: "Who is the community?" and "What is this?" I would ask the identical two questions today. I think most Greater Brooklanders would.

Sincerely,DP

Date: Tue, 21 May 2002 09:53:18 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] ...what about some schools?
Dear neighbors,

Please know I share your concerns about the Turkey Thicket issue, and have struggled long and hard to figure out where I stand on the issue.

Basically I would love to have a well maintained free / affordable indoor pool and recreation center in walking distance of my home, with hours and programs that would accommodate both students and working people. [I am aware of the many "driving distance" pools, but it seems adult lap swims are limited to the early AM and mid-day hours -- not much help for working moms.]

That said, do I think there is much chance that the current project is going to produce that utopian dream -- HA! I really appreciate those of you who are investing so much energy to keep the city from making it any worse or more corrupt than the direction it almost inevitably appears to be heading in.

My major concern lies in another direction however -- middle and high school. (Guess what age my kids are).

Within walking distance of my house at 14th and Lawrence are the following elementary schools: Brookland, Bunker Hill, Burroughs, Noyes, and Slowe. In addition there only a short distance further there are the Edison Charter School, Ft. Lincoln, and Langdon. (Not to mention several parochial schools).

How many middle schools and high schools are there to serve this huge

population of students who annually complete their elementary education and seek to go on for "advanced education" -- ie. 7th grade and up. None. Zero. The Luke C. Moore Academy is for "special populations" and therefore is not a neighborhood school in the true understanding of that term.

Taft, which has a beautiful facility, was closed during the Becton era, and has been commandeered by DCPS to use as a "floater school", McKinley High, another Becton target, remains closed, though rumors persist that it may some day reopen as a "vocational" high school -- the assumption evidently being that none of the students who reside in Brookland are college prep material.

In fact, I have been hard pressed to find out if there even is an "in-bounds" high school for Brookland. After spending several months last year on a wild goose chase trying to find out where my rising freshman daughter was eligible to go to DCPS High School, being referred to several schools, all of whom said, no not ours, and finally being told that the DCPS directory still listed McKinley as inbounds for Brookland (four years after its closing!) , Sarah was finally admitted to School Without Walls, a DCPS magnet on the George Washington University campus, where she is getting an excellent education.

That is beside the point however. Currently our kids have limited options. The more affluent (of which sadly I am not one) can choose private schools. The lucky manage to get their kids into out-of bounds placements in the better DCPS schools on Capitol Hill and west of the park. The rest are stuck without many choices. Certainly the Brookland/Michigan Park/Woodridge neighborhoods have enough students to support our own schools. One only needs to look at the metro platform every morning at 7:45 to see that, as we ship our kids all over town. Why can't we have a middle school and a high school (college prep please -- our kids are bright and capable!) in our neighborhood? I would love to hear from Vincent Oranges' office and our School Board on this one.

Reopening Taft as a Brookland middle-school would be a good start. I know this won't happen in time to benefit my daughter, but what would it take to make it happen for the kids who are coming along after her? All of the community development in the world means nothing to families, if they cannot educate their children. It has to become a top priority for our community as we continue our various planning processes.
Thanks for letting me vent.
MT

Date: Tue, 21 May 2002 14:49:37 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: A question for the chosen 12

>The now retired C. Haynes who was at the disastrous meeting in early May had the audacity to state that we had to make decisions that night or we'd be out of the loop and the machine would start rolling on the following Monday. Then he took back that statement/threat.

That's not my memory. As I recall, the Planning Office guy (who's name escapes me) said that, and Mr. Haynes seemed embarrassed by the guy's gaff and tried to salvage the meeting afterwards. I've found the Planning Office rep to be the lead poo-poo-er, but though I found Mr. Haynes (somewhat understandably) defensive, in a few meetings I was generally pleased with his

presentation and communication, if not his preparation.
DT

Date: Tue, 21 May 2002 17:04:21 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: ...what about some schools?

M,
I feel your pain and I understand your concerns. I went through the same thing with my sons before moving into DC. It seems as though there is a effort to send our children from here to yonder. In a since it may be good for busing but weird for community. I was told Roosevelt was the school for Brookland yet I know plenty of kids that go to Wilson and Dunbar.
As far as a pool is concerned I still believe that DPR, DCPS and the community need to talk, especially on Turkey Thicket/Brookland ES issue. I have two sons and I am constantly driving from facility to facility for fitness and recreation, try living in the suburbs. **But in the best interest of the community we should make sure that the proper process is followed, that the Government agencies coordinate with each other in their planning and have we explored all possibilities in our planning. We as a community should not make decisions without having all of the information needed to make an educated decision. I would hate to make a 8 million dollar decision based on 8 cents worth of information.**
jw

Date: Tue, 21 May 2002 20:21:47 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] I stand corrected

At 02:53 PM 5/21/02 , DT wrote:
>"The now retired C. Haynes who was at the disastrous meeting in early
>May had the audacity to state that we had to make decisions that night
>or we'd be out of the loop and the machine would start rolling on the
>following Monday. Then he took back that statement/threat."
>
>That's not my memory. As I recall, the Planning Office guy (who's
>name escapes me) said that, and Mr. Haynes seemed embarrassed by the
>guy's gaff and tried to salvage the meeting afterwards. I think the
>Planning Office rep is offensive and the lead poo-poo-er, but though I
>found Mr. Haynes (somewhat understandably) defensive, in a few
>meetings I was generally pleased with his presentation and
>communication, if not his preparation.
Okay, I stand corrected as to whom said what. Mr. Haynes, may he retire in peace, had a more respectful demeanor. But the Planning Office guy was disgracefully unprepared, and the whole meeting... well nevermind, 'nuff said. I wonder how the 2 meetings tonight (the committee of the 12, and the crime meeting in the outdoors) are going... I am home with strep throat
JL

Date: Wed, 22 May 2002 12:35:08 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Little League, Babe Ruth and AAU Teams

I've in this area for a little while now and I haven't seen that many local little league teams using Turkey Thicket Park. There are at least 5 Elementary schools within a square miles distance from each

other each having a least 300 students each. Where are all the teams? I would like to look into starting some local leagues if there are none. I come from a very athletic family and sports helped to keep my brothers and I out of trouble while growing up.
Also are there any Adult Leagues in Upper NE? I play volleyball in Capitol Hill on Tuesday nights but would like to play other sports. JW

Date: Wed, 22 May 2002 14:06:14 -0000

Subject: [Brookland] youth athletic teams

Many years ago we had a recreational t-ball team for the little kids. It was organized and run by DC recreation out of Turkey Thicket. But it fell apart because DC rec dropped the ball and often never showed up. The Catholic school kids play sports in the CYO league. My kids also play soccer with DC Stoddert, which was organized by Stoddert School parents many years ago and has grown to a huge city-wide soccer league. And kids who go to private schools can play sports with their school and compete in the independent schools league. I think that if anyone wants to have organized athletics in Brookland, parents will have to organize it. DC does not have the staff or inclination to follow through. And there is nothing more discouraging than to bring your kid for a game and the coach doesn't show. However, that kind of organization takes a lot of work. My obversation is that there must be a core group of parents who have lots of free time to devote to such an enterprise. Fund raising and good supervision are also needed. Not an easy task.
Amazonmom

Date: Wed, 22 May 2002 10:24:08 -0400

Subject: Re: [Brookland] youth athletic teams & running clubs

It may not be as hard as we think. Last summer I talked to a very nice man at Turkey Thicket, I think his name is Mr. Carpenter, and he was trying to start a T ball team but wasn't getting much support. If all he needs is support, then heck, lets give him some! I backed away from the chance because my son decided he wasn't interested and we have a thing in our family about not pushing until the child is interested. (since we've started other things and dropped out). But my impression was one of willingness. I think those of us who don't really know the TT folks could benefit from talking to the staff more regularly.

I also have heard that things have been done well in the past, like a TT tennis group for kids, which fell apart due to DPR incompetence or neglect. So its not like they are waiting for parental involvement with open arms. But some support would be appreciated I think (I may be naive here). Seems like many of the families who schlepp around time, mine included, are already tied into other teams and kids and schools and groups. But (I hope) its never too late to dig into what is here in Brookland. I'd like to talk to James Watkins more about the sports he has in mind. What the heck, its worth a try.

A year or so ago a few parents were meeting to talk about how to get kids together in the neighborhood and we tried to meet at the Otis Street playground by Taft 4th Saturdays. But it didn't quite jell -- folks are busy on the weekends and it never reached a critical mass. Could be tried again, though, now that we have the power of the listserv.

I'd love the idea of a running club, Paula, once I start running

again! Just once a week, early Sundays perhaps, a run around the neighborhood, that would be very cool! Let's see who else responds.
JL

Date: Wed, 22 May 2002 10:58:14 -0400
Subject: RE: [Brookland] youth athletic teams
I couch my son's T-ball team associated with Oyster Elementary School in NW. If there is the interest (12-15 kids, aged 6-8) all we have to do is sign up with the Cal Ripkin league and we've got ourselves a team. They will help us get permission to use the fields (either Turkey Thicket or the other one on S. Dakota) and they set the schedule and we're off. The key is to have a pool of people to draw upon, which is why the teams usually are associated with schools or local rec centers. It doesn't take much and most practically all coaches are volunteers -- with not a lot of time on their hands. Is there enough interest out there to form a team in Brookland?
- RE Brookland dad

Date: Wed, 22 May 2002 15:16:07 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] youth athletic teams
I want in, perhaps plan for a legit league next year. Don't let Parks take away our fields with this new construction, something that they plan on doing right now.
PO
Brookland Pride Inc.

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 14:22:11 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project
Hello everyone,

I just found out that the Thicket park project will move forward. The issue we have about parking, picnic area on 10th & Shepard, Rats, Security are things that will not stop the construction of the park. What can we do... maybe have a meeting with the representatives in charge of Parking, Security, ask that someone address these issue.

Any suggestions?
A

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 10:24:30 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project
A-
Found out from who? SG

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 14:57:15 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project
Derrick Copper he works in Mr Orange office and Tim Thomas Anc Rep for Michigan Park. I called Mr Orange office to find out who can answer some of the questions about the Park and parking, rats, security and they gave me numbers of other people to talk to but he did say the park project is going to move forward at the request of the Mayor.

Derrick Copper gave me Angela Jones name rep for parking in Ward 5 her number is (202) 671-2365. Tim Thomas said I should be talking to Mrs Curri(sp) but he was nice and answer some of my questions. Neil Rogers is the Chief of Staff for Parks his number is (202) 673-2143 or (202) 673-7665. I was unable to reach Neil Rogers nor Angela Jones. Neil Rogers was away from his desk and Angela Jones is out on vacation until May 29th.
A

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 12:20:20 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project

Could someone in the neighborhood who attended Tuesday's "Leadership Meeting" at Parks & Rec please give the Brookland listserv group a briefing on what happened?
It seems odd that we've heard no report whatsoever from that meeting. If it was indeed held to help foster communication on this project and to set the date for a June meeting, somebody should be communicating pronto about what happened.
As one of the so-called "Gang of 12" invited to the meeting, I declined my invitation because I felt it was inappropriate. I was invited as the editor of The Common Denominator, at my home address, and I cannot ethically participate as a working journalist in such a meeting.
As a neighborhood homeowner and D.C. taxpayer, I also think it was wrong for someone in our government to select a few people they felt were "representatives" of the neighborhood to discuss this project. I do not pretend to represent my neighbors' interests in this matter. We all have equal rights as property owners and/or residents in the neighborhood and should be treated equally by our government.
I fear the government's attitude in holding this meeting was but an extension of the basic process problem in planning the new rec center. For the record, when I spoke with Sandra Hill to decline the invitation and noted that I thought the government needed to take a step backward on the project, she repeatedly told me that the project was "moving forward." So much for seeking any real input from the community, huh?
-KS

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 12:31:41 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project

At the ANC5A meeting last night fliers were distributed with the following information:
>>Special Community Meeting
ANC5A in partnership with Parks and Recreation

You will receive the plans and hear discussion regarding the development for the new Turkey Thicket Recreation and Aquatic Center.

Wednesday June 5, 2002 7:00 pm
Brookland Elementary School 12th Street and Michigan Avenue NE

For the purpose of sharing ideas and discussing issues with one another to ensure that community residents are fully informed regarding the current status of the project and that each voice is heard.
>>
The ANC has also allocated some money to make sure that plenty of fliers are distributed. They sounded very much aware that some members of the community

are not informed.
Best, JC 22+Otis

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 12:59:10 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING
SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING ANC 5A IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARKS AND RECREATION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2002 7:00 P.M.
BROOKLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 12TH STREET AND MICHIGAN AVENUE, NE

You will receive the plans and hear discussion regarding the development for the new Turkey Thicket Recreation and Aquatic Center.

For the purpose of sharing ideas and discussing issues with one another to ensure that community residents are fully informed regarding the current status of the project and that each voice is heard.

For further information please call the ANC 5A office, 202/635-6563

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 18:14:19 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING
I spoke to someone at the ANC 5A OFFICE. I requested that someone from parking, security and parks come to the meeting Wednesday, June 5,2002. I did not get the guys name. However, perhaps if other people called and suggested that representatives from parking, security and parks attended the meeting maybe more questions can be address. The number for the ANC 5A office is (202) 635-6563 email address: anc5adc@aol.com.
A

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 14:20:44 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project
Just wanted to know if the environmental impact statement and transportation study that were promised to the community within one week following the May 9 meeting were received? I'd like a copy to review for June 5 meeting.It may be time to seek legal representation as a neighbor opposed to the lack of due diligence with regard to this project. Again, who received those documents from Parks that were promised? I definitely need copies.
PO

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 14:24:33 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING
Still waiting for a report from someone that attended the meeting of 12. I hope it wasn't just a group of the Commissioners' supporters that will claim to represent the community in what may be considered a formal capacity at this Parks appointed meeting.
PO

Date: Thu, 23 May 2002 21:47:33 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Regional Park Project
Hello everyone-

I am new to this list. Signed on in the last couple days.

I am DC resident of Michigan Park since 1994 and member of the Michigan Park Citizens Association and current editor of its exceedingly modest newsletter.

I guess, I am also one of the Gang of 12?!

I was at the meeting with the Dept. of Recreation on Tuesday evening and will attempt (dare I be so bold?) a brief description of the meeting.

It was attended by staff of Dept of Recreation, several ANC Commissioners and only about half of the Gang of 12.
I pointed out during the meeting that I could not possibly be representative of the neighborhood. (I went to the meeting in hopes of helping to facilitate the review of the proposed building submission and help prepare for the promised neighborhood wide meeting.)

The meeting began with a description of the project's evolution. Improved facilities at Turkey Thicket were requested by the community at the "Cluster" meetings sponsored by the Office of Planning some time back. Also there was strong interest in a new facility expressed at the "SNAP" meeting attended by Mayor Williams at the Brookland Elementary School. (I think the SNAP meeting was maybe two years ago?). Other community meetings and events were mentioned.

The meeting was dominated by a presentation of the 60% submittal for the proposed recreation center. There were many comments, questions, observations regarding the building and the site. (Many of which repeated what had been said at previous meetings). No conclusions of any sort were reached at this meeting. This portion of the meeting finished with the understanding that the 60% review of the project plans will not be complete until the entire community has an opportunity to comment at the upcoming meeting.

The meeting concluded with comments and suggestions about the upcoming community meeting to be held by ANC 5A about the facility.

A partial list of the suggestions is:
1. Prepare written ground rules for the discussion and consider additional ground rules suggested from the floor-have attendees agree to the rules
2. Prepare a readily legible site plan with labels for distribution.
3. Building plans and elevations to be presented must also be suitable for distribution and drawings used by speakers in presentation must be legible from a distance.
4. The room must be of adequate size (though no one knows how many to expect).
5. A public address system should be available so all participants can be heard.
6. The room must be accessible.
7. Notice of the meeting must be as widely disseminated as possible. (Nebulous comment this but suggestion of posting to this list was made).

There for what it is worth, is my description of the Gang of 12 meeting. I am sure other participants will have a different take and perhaps can help identify omissions and errors in my summary.
DPC

Date: Fri, 24 May 2002 15:48:56 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years
In terms of playing team sports at Turkey Thicket I understand there will b no fields available for the upcoming two years of construction. SG

Date: Fri, 24 May 2002 16:22:14 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Nothing's ever a done deal....
Thanks, A, for doing all that calling to Vincent Orange's office, and tracking down information. I just want to encourage you and all of us who are striving to have this Turkey Thicket thing done RIGHT if its going to be done at all to know that we have a lot more power than we use, and we can't be cowed into thinking ANYTHING is a done deal. That is just so much spin and magical thinking. Orange and the Mayor want this done, but Michigan Park fought it and got a smaller better planned facility. The Harry Thomas Senior Rec Center on Lincoln Road is partially built, falling down, and attracting crime. There are community activists who have stood in front of bulldozers. Would that we do not have to go that far. We have time still. The freeway over Brookland was a done deal too, and you and I live where it was supposed to go.
JL

Date: Sat, 25 May 2002 22:29:00 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Youth sports in Brookland
Regarding Baseball, Soccer, etc in Brookland for kids:

Our two boys (ages 8 and 5) play in the well organized and not too far away Takoma Park Soccer league. They also have a baseball league (both co-ed and girls).

Harry Thomas, Jr has on several occasions invited us to join him Saturday mornings at Taft starting at 9am for baseball and other sports workshops and games. I believe he runs a group that sponsors some sort of organized sports programs for the neighborhood but we have never been able to make it on Saturday mornings.

I had spoken last year to the fellow who was mentioned before at the Turkey Thicket Rec center and when I showed up with my kids for the promised baseball (t-ball) workshop, no one knew anything about it. We started a pick up game ourselves and a bunch of kids came over to join in. There are kids there just aching for fun things to do. If there is supposed to be adult leadership around, they do not make themselves available at all to the kids. I did not even realize that the little building at Turkey Thicket was a Rec Center until someone told me. The lack of organization among such a captive audience is a shame and a waste.
CG Varnum St NE

Date: Sun, 26 May 2002 15:14:29 +0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: HOPE for our community
Hi, All,
Thanks for all the valuable discussion and work so many people are doing about Turkey Thicket. I haven't made previous meetings, but hope to come to the one on June 5. My hope is that we will stretch ourselves and find ways to be genuinely concerned for everyone affected. **In particular, we could**

aspire to viewing the young people who play, or deal, or just hang out in the park as community resources waiting to be tapped . . . or at least as children who belong to our entire village. I'm the first to admit that I hav not taken the time, as JL so wonderfully suggested, to talk with the staff (or families) at the Turkey Thicket Recreation Center. It's overdue, and I will take that step this week.In the spirit of being concerned for everyone, I'd like to pass along a piece by Kevin Yarr from the magazine HOPE (Jan./Feb. 2002, p. 11). Please read it when you have time.
Best regards, BR

"When Police Constable Mike Rioux and teenager Melonie Hughest confronted one another in a doughnut shop parking lot in Summerside, Prince Edward Island, on a summer evening five years ago, nothing construtive was likely to come of it. For Rioux, it was the beginning of another night of shuffling teenagers around the downtown, moving crowds of sometimes more than a hundred from one fast-food parking lot and the next--a perennial problem in Summerside. For hughest, sober and drug-free, it was a question of why she couldn't stay and finish the coffee she had just bought, and hwere was she supposed to go, anyway?

"Rioux didn't know where she was supposed to go and admitted it. Then he turne dthe question around and asked what she wanted to do about that.

"It was the beginning of a powerful reltionship between a teenager willing ot lead and a police officer willing to follow. Hughest and about a half dozen other teenagers began to work on finding a place for their peers to go. Six months later, they took up residence in an old rink, founding the club that would become know as Generation XX.

"It's been an amazing success, boasting 500 to 600 visits a week in town of 15,000. It was recently awarded an international prize as one of the best youth clubs in the world.

"The club, with its video game machines, pool tables, and beat-up furniture, might not look much to the average adult visitor--but then it wasn't designed for the average adult. Down in the old rink space is the region's first indoor skateboard park, a boxing club, and a stage for concerts. Given the dream-rec-room atmosphere, no one seems to mind the prohibition on alcohol and drugs.

"We're successful because it wasn't a bunch of adults coming and saying, 'Okay, this is the way we're going to do it,' says Hughes, now twenty-one and adult president of the club. 'Every week we talked, and it was all the youths' ideas [that created it]. It was built the way we like it.'

"Financial support comes from diverse sources: Use of the building is donated by a private individual, but the club pays for utilities, taxes and insurance, says General Manager Gordie Whitlock. From raffles, auctions, car washes, business signs posted in the buildling, and two kindergarten classes that rent space there, the club raises about $75,000 a year, according to Whitlock. Coin-operated games at Generation XX also provide income, as do vending machines placed in businesses around town.

"The club's benefits to the community have been striking. Not only is Rioux free from spending his nights herding idle teens, but since 1996

youth-related police calls are down 40 percent, and charges against teenagers are down 30 percent. In August of 1996, Summerside was holding thirty youth in detention; last August it held six.

"'It's a safe place to go, and the kids can just be themselves,' says Rioux. 'They're happy there, and hapy kids are less likely to cause problems.

Date: Mon, 27 May 2002 21:06:28 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket info

Brooklanders,
Does anyone know who was supposed to receive the copies of the environmental impact statement and transportation study that was promised by the Parks and Recs representative at the may 9 project meeting? This is very important for that June 5 meeting. Somebody please touch base. Thanks,PO

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 13:12:24 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Turkey Thicket info

P,
I just got off the phone with Sandra Hill. She's the new lady responsible for the park project. She maybe able to give you some more information about the environmental studies and who has it. Her number is (202) 671-3246

Also, when i talk to Sandra Hill she mention that the focus of this meeting is only the park. She said she will consider talking about security, parking, rats. I told her that every meeting they keep telling us the next meeting she said she will consider that. I also mentioned that the people on 10th street did not want a PICNIC AREA in front of their house. She said she write that down and to bring those concerns to the meeting. I told her from talking to other people i understand that this meeting will already be format with limited input. She said, no we will listen to the people's concerns. She told me that the park project is really nice and we may have to compromise some things. I told her, we do not want a PICNIC AREA on 10TH & SHEPARD street ... And we would like someone from parking and security to attend this meeting. She said those issues are really important she took my name and number down.
A

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 16:41:50 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Youth sports in Brookland

C,
I agree with you and all of the other people in our community concerning the lack of commitment. This is why I would like to see something happen in Brookland, but it is going to take us parents and community participation to make the difference. I have always participated in my sons teams whether it be fundraising, being an assistance coach, preparing the fields, keeping score, officiating or just working in the snackbar.

I was an assistant coach within already well established league but never have started a team or league, but I am game to give it a try. If someone else would like to spearhead things I don't mind stepping aside because I'm really about power struggles but our chidren and community.

Rich in a previous email had mentioned possibly starting a team through the

Cal Ripken League which is a good idea. Maybe being an off shoot of the Takoma Park Soccer League is an idea.

If anyone want to talk to me further give me a call at 202 832-3683. If you call and I don't respond within 2 days give me another call, I have two girl crazy young men at home who love to tie up the phone lines. JW

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 13:26:05 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years

J-I heard that the heavy equipment for the construction would be taking up the field space. Do you know how long they estimate construction time to be? S
>Subject: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years
>Date: Tue, May 28, 2002, 1:20 PM
> S,
> Why 2 years? J

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 18:06:33 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years

I heard originally that they were supposed to be completed, per Bob Oudit, 420 days from March 21, 2002. I might be wrong but they said in previous meeting that the fields were going to be first thing to work upon, then the building.

Even though, this stuff may be going on with Turkey Thicket I still don't want to abandon the Brookland Sports idea, unless there is no community support.

I moved to Brookland because it's the best of 2 worlds, accessibility to mass transit like the city and yet the residential feel of the suburbs. Also the cost of housing. The only thing missing are the community sports.
J

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 18:22:48 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] swim team news

If you are looking for a great swim team this summer, join the Prince George's Pool, corner of Buchannan and Chillum, in Mt. Rainier. Swim team practices start tonight at 5:30 for 8 and under, 6 pm for 9 and 10 year olds, and 6:30 for 11 and up. You must be a member of the pool to be on the team. You will be with many Brooklanders. It's great fun for the kids, and relatively non competitive. Open to any child who can doggy paddle across the pool! JY

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 18:46:08 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years

On the bright side, if the fields are closed for two years, all those out-of-town leagues will have to break their habit of using Turkey Thicket, leaving our refurbished fields ripe for use by *our* neighborhood teams and leagues coming "on-line"!
KB 12th Pl & Upshur

Date: Wed, 29 May 2002 14:11:42 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years

I was told by the Property Management guy (Captain Poo-poo) and the contractor that the construction area will be fenced off at a line approximately at the current home plate. They've also told us a few times that project completion is required w/in 400 (that's my memory) days from the start. Hopefully, enough of those two promises will be kept to avoid the fields being shut for that time, which I consider unacceptable. Who said that they would be? DT

Date: Wed, 29 May 2002 16:41:10 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: No fields at Turkey Thicket for 2 years

How will the fact that Turkey Thicket is regional park affect scheduling of community use versus regional use? I really don't know if we should consider Turkey Thicket as a home field for sports until we know how much we will be able to utilize it. That's why I really have tried to avoid the Turkey Thicket subject even though I have some real issues with it sometimes. I am trying to stay positive that's why the sports and community building topics I have been trying to stay focused on. Really I think there are some legitimate concerns that need to be addressed such as discussion on the EIS, TIS, parking, crime and coordination with other agency projects. From what I was told all this was done within SNAP. From what data (survey/consensus) was the planning based upon and what other functional government structures were they compared to. It's not always how much you have but how well you manage what you have that makes the deference. MC Hammer is a perfect example of that. JW

Date: Wed, 29 May 2002 17:00:45 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Explanation of Last Email

I was not venting just asking questions. In a democracy we should be able to question our government's decisions. Sometimes it may seem annoying but that's democracy. Peace J

Date: Wed, 29 May 2002 10:03:24 -0700
Subject: RE: [Brookland] Adult & Children Sports

Both sound like good ideas. What about something for both children and adults playing together, like soccer. It would be fun to have someone coach all of us. Lynne

Date: Thu, 30 May 2002 16:55:15 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Conversation with Sandra Hill

Yesterday I spoke to Sandra Hill about the concerns of the neighbors of Turkey Thicket Park and that they need to be addressed. I also I discussed the selection of the 12 people chosen that DPR meet with and the content of their meeting. She told me that the people that were selected were people who wanted to be involved in the process and that is why they were selected, which contradicts quite a few letters and emails that I have read. I do believe the emails and letters that I have read that these people did not asked to be involved in any private meeting wherein the community would be excluded.

Notwithstanding there are issues that we who live around the park have lived with, issues in which we have been sent from department to department yet without resolution. **While some believe that a new structure will drive away the negative elements I believe that a committed community along with a functional government makes the difference, Harry Thomas Sr. Recreation Center is a perfect example, no offense. All we ask for is accountability not passing the buck or overlooking the issues.**

Parking problems, littering, loitering, sales & use of illegal substances, public urination are issues that need to be dealt with. While people are supporting a new facility please remember to support the people who near the park and our quest to eliminate some of the items listed above. A bigger building could bring bigger issues without continuous community support and vigilance. Plenty do use the park, or kids use the park, go home, shut their doors and leave us dealing with the issues.

While DPR is pushing building, building, building we who live around the park are pushing the elimination of issues, issues, issues.

It's amazing how when a few of my neighbors and I began notifying people how so many people began to show up at the meetings. This was prior to any announcement of a ground breaking ceremony. This is what happens when people are notified. I really didn't care whether people supported my beliefs or not it was about community involvement.

Some things to think about in future planning of recreation center:

1. Promote family. A place that encourages fitness and activities from Grandma and Grandpa to baby, not just a place to get rid of your kids or activities that cater to just the needs of the elderly or children.
2. Good Landscaping. Not just grass cut, no dirt huge patches around building, some weed control, plants inside and around the building.
3. Sufficient, trained and courteous staffing. All the staff drug free and trained in first aid & CPR certified.
4. Dumpster in enclosed area and recycle bins (encourage recycling and environmental consciousness).
5. Partnership with community (promote volunteers through the volunteers in action program). Currently this department has only one person and she seems to be inundated.
6. Security (police foot patrol, occasional K-9 presence and metal detectors)
7. Maintenance (clean locker and rest rooms, window washing, repair of broken items, etc.)

After visiting my parents last night I drove past my former elementary school just before driving through McLean, Virginia and the parking lot was full. Their community and adult education program is really inspirational. Also there were signs everywhere announcing registration for fall lacrosse, soccer and football. By the way my parents live in a neighborhood of mostly moderate-income families and quite a few retirees.
JW

Date: Thu, 30 May 2002 14:16:43 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] paved paradise, put up a parking lot...

I found this article in the POST archives about Brookland. Just to add to our community activism lore... Why don't we truly ask the diverse community

we are WHAT WE WANT, then figure out how to get it? Why not be proactive?

I heard Neil Albert, Director of DC Parks & Rec, say on Kojo Namdi's show today that DC has more pools per capital than most US Cities. There's something very fishy about this... I paid for this article from the post and would be glad to email all 12 pages as an attachment if you email me privately for it.

END OF THE ROADS November 26, 2000; Page W10 By Bob Levey Jane Freundel Levey
In the Interstate Era, Congress ruled Washington like a fiefdom. Then a fight over some freeways inspired a biracial, neighborhood-level movement to fight the federal power
If you drive south from Baltimore along Interstate 95, you have to make a choice when you reach the Capital Beltway: west toward Silver Spring or east toward College Park? If you try to continue south, toward the District, you'll find that the roadway stops dead about 200 yards later, in a field of flowers. If you enter the District via the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, you'll encounter a similar superhighway stub: Soon after crossing the Potomac, Interstate 66 dumps you onto local streets.

If you try to drive to a game at RFK Stadium via the Southeast-Southwest Freeway, you can't quite get there, because the freeway ends in a mound of dust about a mile short of your destination.
And if you drive north along Interstate 395 past the Capitol, keep a foot near the brake. About a mile after the tunnel passes the famous dome, the road dead-ends at New York Avenue, at the front door of the Church of God and Saints of Christ.

There was a time when the Washington area was supposed to have 450 miles of interstate highways. About 38 of those miles were supposed to pass through the District of Columbia. But because of an epic political battle that lasted 22 years, only 10 were ever built -- and all were finished before the protests started in earnest.

Instead, the Washington area got Metro -- all $5 billion and 103 miles of it. Much of the money had been earmarked for interstate highways. It was diverted to subways. But this was no simple swap on a spreadsheet. The struggle to block freeway-building wrenched local politics between 1954 and 1976 like no other issue, involving public protests, court decisions, presidential-level politics and cooperation between the races that would have been extraordinary in any other era.

Date: Thu, 30 May 2002 17:23:22 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] paved paradise, put up a parking lot...
J, you are right, we can either be pro-active on our commumity's behalf, or submit to the juggernaut rolling over us.

Of course there is something fishy, and it aint the swimming pool.. When you smell something, it usually involves speculators, real estate dealers, insider businesses, trade-offs, developers and weak, corrupt, venal, greedy ambitious politicians, often petty politicians who will sell our collective holdings for a handshake.

Lots of things, like freeways, come down to us in DC from above, and I mean from high up in the echelons of power. And, even if they are not directly

Brookland issues, the Olympics and the Mag-Lev train.

Turkey Thicket and one other DC recreation area (I don't know which) were designated "Regional Parks" by the Mayor, after he took office. Why???? What does it mean: regional park??? There are some answers around, somewhere. Follow the money, follow the votes.

Good idea, passing on the Levey's article. This may well be a redundancy, but I have it saved from when it was free, and cannot send it as an attachment, but if anyone would like a printed copy mailed to them, ask me.
AH

Date: Mon, 03 Jun 2002 13:32:56 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Park
I have 10 copies of correspondence, Geotechnical report and environmental impact study assessment form. Email me if you want a copy. I have only one copy the RFP, etc. JW

Date: Tue, 04 Jun 2002 15:59:08 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Common Denominator Article
I'm afraid some are tired of the topic, just as the motivations of the government are becoming clearer.

Kathy has done an excellent job of summarizing the issues and the ramifications of Turkey Thicket for the entire city. The url is : http://www.thecommondenominator.com/060302_taking.html.

First Paragraph: AN $8 MILLION TEST CASE: The quiet residential streets surrounding many of the city's parks could change dramatically in character without regard to homeowners' concerns if a plan being advanced by the Williams administration goes into effect. A source at the Office of Planning calls the current effort to construct an $8 million aquatic and recreation center at Turkey Thicket, on the border of Northeast Washington's Michigan Park and Brookland neighborhoods, a "test case" to determine whether the city can build recreational facilities "as a matter of right" in any residentially zoned area.

Date: Tue, 4 Jun 2002 13:02:20 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Common Denominator Article
Thanks, JW. It really blows the plan apart.

1. no EIS, of course
2. no public input as legally required
3. no adequate notification to affected citizens, as legally required.
4. no legally carried-out zoning change request.

Williams probe flunks the test.
We cannot sustain without grievous injury to the life of the surrounding neighborhoods an oversized, ugly, inadequately (if the past is prologue) staffed spa designed as a "Regional Park" open to residents of the District, Maryland and Virginia, (according to Mary Currie) by the "triage" process of applying for permits for use.
The politics of abuse.
AH

Date: Tue, 4 Jun 2002 13:24:05 -0400
Subject: RE: [Brookland] Common Denominator Article

It's also my understanding (I may be incorrect) that all along 16th street and other streets in the Brookland area, a lot of the land that property owners might assume is part of their property, actually lies outside of their official property lines and is not really their property but belongs to the city (with little risk the city would ever exercise it's ownership of it). If this is in fact correct, it may be a reasonable concern that a large facility/attraction and development could lead to the widening of roads, in which case their could be an adverse effect on the size of homeowner's lawns and fences.
I wonder if anyone has further insight into this or thin it's a reasonable concern.
M E

Date: Tue, 04 Jun 2002 17:52:44 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Common Denominator Article

Thank you all for your insights. These are things I was not aware of until now. peace. K

Date: Tue, 4 Jun 2002 15:04:48 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Re: Common Denominator Article

Brooklanders,
This is very impressive and I am proud of how a number of citizens will not roll mover for this project. Like I stated a few wee back, roll over on this and the city will never take this community seriously. The ANC teamed with city development and tried to slip this one right under our noses but it will not happen.

The sad thing is, we all want the best facilities for our community but this lack of responsibility exhibited by our elected officials has proven the death of this project. It's a shame.

Also, the ACLU has been contacted and a full report of this process has been requested.

This community should be proud as it continues to hold elected officials accountable.

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT WEDNESDAY'S MEETING AT BROOKLAND ELEMENTARY AND LET US SEE WHAT SUPRISES LIE AHEAD.
PO Brookland Pride

Date: Tue, 04 Jun 2002 20:00:47 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] just in case you didn't have time to click on the url...

Taking note . . .
Observations about public affairs in the nation's capital
by the editor of The Common Denominator
AN $8 MILLION TEST CASE: The quiet residential streets surrounding many of the city's par could change dramatically in character without regard to homeowners' concerns if a plan being advanced by the Williams administration goes into effect. A source at the Office of Planning calls the current effort to construct an $8 million aquatic and recreation center

at Turkey Thicket, on the border of Northeast Washington's Michigan Park and Brookland neighborhoods, a "test case" to determine whether the city can build recreational facilities "as a matter of right" in any residentially zoned area.

Yours truly always thought that the "right" to build belonged to the property owner. In the case of public par, the owner is the taxpayers - so shouldn't government officials still need to take their plans to the public for comment and assent?
The "test case" at hand, which has prompted great consternation among many neighbors of Turkey Thicket Recreation Center (including yours truly, to make full disclosure of a personal interest in the case), came to light in April when grapevine communication informed the area's residents that groundbreaking for a huge new recreational facility was imminent.

According to Par and Recreation Director Neal Albert, city officials did much of their "communicating" with the public in this case through Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner Mary Baird Currie and the Michigan Park Citizens Association, a dues-paying membership organization. Currie, for the record, represents the area immediately surrounding Turkey Thicket but also has a vested interest in what happens there, since her home abuts the park. Consequently, many neighbors consider the new rec center to be Currie's "pet project."

The simmering neighborhood controversy, which has so far prompted one contentious and abruptly aborted meeting with the city's project managers on May 9, has been fueled by the inability of city officials to explain publicly exactly what they plan to do at the park. The city has already signed an $8 million contract with R.K. Contractors Inc. of Beltsville to demolish the existing rec center and build a new, much larger one.

Despite the mayor and others holding a groundbreaking ceremony at the site on May 3, officials say the plans for the center are only 60 percent complete. One curious aspect of the current plan locates a 32-car parking lot along a gently curving stretch of Michigan Avenue NE, directly adjacent to Brookland Elementary School. Our Office of Planning source says the city would "never" allow entry and exit points for a parking lot as the project currently proposes.
A special ANC 5A meeting about the project is scheduled to be held at 7 p.m. June 5 at Brookland Elementary.

Officials might do well to rein in Senior Project Manager Bob Oudit of the Office of Property Management during the upcoming meeting, judging from his inflammatory performance on May 9. During that meeting, which was adjourned an hour earlier than planned when officials were unable to provide definitive answers to residents' questions, Oudit responded to one complaint by loudly declaring, "I will build this project!" The standing-room-only crowd did not respond happily.

Residents thought they were getting somewhere when Par and Rec's Connie Haynes told them that the traffic study and environmental impact study for the project would be made available to them within the coming week. Haynes may be happy he escaped the brewing controversy since he retired, as previously planned, from his job as the department's capital projects manager a week after the May 9 meeting.

In response to The Common Denominator's Freedom of Information Act request, Par and Rec turned over documents on May 24 that show the promised traffic and environmental impact studies were never done.

And there were more revelations in those documents. A memo from Development Review Specialist John Moore in the Office of Planning, dated last Oct. 5, informed the Office of Property Management's Dave Ferebee that a special exception was needed from the Board of Zoning Adjustment to build the new recreation center in residentially zoned Turkey Thicket Park. A subsequent memo from Property Management's Oudit to then-Zoning Administrator Michael Johnson, dated last Oct. 11, sought Johnson's assistance to streamline the zoning process by classifying Turkey Thicket in such a way that a "community center" could be built.

"This process would be the course of least resistance, given our need to fast track this project," Oudit wrote. "If you determine that a full blown zoning process is necessary, it is my understanding that it would take much longer, the course of most resistance."

Curiously, Oudit's Oct. 11 memo sought Johnson's "immediate attention and favorable determination to this matter, as The District has already contracted with a contracting firm to construct this facility." Other documents obtained by The Common Denominator show that the bidding process was in progress at the time, but the formal process to award the contract to R.K. Contractors did not begin until last Dec. 4. A city official signed the contract at the end of February.

A spokeswoman for the BZA said she was unable to locate any application regarding zoning matters at Turkey Thicket Park. The Common Denominator has received no response to its Turkey Thicket zoning inquiries from Acting Zoning Administrator Denzil Noble in the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs' Building and Land Regulation Administration. Ward 5 Councilman Vincent Orange's office, which promised to look into the Turkey Thicket project's zoning status, had not responded at press time. Orange, who is seeking re-election, said he plans to attend the June 5 community meeting.

In the meantime, some neighbors have been contemplating legal action to delay the new rec center as a way to force city officials to communicate more fully with residents about the surrounding community's concerns and recreational needs. The current battle has prompted some neighbors to recall that residents pulled together in the 1960s to save the Turkey Thicket neighborhood from being obliterated by freeway construction, and many of those fighters remain in the area. Stay tuned.
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Date: Tue, 04 Jun 2002 20:12:32 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] on record from the inspector general...

· Related to the issue of budget and spending, is Department of Par and Recreation's ability to manage the effort of building a new rec center. In the cover letter to Report No. 01-0002HA, dated September 21, 2001, Inspector General Maddox states: "While the inspection report identifies management challenges in a variety of services and operations, we note with particular concern the deficiencies found in the areas of

procurement, contracting, and property accountability. Failure to address these deficiencies will continue to create the potential for waste, fraud, and abuse at the agency." Neighbors will want to read this report which can be found at http://www.dcig.org/reportsframe.html.

{I had trouble downloading it because it is apparently HUGE.} But the contracting abuses and general chaos of the DPR is listed in careful bureaucratese. I also understand from a former DPR worker that as of today, none of the concerns have been addressed in the months since.)

Don't we deserve the BEST POSSIBLE POOL?

See you tomorrow night.
JL

Date: Wed, 05 Jun 2002 18:12:39 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Mayor's meeting w/MPCA

Unfortunately I got to the meeting a couple of minutes late. I guess the board decided to write down questions at the beginning of meeting they decided to ask only one TT question. It was decided that all other questions concerning TT would be addressed in meeting tonight. The current president of the assn asked the questions and the mayor responded. They asked whether TT would be a community based center, to paraphrase. The Mayor responded that it would be a community based park. DC can correct me if I am incorrect. Prior to me realizing it I was telling a reporter from Citypaper my take on the TT saga, she was sitting next to me.

Also I asked a person from Vincent Orange's office about notification in the case of a special exception and she stated that the ANC could represent the community. I might have misheard her. In response I told her this was unconstitutional, I meant to say undemocratic. I could continue the conversation because of the meeting.
See ya tonight,
JW
PS I gonna try to bring a camcorder

Date: Wed, 5 Jun 2002 17:12:18 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket "urgency" - IMPORTANT INFO

Dear Neighbors,
Today I learned some additional news about the Turkey Thicket recreation center project that I believe is important for you to know before tonight's ANC 5A special meeting at 7 p.m. at Brookland Elementary School.
For those of you who do not know me personally, I have lived half a block from Turkey Thicket (in the 4100 block of 10th Street NE) for the past 14 years. My husband and I own our home and, therefore, have a direct interest (like many of you) in any matters that would dramatically change our neighborhood - which the proposed new rec center is certain to do.
Many of you who have spoken at meetings and to me directly have questioned the sense of urgency that public officials claim for this project, yet they have been apparently unwilling to explain this to the public.
That "urgency," at least in part, concerns a June 11th deadline by which the application for a building permit must be submitted -- or else the city will need to go through a much more public process to obtain the necessary

zoning approval to build the project. In order to get a building permit, you must submit building plans (which we have continually been told are not yet completed).
On Feb 11, 2002, the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) -- through the emergency rulemaking process, which requires no public notice and received none -- approved a 120-day change in the District's Zoning Regulations at the request of the Department of Parks and Recreation. This "emergency" change allows the Turkey Thicket rec center to be built without going through the otherwise required public process to change the zoning regulations. The emergency rulemaking order expires on June 11th.
According to the zoning board office, Parks & Rec officials requested this change as an emergency after realizing -- when they went to obtain building permits for a number of planned projects -- that the projects did not comply with zoning regulations. The "emergency" cited was that the contracts for the projects already had been signed.
In the case of Turkey Thicket, the contract with R.K. Contractors of Beltsville was actually signed by the city at the end of February (although the process to award the contract, based on the bid, began in December 2001).
Last Oct. 5, the Office of Planning informed the Office of Contracting & Procurement (OPM--which signed the Turkey Thicket contract for the city) that a "special exception" to zoning regulations was needed from the BZA to build the planned new recreation center.
Six days later, on Oct. 11, **OPM Senior Project Manager Bob Oudit asked then-Zoning Administrator Michael Johnson at the Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to assist OPM with taking "the course of least resistance" on the Turkey Thicket project "given our need to fast track this project." Oudit's memo on Oct. 11. 2002, claimed "The District has already contracted with a contracting firm to construct this facility." Based on the city's own documents, this final assertion obviously was untrue at the time.**
It concerns me, as I'm sure it concerns many of you, that incompetence -- or even worse, duplicity -- by city officials appears to have created a claimed "emergency" that has totally shut out the public from the legal zoning process that was required to build a new Turkey Thicket rec center. Officials knew at the beginning of last October that they could not build this new recreation center under the current zoning regulations, yet they chose not to begin the legal course -- which includes public hearings -- to get the public's assent to the needed zoning change.Instead, they continued the process that resulted in the signing of an $8 million contract to build a new recreation center THAT THEY KNEW DID NOT COMPLY WITH EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS. Their solution to the problem was to create an "emergency" that would shut out public participation and which never would have existed if they had simply followed the rules in the first place.

Why must the community be shut out of the process of building a recreation center, which is supposed to be for the community's benefit? Rather than continuing to push ahead with this project, city officials who chose to short-circuit the public process for a public facility (to be paid for with public money) should be held accountable and the ENTIRE community should be encouraged to participate in planning the improvements at Turkey Thicket. Too few people -- especially those of us who own homes in direct proximity to the park and will most directly be affected by a dramatic increase in the park's use -- have been left out of the process.
I suspect -- although I hope I am wrong -- that the pre-arranged plan at tonight's meeting (which may figure into why the meeting was formally advertised as a special ANC 5A meeting, rather than simply another community

meeting with Parks & Rec) is for the ANC to vote to approve the Turkey Thicket rec center plans so that the building permit may be obtained before the June 11th zoning deadline.
--K S

Date: Wed, 5 Jun 2002 17:18:21 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] Text of BZA's "emergency" order

FYI: Where it says below "new language indicated in bold," the new language is all in CAPS.

ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NOTICE OF EMERGENCY RULEMAKING and ZONING COMMISSION ORDER NO. 02-15
Case No. 02-15TA (Text Amendment - Providing Matter-of-Right Use in the R-1 Zone District for Public Park and Recreational Uses -- 11 DCMR)

The Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia, pursuant to the authority set forth in section 1 of the Zoning Act of 1938, approved June 20, 1938 (52 Stat. 797, 799; D.C. Official Code § 6-641.01), and section 6(c) of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act, approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat. 1206; D.C. Official Code § 2-505(c)), hereby gives notice of the adoption, on an emergency basis, of amendments to Chapters 2 and 4, of the Zoning Regulations (11 DCMR). This emergency rule was adopted by the Commission at its public meeting on February 11, 2002, and became effective on that date. **The rule established a matter of right provision to allow public parks and recreational uses and public community centers in R-1 and less restrictive districts. This emergency rule will expire on June 11, 2002 (the 120th day after the adoption of this first rule), or upon publication of a Notice of Final Rulemaking in the D.C. Register, whichever occurs first.**

This action is being taken on an emergency basis because there is no existing use category for public recreation facilities or public community centers in the Zoning Regulations. In the absence of a Zoning Regulation providing for this matter-of-right use, there is no mechanism to allow the existing uses to obtain necessary permits to ensure maintenance and upkeep of the existing facilities or allow for the expansion or construction of new facilities as planned. Normal rulemaking procedures cannot be completed in sufficient time to adequately safeguard the public welfare and would result in significant delay and substantial public cost.

NEW LANGUAGE INDICATED IN BOLD

Title 11 DCMR (Zoning Regulations) is amended as folkslows:

A. Amend Chapter 2, R-1 RESIDENCE DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS, section 201, USES AS A MATTER OF RIGHT (R-1), subsection 201.1, paragraph (k) to read as follows:

(k) Public school, PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES AND PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTERS, subject to the provisions of chapter 21 of this title;

B. Amend Chapter 4, RESIDENCE DISTRICT: HEIGHT, AREA, AND DENSITY REGULATIONS, as follows:

1) Amend section 400, HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES (R), by adding a new

subsection 400.14 to read as follows:

400.14 A PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTER IN ANY RESIDENTIAL ZONE MAY BE ERECTED TO A HEIGHT NOT EXCEEDING FORTY FEET (40 FT.).

2) Amend section 402, FLOOR AREA RATIO (R), subsections 402.1 through 402.3, to read as follows:

402.1 In an R-1 and R-2 District, the maximum floor area ratio requirements applicable in each district may be increased for specific public school buildings or structures, OR PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTERS; Provided, the total gross floor area of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed a floor area ratio of nine-tenths (0.9); AND PROVIDED FURTHER, THAT ANY PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTER THAT EXISTED PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2002, MAY BE EXPANDED TO HAVE A FLOOR AREA AS PRESCRIBED FOR THE R-5-B DISTRICT.

402.2 In an R-3, R-4, R-5-A, and R-5-B District, the maximum floor area ratio requirements applicable to each district may be increased for specific public school buildings or structures, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTERS, but shall not exceed the floor area ratio prescribed for the R-5-B District.

402.3 In all other residential districts not provided for in §§ 402.1 and 402.2, increases in the floor area ratio of all ANY public school buildings and structures, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTERS shall not exceed the floor area ratio prescribed for the R-5-C District.

3) Amend section 403, PERCENTAGE OF LOT OCCUPANCY (R), as follows:

a) Amend subsection 403.1 to read as follows:

403.1 A public school building, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTER may occupy the lot upon which it is located in excess of the permitted percentage of lot occupancy prescribed in §403.2; Provided, that the portion of the building excluding closed courts exceeding the permitted lot coverage shall not exceed twenty feet (20 ft.) in height or two (2) stories; and Provided further, that direct pedestrian access not less than ten feet (10 ft.) in width from at least two (2) public right-of-ways shall be provided to each roof area used for these purposes. The roof area shall be used only for open space, recreation areas, or other athletic and field equipment areas in lieu of similarly used space normally located at ground level.

b) Amend the table in subsection 403.2 to permit PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES AND PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTERS to have a permitted lot occupancy of sixty percent (60%).

4) Amend section 404, REAR YARDS, subsection 404.3 to read as follows:

404.3 In the case of a lot proposed to be used by a public school, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTER which abuts or adjoins along the rear lot line a public open space, recreation area, or reservation, the required rear yard may be reduced or omitted.

5) Amend section 405, SIDE YARDS (R), subsection 405.7 to read as follows:

405.7 In the case of a lot located in an R-1 or R-2 District proposed to be used by a public school, PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY, OR PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTER that abuts or adjoins on one (1) or more side lot lines a public open space, recreation area, or reservation, the required side yard may be reduced or omitted.

Date: Thu, 06 Jun 2002 03:03:47 +0000
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Digest Number 299

Hi, few comments/questions:

1)I join in the objections to inclusion of an entire (and needless to say, self-serving) news release from Council Member Mendelson (sp), especially as regards affordable housing. Thank God that the Council did the right thing, and his action is commendable--but it took some real persistence on the part of our poorest citizens and their allies to have that happen! That's who should get the credit, and organizations such as Washington Innercity Self-Help (WISH), that are not afraid of being unpopular and sounding like a broken record to secure basic human rights.

2) What a great showing at the Turkey Thicket meeting tonight! And many many thoughtful, provocative, valuable points and questions were raised. I only hope that our collective cynicism doesn't hinder the opportunity to make much needed changes in the plans.

3) Did I get it right that the Brookland playgroup meets in Maryland? What's the deal?
BR

Date: Thu, 06 Jun 2002 06:44:25 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Let's be idealistic: The Best Possible Rec Center!

BR,
I was very glad to see you at the Turkey Thicket meeting, but I am struck by your word "cynicism" in your comment. Do you think it is cynical to deeply question the DPR's ability to do this project? Last night was public relations, although the facilitators did permit a long question and answer period thank goodness. **There is huge vast and detailed evidence to indicate it cannot do this project adequately, and the evidence indicates that we will soon have a disaster where there is currently at least a serviceable field house, playground and open space if we let them figuratively and literally bulldoze Brookland. Have you read KS's posts of yesterday? There is zoning silliness going that would permit the DPR to build whatever it wants all over the city without community input.** Have you read about Kingman park and the Grand Prix that went in there under neighbor noses? This all may be about the Olympics, or merely having a "show" that gives Mayor Williams standing for doing something for the children, but the DPR is highly likely to screw it up. I think it is cynical to let them build a shoddy structure and then let it rot, like the DPR and the DCPS has done for pools throughout the city. Trying to get the best possible rec center is the height of community idealism. If Anthony Williams (and Vincent Orange, too) wants to do something for the children, then let him START by closing down the crack house on Taussig Place and cleaning up the drug dealing on 10th Street.

From the Due Diligence document by Diane Pecor on the Brookland website:
· Related to this issue of budget and spending, is DPRs ability to manage this effort. In the cover letter to Report No. 01-0002HA, dated September 21, 2001, Inspector General Maddox states: "While the inspection report identifies management challenges in a variety of services and operations, we note with particular concern the deficiencies found in the areas of procurement, contracting, and property accountability. Failure to address these deficiencies will continue to create the potential for waste, fraud, and abuse at the agency." Neighbors will want to read this report which can be found at http://www.dcig.org/reportsframe.html.

Excerpt from KS's revelations of yesterday:

"Officials knew at the beginning of last October that they could not build this new recreation center under the current zoning regulations, yet they chose not to begin the legal course -- which includes public hearings -- to get the public's assent to the needed zoning change.

Instead, they continued the process that resulted in the signing of an $8 million contract to build a new recreation center THAT THEY KNEW DID NOT COMPLY WITH EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS. Their solution to the problem was to create an "emergency" that would shut out public participation and which never would have existed if they had simply followed the rules in the first place."

Last night, the presenters kept mentioning the SNAP process (strategic neighborhood action planning, I think), but very few folks that I know took part in that process. We are learning about communication in Brookland and improving upon it immensely, which is one gift of this whole process. "Public input" is going to mean a lot more now, at least for Brookland.

The young people and many of the older people who were there last night want this rec center built. And some would use race and class tensions to do the marketing & PR for the Dept of ParKS & Recreation that can do no wrong. But how will those same proponents feel when things don't go well? I don't know if close scrutiny is going to make this thing get built and maintained properly but it feels like the most important leverage we have. I think Neil Albert, Director of DPR, showed good faith. So we'll match that, not with cynicism but with idealism.

I will be at that meeting June 19th: For folks who weren't there, the Turkey Thicket "Committee" will meet at 7pm June 19th, presumably at Brookland School. Come on down.

Key phone numbers shared last night:
Linda Perkins, Ward 5 Outreach Coordinator: 442-8122.
Bob Ouidit, Project Manager: 671-2612.

A few more "facts" learned last night: The capacity for this rec center is 500 persons. It is no longer "regional" but "community center". There is debate amongst the neighbors about whether to have a picnic area, and if so, where. There is a lack of clarity about parking. Since DC and the WMATA is committed to "transit oriented development" doesn't that mean that use of cars should be discouraged, thus, no parking lot should be built? For 500

persons at the occasional event, will they all walk to come from Brookland? Will they park all over 10th, Shepherd, Quincy, Perry, and Sigsbee like they do now for soccer and tennis? Where are the basketball courts going to be?

Submitted with every hope for a beautiful, well built and well maintained rec center,
JL

Date: Thu, 06 Jun 2002 06:51:23 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] the Brookland listening project

I would LOVE to talk to you (and CW and VW? and whomever else you think is appropriate) about the listening project, especially now . The young people of Turkey thicket don't feel heard at least by the wider Brookland neighborhood which, I take it from last night, they perceive to be hostile to them. If not hostile, then at least neglectful. Also, since the Brookland playgroup plays in Maryland, apparently other Brooklanders also perceive the young people of Turkey Thicket to be, if not hostile, then unwelcoming. There is much work to be done! Your skills are ones we need!
JL

Date: Thu, 6 Jun 2002 07:23:07 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] Parking and Religion

It was great to be at the meeting last night. Nice to finally put faces to names of neighbors. I was unable to be at the earlier meetings because of the lack of good notice about those meetings (a horrible fault in communications that was surprisingly not brought up last night).

I wanted to offer that I distinctly thought I heard Mr. Oudit, the city engineer, snarkily say that they were considering putting the entrance/parking lot on 10th. Let me elaborate. It came up when he was asked about the "safety" of the proposed Michigan Avenue entrance to parking. The question seemed straight-forward enough, but he didn't answer it. But in his meandering response he brought up the aforementioned comments about the 10th St. picnic tables and said that "this very morning" he had been in meetings about the site and about changes and then I thought I heard him say they were looking at the parking situation and that the folks on 10th Street weren't going to be happy. Something to that effect.

Now, I hope I was mishearing things and I'd appreciate the correction. **It seems hard to imagine how on earth they are going to get zoning permission for the entrance on the bend of Michigan avenue (it's a crazy and hazardous place for an entrance). That's their initial plan, but I think that as they proceed and really look at it, they're going to have to switch it and I fear that they're going to drop the parking lot on to 10th Street. I can't imagine where else they would place it.**

I also want to say that I was horribly dismayed by the repeated interjections of religion into what was a civic meeting. I say this as a person who works with church and Christian communities for a living. Asking for a prayer is one thing, but to have a commissioner lead the group in the Lord's Prayer felt off putting to me and to participants who may not be Christian or observant or religious. Its also strikes me as misuse of prayer or at the very least misleading. These are "civil" and not religious meetings. To invoke this prayer and then hold a contentious meeting and not act towards

one another in charitably Christian ways just violates the prayer, making it more troubling. When I hear a prayer, I expect to be in a space that is prayerful and considerate. ANC meetings do not fit that bill. If its some pro-forma thing then maybe they should ask for a moment of silence or something.

Don't know if anyone else felt bothered by that.

Date: Thu, 6 Jun 2002 09:39:15 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Par, Pools, and Playgrounds [was Re: Brookland Playgroup]
I think the points that Liz makes here are a great starting point for some creative input to the Turkey Thicket process.

What makes a good park for small children? LH has mentioned:
- proximity to home
- appropriate equipment
- shade
- places for parents to sit

It reminds me of a conversation I've had with at least one Brookland parent about pools. Did you know that (at least as of last summer) we could use Langdon pool for FREE? So why do Brookland/Mich Park/Woodridge families pay membership fees to join the private PG pool, or pay out-of-state user fees at Rollingcrest-Chillum or Lane Manor Splash Pool or Ellen Linson? Langdon pool is located in a rolling park area with big old trees, and plenty of street parking. Why don't we go there? My friend's main reason is that the pool is not designed well for kids. The "shallow end" is too deep for kids who are just a little too big for the tot wading pool. The aforementioned Maryland pools all offer very shallow and sloped-bottom areas (and the splash pools have other amenities). Langdon pool is great if you just *have to* take a cool dip on a hot day! But it isn't the kind of place where I would care to hang out for hours, and let my kid(s) play.

[Glancing at the TT pool plan, it looks like a standard lane-swimming pool. Is this what we want? Is this what our children want/need?]

Would it be possible to establish a photo gallery of "Good Parks, Playgrounds, and Pools" here on the Brookland web site? I have access to a digital camera, and would be happy to snap some photos of play areas and fields at Stoddert and Hardy, where my son plays soccer (DC Stoddert League -- by the way, what was the League that was mentioned last night? Do we have a league in NE?). Can anyone in the play group snap some pix at Magruder?

My hypothesis here is that identifying things that we like about "Good Parks" will help us provide productive and creative input to the Turkey Thicket process.
KB 12th Pl & Upshur

PS, Speaking of productive and creative, I was impressed with the event last night at Brookland School. I enjoyed meeting some of the listserv folks outside of cyber-space. It was good to hear the variety of concerns.

On Thu, 6 Jun 2002, moegreen320 wrote:

> --- In Brookland@y..., "Brigette Rouson" <brouson@h...> wrote:
> > 3) Did I get it right that the Brookland playgroup meets in
> Maryland? What's the deal?

Date: Thu, 6 Jun 2002 12:11:06 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] Copy of letter sent to Councilmember Orange
James L. Watkins
1002 Shepherd Street NE
Washington, DC 20017

June 6, 2002
Councilmember Vincent Orange
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Room 108
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Councilmember Orange,
I really appreciate your presence at the Turkey Thicket Project Meeting last night and thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. As you could see the majority of people are in favor of a new recreation center. However, I think that the people, who have concerns about the process, were mistaken for being against a new facility, anti-youth or even prejudice. This is a grossly inaccurate assumption. I feel it is bad to give our young people misinformation about the intentions of the community who has concerns about this project. We who are adult and are more experienced in life know and that there is more to building a structure then just digging a hole in the ground. There is a procedure and part of that procedure, especially in construction, is quality control/assurance. Plenty of us are parents and one of our first concerns is the welfare of our children and grandchildren. I am a parent and was a foster parent to many at risk youth. Also, I was an at risk youth. Our elected officials should make sure that they don't give the false impression to our youth that those who have concerns about the park are not against them, but are trying to be civically responsible.

Because of misinformation presented to the community before the meeting, what should have been a QA session turned into a debate on why people supported or did not support a new facility. Because of the debate I felt that few questions were not adequately answered. Also, I had quite a few more questions e.g. a technical question concerning the geotechnical report and the evidence of water 8 feet below the surface and how will buoyancy and water intrusion be handled during excavation? We who live on Shepherd Street have been dealing with water problems in our basements, will such a thing be prevented with the new structure? Although the sentimental aspect is very important and valid we must always keep in mind the technical aspect. I am not a planner or an engineer but I have worked within the development arena for 18+ years and the questions and concerns reflected in last nights meeting were valid. **Remember, in the District's past, there has been a lot of fraud, mismanagement and neglect, so that is why some people are a little apprehensive when it comes to new projects, especially when it is in close proximity to their homes. Another item is MPD had refused to use OPM on their construction projects because they were incompetent on previous projects.**

Also keep in mind we are the ones who are going to have to deal with the issues if Mr. Albert doesn't keep his promises that he made last night. I am definitely willing to help make Turkey Thicket a complete success story.

Although I really wanted to see a pool and additional recreation space added to Brookland ES because of the parking/green space concerns etc. I do believe and accept the outcome of a democratic process.

The one thing I did not realize until I started doing my research is we have so many parks and recreation centers so close to each other. I can think of 7 off the top of my head all within a mile of each other, this is why DPR's master plan is so important to any future development in our community. Also it would nice to know whether the plan is coordinated to DCPS master plan and the comprehensive plan for the greater Brookland area. Once this is done a presentation needs to be made to the various communities.

Hopefully, you will take every thing into deep consideration and I look forward to working with you and the community in the future. Good luck on your campaign.
Sincerely,
James L. Watkins
Cc: Brookland Listserv
Ward 5 Listserv

Date: Thu, 06 Jun 2002 20:16:56 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Copy of letter sent to Councilmember Orange

James! Excellent letter! The animosity in the room disturbed me, too. Divide and conquer: we can't let them do that to us.
JL

Date: Fri, 07 Jun 2002 13:02:49 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Clarification of Letter to Councilmember Orange & TT Meeting

First of all I really appreciate the communities participation in the meeting on Tuesday night. Personally I was quite dismayed that quite a few of the questions asked were not answered adequately. Second of all I felt our youth were being misled to believe that those who questioned the process or even those who are against this project were against them which is totally false. I think that our elected officials, the community, and DPR need to make sure that the wrong message to them. We who are adults see things from a more experienced point of view. Believe me I have an 18 & 21 year old and I worked with quite a few youths. Sometimes they can't understand why we tell them to go to college and to save money they have no experience to draw from. That is why they need parents or older people to train them.

Although I mentioned the debate issue I learned quite a bit from it.
1. There are many schools and pools in disrepair how much attention was given to this.
2. The young man who works at the center said there were 50 children being serviced in the current center for the after school program that had inadequate a/c.

Questions:
a.) Can that building hold that many children, if not is this potentially hazardous, and are all these registered for the after school care (for emergency contact and care purposes)?
b.) How can the schools and other rec centers eleviate this problem?
c.) Is busing to other nearby schools or rec centers e.g. the new North Michigan Park Center which is very close an option?
This matter does need to be addressed and I am one who does advocate for affordable after school care. Child care can very very expensive I know some people who pay a large portion of their income towards child care.

Even though there has been a lot of confusion about this Turkey Thicket issue it has been very educational to me. In this I have learned:
1. Government officials, whether elected or selected, need to be held more accountable.
2. The community need to be notified.
3. There needs to be more education on the proper planning process and site plan review process, e.g. the important of due diligence, the technical aspect and quality control/assurance.
4. There needs to be more community involvement in the planning process.
5. More awareness of community activity.
6. Inventory of all community resources, public facilities, etc. and
7. The importance of a consensus.
With all the proper pieces in place our community will be more effective and proactive rather than reactive.

We as a community should never embark on anything without:
a. Absolute community involvement.
b. A proper assessment of all the data that is collected.
c. Discussing the Pros and Cons in our planning (dialogue).
d. Seeking alternative options if the resources are not available.
e. Make sure the tail is not wagging the dog.

See Ya,
JW
PS. Thank you Kathy for all the information you have given us. Please continue.

Date: Fri, 07 Jun 2002 14:06:25 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Zoning Parking Lot Requirements and VPD

Could someone go to this url http://dcoz.dc.gov/info/reg/reg.shtm and see what the parking requirements are for recreation centers. In Fairfax it is 1 per 3 seats and 1 per 1 employee and tennis court 1 per court I don't know what basketball and fields are. Also who holds jurisdiction on Michigan Ave., 10th & Shepherd Streets. In other municipalities in which I have worked usually a VPD (Vehicles Per Day) count is required on site plan. At VDOT & GDOT there is a department that keeps an annual record of VPD. JW

Date: Fri, 07 Jun 2002 16:15:33 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Zoning Regulations

I read zoning regulations for community center and parking lots not too detailed however there are landscaping requirements. Until I'm looking in the

wrong place I think zoning regulations need some fine tuning. Especially for area like our community to prevent parking problems.
JW

Date: Fri, 7 Jun 2002 14:01:46 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket/ legal action

I forwarded to my son in far away Oregon, the contents of Kathy S's op ed and her update on the violation of zoning regulations. He grew up in the 60's and 70's in a household which helped in the 10 (at least) year freeway fight. The 69 homes were those on 10th St confiscated by the federal government for the freeway right-of-way. After warning all officials and the media, we broke nto one of the houses to test the legality of the taking, which set the stage for a decision in favor of the citizens in the court of J. Skelly Wright, and signalled the end of 38 miles of interstate freeways being pushed through DC.
####################
Wow. This is a much bigger deal than I thought. The neighborhood ought to hire a lawyer and plan to go to court immediately. There's no time to waste. The District has simply ignored and violated the law. It's astonishing, given the history with the 69 homes, that this could happen again in Brookland.

I wouldn't even bother being polite with city officials and Vincent Orange. If they don't put this back on the public siting track it belongs on, they should face the consequences and no question about it.

Date: Sat, 08 Jun 2002 05:45:37 +0000
Subject: [Brookland] TURKEY THICKET

Hi, All,
Just want to express regret if I "dissed" my amazing neighbors in regard to Turkey Thicket by expressing concern about cynicism. I am all for the democratic process, and it often ain't pleasant to say what's got to be said. We've benefited from the very thoughtful and well-researched critique of the city's OUTRAGEOUS course of action. My hope is we can ALSO appeal to city officials and the contractor based on shared aspirations, taking every opportunity to get them on board--rather than their getting defensive/offensive.

The Baltimore-based Casey Foundation, which has chosen DC for intensive funding/resource support, has an interesting initiative designed to deal with large-scale conflict resolution in municipal affairs. I'm intrigued by the possibility of novel approaches that complement the necessary criticism, and model the style that we want the city to adopt.

That said, recovering lawyer though I am, I agree wholeheartedly with AH that it's time to pursue legal action. We'd need to identify the best (ideally pro bono) lawyers, with which I could help if need BE, who would be plaintiff (e.g., Brookland Civic Association), and who'd be the point persons to move this forward. YOUR THOUGHTS?
BR

Date: Sat, 08 Jun 2002 07:44:17 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] TURKEY THICKET

B,I looked upon the Casey Foundation website this morning and found the "Rebuilding Communities Initiative" information. If there is more that deals with, as you say, large-scale conflict resolution, I am eager to

learn more. Do you know anyone there? Any contacts? Given the way the DPR is operating, ignoring zoning hearings and process in this the first of some dozen communities (Bannaker, Girard, Brentwood, Trindad, Fort Davis, Hillcrest, Kennilworth, Park View, King Greenleaf, Emory, Lamont, Takoma, Capitol East, Kennedy (under construction), N Michigan Park, TT, Sherwood, Bald Eagle, Oxon Run), there must be some resource somewhere.

Than so much for your thoughts. I respect you and your community organizing gifts very much. We need you!
J

Date: Sat, 08 Jun 2002 12:54:16 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Trash at the Tennis Court

Jw,
I just walked my dog and noticed that the trash is still there from last week's tennis meet. This is very interesting being that they wanted to put that PICNIC AREA near the play area. Maybe we should get a picture of this to show them at the next meeting since their so prepared about how to handle this park. That is one example of why I DO NOT WANT THAT PICNIC AREA NEAR 10TH AND SHEPHARD. Hopefully that PICNIC AREA IS NOT PUT BACK ON THE PLANS.
A 10th street

Date: Sat, 8 Jun 2002 07:37:10 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: [Brookland] TT, unanswered questions - unacceptable

Zoning issue and transportation study, why weren't done prior to the RFP being done? What was the parking spaces based upon? The why these questions were addressed or not were addressed really showed a lack of professionalism with our government. **All the questions of concerns, if done right, should have been addressed in the planning process prior to an RFP. Parking should be based on capacity not a mere guesses. This is the nation's capitol and we need to hold our government to a higher standard than what is done in undeveloped areas. Because of negligence they are seeking to bypass the proper process at the expense of the community. Again in the meeting DPR & OPM has really been an embarrassment to our city. They really need to be a better example to our children by being a little more professional, accountable and responsible instead of using them as a shield to hide their negligence. Now zoning is trying to clean up the mess by issuing DPR matter of right status which is totally inappropriate. Let them prove themselves to be competent first. Whenever one of us are hired usually we go through a probationary period to prove we are capable to do the job before we are given full benefits. People we should be outraged.**
JW

Date: Sat, 8 Jun 2002 13:39:36 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] TURKEY THICKET

J, Is your list of recreation areas from some official list of places targeted for development by the DPR? If so, what is the source.

Also, I too searched the Casey Foundation website. I looked for "conflict resolution and Washington DC" but came up with no significant looking items. I also would appreciate more information about what the Foundation's plans re for DC in this regard.
AH

Date: Sun, 9 Jun 2002 01:43:58 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] TURKEY THICKET
Dear Turkey Thicketeers:

When we get beyond the current difficulties, and even before, I urge us to imagine a new Turkey Thicket:

* constructed from the ground up by the combined wisdom of its local caretakers and lovers of this community.
* contained within the ecological limits of its place: using only so much air, water, space, as the limits of its particular situation dictate.
* designed to reflect the past present and future spirit of this neighborhood, it hopes and ambitions, reflected in its architecture, landscape and friendly capabilities open to the neighborhood in which it is a commons to be shared peacefully by all.
AH

Date: Tue, 11 Jun 2002 02:26:23 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Building design
This may be a very naive thought, but I will post it anyway. Is it possible To design a building that is two stories instead of one. In this case the pool could be below and the gymnasium above. If this was possible, it would certainly take up a lot less space, leaving more grass area and more room to play.
LH Tenth and Taylor

Date: Thu, 13 Jun 2002 00:26:14 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] turkey thicket
Can anyone give me a clue as to what is going on with meetings, and organizing about the current situation at Turkey Thicket?

I have a notion that there might be efforts among people close to the site, and that there might be another meeting with officials?
Thanks, AH

Date: Thu, 13 Jun 2002 06:34:43 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] next turkey thicket is 6/19

There is a meeting at Brookland School on June 19th at 7pm. for the folks who volunteered at the meeting on June 5th to talk about design of the building. If folks didn't make the meeting on the 5th but still want to come on the 19th I'm sure that's okay.

Did anyone catch the City Paper article this week about the Home Depot/Ward 5 dynamics? It's called "IT's Sprawl Good". VEERRRY interesting. It's available on their web site.
http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/cover/cover.html (until Friday when there's a new cover story).
JL

Date: Thu, 13 Jun 2002 11:10:24 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Fwd: [ward5] Will Turkey Thicket Recreation Center be

built? Yes? No? Maybe?

Brooklanders, this is a copy of an email I sent to the ward 5 egroup, which is much smaller but has some interesting things to say about turkey thicket and ward 5 development. Please read the ward 5 post first (at bottom) then my response. There are some wild rumors, but also, look at Vincent Orange's statement to the city paper: "We should take advantage of this project to learn what we didn't do properly. When others want to come in, we should make sure that we do take into consideration proper planning." —Ward 5 Councilmember Vincent B. Orange. I have also learned that the writer of the email, Kathleen Pearson-West (aka KPW) lives in Michigan Park and that Michigan Park rejected this large pool idea for their new rec center. Full disclosure of folks' interests (financial and otherwise) would help the honesty and openness quotient here a lot.
JL

> >From sentto-1590746-1386-1023965175
>To: ward5@yahoogroups.com
>Date: Thu, 13 Jun 2002 06:44:25 -0400
>Subject: Re: [ward5] Will Turkey Thicket Recreation Center be built? Yes? No? Maybe?
>
>Relating to the turkey thicket design and planning issues, I believe those
>who question the DPR have always wanted one thing: Due Diligence.
>
>Did you all see the City Paper article on the Home Depot development on
>Brentwood Road? I took these quotes from the web site at
>http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/cover/cover.html. Mistakes were
>made. Will they be repeated at Turkey Thicket? **A lovely new rec center
>would be wonderful. What are the chances we'll get one, given the DPR's
>history? Why didn't Michigan Park want the new pool? The zoning issues
>make this a test case. If the citizens of Brookland /Michigan Park don't
>insist on respectful communication and process, the rest of the city is
>sunk. If, "someone is looking out for ward 5" that someone must be looking
>to mess with us big time. As you can see from the article, why are we
>being treated AS a suburb with HUGE designs for smaller urban,
>transit-oriented spaces?** There are many many many unanswered questions.
>
>+++
**>The wall's immutable presence will serve as a lasting reminder of what
>happens when city officials act out their inner envy for the suburbs.
>+++
>"We should take advantage of this project to learn what we didn't do
>properly. When others want to come in, we should make sure that we do take
>into consideration proper planning." —Ward 5 Councilmember Vincent B. Orange
>+++**
>"We're in a box, where we say, 'Compete.' But, on the other hand, we can't
>become a suburb....There's no way you can defend the Brentwood development
>as anything but anti-urban." —Charles Buki, a community-development
>consultant who specializes in neighborhood revitalization

>+++
>"I trust that Home Depot will get tired of the stinking odor that we've
>been enduring over here for the past seven years. They will want it out of
>here. It's not a pleasant smell." —The Reverend Morris Shearin, pastor of
>Israel Baptist Church

>In the race to the finish line, members of the D.C. Office of Planning
>watched from the sidelines as their planning principles were run into the
>ground.
>+++
>"When it comes to enforcing design improvements in areas outside of
>historic-preservation districts, we don't really have a hammer." —Arthur
>Jacon Jr., of the D.C. Office of Planning
>+++
>"The fact that this site was able to handle a normal-sized store was a
>selling point to Home Depot. We never encouraged them to make it smaller,
>and they never brought it up." —Cyril Crocker, project manager in the D.C.
>Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
>+++
>"It was much more cost-effective to use the retaining walls."—Don
>Shillington, lead engineer
>+++
FROM KPW:
>>At 08:32 PM 6/12/02 -0400, you wrote:
>>I heard on the news that some citizens are planning a lawsuit against the
>>building of the recreation center or at least challenging some aspect of
>it. Zoning was an issue that was mentioned. I don't know the merits of
>>the lawsuit.
>>
>>A meeting to further discuss the plans and design of this proposed
>>recreation center is scheduled for June 19th. I believe it will be at
>>Brookland Elementary School, but I'm sure that ANC 5A and others will
>>publicize the information to the extent possible within their financial
>>means and human resources.
>>
>>Will this legal threat keep the Turkey Thicket Recreation center from
>>being built? Is the support stronger for it or against it? Are there
>>competent lawyers on both sides? Do the pros outweigh the cons or vice
>>versa? Is there a list of the issues and concerns with possible
>>recommendations or solutions? Is there a consensus facility somewhere
>>that will deny our youth and others a great state of the art center?
>>
>>Who stands to benefit most from a new recreation center and who stands to >>lose? How is it that so many knew about the proposed recreation center, >>yet so few knew? Was the process that lax or flawed that community >>people were uninformed? Were they that uninformed that they want to pull >>out all the stops to delay or stop it? Certainly there wasn't a malicious intent? Certainly it wasn't a secret to the ANC 5A commissioners? How can we make sure that more people are kept informed? Perhaps the media can help put out the word. Maybe some of the young people that are interested in the process can help distribute flyers about meetings.
>>
>>Have ANCs and the civic associations stopped all their monthly meetings >>so that the recreation center could never be discussed? Was there no
>>unbiased dialogue in the media on this?
>>
>>Well, June 19th promises to be the meeting to attend if you have any
>>interest in recreation in Ward 5 and the city. Whatever the outcome,
>>we'll all be neighbors in spirit. Let's keep the information flowing. Let's see more young people at the next meeting. I love seeing diversity at meetings and hearing the different points of view. Yes, we can all come

together for the good of the majority without taxing the minority too strongly. This is no time to be shy with viewpoints--whatever your position--when there is master organizing going on.
>>How do we control crime in the area now and in the future? How do we
>>keep the facility maintained when resources are low? What is the best
>>location of the basketball court? Should there be a picnic area? How do
>>we keep criminal elements from loitering in the evening? What role will
>>the police or security guards play? If there is an increase in parking
>>needs, how will we address those needs? How do we reduce the impact on
>>the surrounding community?
>>
>>How do we get the largest swimming pool possible there? What will the locker rooms be like? Will the center be built with quality materials? When can we expect to use it? What fees will there be and will I get a break living in Ward 5? Will there still be enough tennis courts? Will there be a weightlifting or nautilus (whatever) equipment? Will there be a room just for meetings? What types of programs will the new center accommodate? How can residents show their support for the center but still make sure that it is built to be the best? Can it be made larger if needed? How will this center compare with those in the suburbs? What types of programs would the community like to see in there? How come it took so long to get to the point where a new center seems to be on its way? Somebody must be looking out for Ward 5.
>>kpw

Date: Tue, 18 Jun 2002 19:07:40 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] FYI TOMORROW'S MEETING 7:00PM
HELLO EVERYONE,
FYI
ANC WILL HAVE ANOTHER MEETING TOMORROW WEDNEDAY JUNE 19, 2002 AT BROOKLAND SCHOOL 7:00PM ABOUT THE TURKEY THICKET PARK

Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 13:18:34 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] ANC Meeting Tonight
Has the ANC confirmed that there will be a meeting tonight and what is the agenda? What will be particularly discussed?
JW

Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 10:31:45 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] TT, unanswered questions - unacceptable
james,
I expect this type of outrage at tonight's meeting. Please bring video camera. I can not get access like I did last time. The planners are expecting the community to fizzle out on this one but you and I have to stay tough. See you tonight, please touch base with M at 202-636-XXXX
PO

Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 10:39:08 EDT
Subject: Re: [Brookland] ANC Meeting Tonight
Brooklanders,
THERE IS A TURKEY THICKET MEETING TONIGHT! DO NOT LET THE PLANNERS ACHIEVE THEIR GOAL OF EXPECTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S OUTRAGE TO FIZZLE OUT!
THE LETTER IN THE COMMOND ENOMINATOR FROM THE ELECTED PLANNERS SHOWED NO REGARD FOR THE PROCESS AND FOLLOWING THE LAW. AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC

STUDY IS REQUIRED AND WILL BE DEMANDED BEFORE CONSTRUCTION. IT IS A RIGHT. HOW WOULD THE PLANNERS LIKE IT IF THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS WERE IGNORED JUST TO COMPLETE THE GOAL OF A HANDFEW? UNACCEPTABLE!
PO

Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 19:04:19 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Park - A Reminder

I don't whether you all can remember me when I first started posting information concerning meetings on the new facility. After I had a conversation with someone this morning I remembered why I started posting information so vigorously. **Back when I asked this particular person whether I should post information on the content of the meetings and about the meeting on the vote on the design of the building I was told not to. One of the people in this person's task force said that people would get involved that had not come to the previous meetings. This person insisted that people were notified when I can testify that I was notified only once. I felt this was wrong because the community should be involved especially we who live around the Park. The RFP was done without our input. The contact was signed without our input. The design of the building was done without a lot of our input. We would not be where we are today on this project if we allowed to voice our opinions prior to an RFP ever being done. With the parking situation as it currently is, trash, crime, etc. there should have been input from all owners in the immediate vicinity of this project.** Than to my neighbors and others now our voice now there is being heard a demand for more community involvement. Please stay involved, keep informed on what is going on in your community. Have a voice.
JW

Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 16:40:26 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] Turkey Thicket Park - A Reminder

James, than for your forthrightness. Let me do likewise: I'm seldom am able to attend meetings. I do not feel that that disqualifies me as a concerned neighbor. Therefore, I depend up[on reports on this list in order to track what is going on so that i may be of use in ways other than attending meetings. Frankly, I think that the advice you were given, James, was balderdash!
AH

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 2002 10:51:07 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] last night's meeting

Greetings! Would someone be willing to provide a summary of last night's Turkey Thicket meeting? How did it go?
A concerned Brooklander,
-B @ Monroe

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 2002 14:55:13 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Just a few concerns

A lot of times when I post emails with this group I really don't have the time to express my true thoughts. The time that I have spent trying to stay involved, informed and possibly trying to informed others I have to make up at work and sometimes find myself working until 9 or 10 at night, trying

to get projects done. Also I would the group to remember that I still have responsibilities at home. Remember I have a fixer upper, animals and young adults who reside with me. Along with that I am a little involved in GBGC, a few support and discussion groups for American Men of African Descent and Volleyball.

In all this I am trying to make time to stay connected to my community. Time after time I have found myself in conversations with people in this community who talk about the years that have had in this community which validates them to have more rights than a person like myself who has not lived in the community as long. To me it's seems to be a form of discrimination. I remember my family dealing with such behavior when I was a child when we were one of the first black families to move into our home. I admire my parents for continuing to stay in their home and for having a voice in their community despite opposition. Also as a child growing up with discrimination, which appears both in the white and black society, I have gained a small degree of tolerance and respect for other cultures. Also I have refused to be enslaved by anyone who feels that I don't have the right to have my voice heard. I have worked just as hard to make this my home as anyone else.

Although I have talked about Fairfax, Virginia in past emails the District is my home now and Fairfax is one of my many references that I will use. Remember I am under a lot of time constraints these days.
J' Community Wish List
1. Last but not less I would like to see a few new ANCs.
2. Although I appreciate the job of the ANCs I don't believe in lifelong politicians.
3. Also I would like to see our young adults to given an opportunity to represent our communities.
4. More community involvement so our ANCs won't be overworked.
5. More racial tolerance and respect for some another. Learn how to live together people.

I have more to say but I must go. Shalom JW

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 2002 15:35:04 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] The Commissioners have spoken for us

Commissioner Currie and Broadnax has spoken for the community and has stated that a Transportation Study, etc. is not needed and that community feels that this is nothing but red tape and bureaucracy.
A copy of the letter is in the latest edition of the Common Denominator. Please read.
JW

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 2002 20:05:42 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] The catalyst for concerns & last nights meeting

After last night's meeting I really could not sleep well. **I was really concerned about how there were some that think our neighbors who are white really don't our black children swimming with them and their children. Also time and time again when I would try to give input on anything relating to Turkey Thicket and would get comments from those who don't even live around the park how long they have lived in the District, how things used to be and how we newcomers are trying to change everything.** Remember I said earlier that Fairfax was just one of my many references but believe me it's not

heaven on earth. I feel that our elders are so used to running everything that we who are younger aren't given a chance. With the last few things that has happened concerning the zoning etc. I have some real trust issues with some of our elected representatives. Although there are a few negligent parents they opt to remember we are the ones raising the children and their welfare is paramount to us. I want my children and future children to thrive in a healthy and productive environment whether in Virginia, DC or any other place.

The meeting starting off on a rough note. Some people did not want video taping and even threaten to sue.

Connie Haynes came from retirement to address past planning items, RFP, etc.

Q: Mary Pat asked for the data that was acquired that RFP, planning, etc. was based upon.
A: Mr. Haynes stated that data will be provided in the near future. I remember that same response with the EIS and transportation study. Where is transportation study.

Q: I asked about parking because this building has the capacity to seat a least 500 people.
A: Had some ideas but was told will discuss in future meetings.

Q: They added 10 additional parking spaces and running track to the plan.
A: Drafts of the latest plans were handed out.

Q: Question was asked about budget breakdown for staffing and maintenance.
A: Will have future meeting with operations on this.

Q: Zoning question was asked.
A: DPR had attorney address.

Q: Can we reduce the size of the structure and allocate some towards maintenance.
A: 2 Different Budgets.

Mrs. Hill got into heated disagreement with a few members of the community. Linda Perkins asked to move on.

Mr. Arties was upset and asked why are we trying to starting over.

Mrs. Currie ended meeting.

There was more but I have to go maybe someone else can add more.
JW
PS Still many who live around the park are concerned with future maintenance Please stay involved. Also the community needs to come up with resolution on race problem. Let's work together.

Date: Thu, 20 Jun 2002 22:48:44 -0400
Subject: Re: [Brookland] The catalyst for concerns & last nights meeting
There is not anything that the government of DC can offer to this neighborhood that will amount to good for us until we learn that we are in charge of this neighborhood. The government of DC is a good or bad

accompaniment to that obligation.
fond regards,
AH

Date: Fri, 21 Jun 2002 07:48:11 -0400
Subject: [Brookland] Opportunities & Challenges Turkey Thicket brings us
Well said, A.
from AH,
there is not anything that the government of DC can offer to this neighborhood that will amount to good for us until we learn that we are in charge of this neighborhood. The government of DC is a good or bad accompaniment to that obligation.

Dear J and other neighbors of greater Brookland:

Although there is much to be concerned about, still, there are MANY opportunities for Greater Brookland: new leadership is growing, people are meeting each other, and people are being heard both by each other (including the cranky Greek chorus of Wednesday night) and a wee bit by the government.

To add to James excellent summary of Wednesday night. This building will be 38,300 square feet built of Kalwall/aluminum and lots and lots of windows. The 2 entrances to the building will be lit and unobstructed by plants for security purposes. The entrances will be from 10th Street and from the parking lot that is planned to be between the tennis courts and the hoops. It will be completely wheelchair accessible. There will be 40 parking spots. It is 30 feet tall. There will no picnic areas per se. All questions asked about zoning were NOT answered by Lyle Blanchard, land use attorney, who was there to, what, obfuscate? I'm sure he was well paid for his obfuscation.

Challenges to the community as I see them:
1. We need to keep on top of Sandra Hill and the others to produce what they promised they would. I fear that they promised things like a transportation study just to shut us up. The entrance to the parking lot is off of Michigan just beyond the school, and there is a dangerous curve and high speeds driven along that stretch. Will rumble strips be added? Is a stop light warranted: Randolph across Michigan into the lot? A stop sign? (Like Providence Hospital has at its ER entrance on 12th.) The Maryland commuters who use this artery are going to be peeved. It's hard enough to cross Michigan at 12th as a pedestrian without ducking right turners off of 12th onto Michigan going west. What about a bunch of kids crossing to get to the pool? I shudder to think. Sandra Hill also promised the data that was (theoretically) gathered in the time before Connie Haynes was in charge of this project, from between 5 and 13 years ago. This data is to have summarized what this area has in it already in terms of kids and families and other recreational opportunities so that our tax dollars can be well spent. Who decided the design had to include what it does? I understand that the pool is deeply supported by the folks who most use the current rec center. Okay. What is the gym for? The DPR can't keep ducking these questions by saying that this was 13 years in planning and that the programming and staffing issues are part of "operations". As much grumbling as J and the rest of us heard on Wednesday, its not too late to ask these questions. Questioning makes us better citizens and the government better government.

2. **No matter what happens, we must be about building community across race and class lines.** There are many who have moved to Brookland because its affordable, has its own metro, and lots of greenspace. Otherwise, its a bedroom community: most shopping, leisure activities and school/child related activities happen elsewhere. For others, this neighborhood is the center of the universe. Aside from grocery shopping, you can get what you want right here: schooling, sports, shopping, day care. And for yet others of us: its a mixture as we try to support the neighborhood while trying to find what our families need. The Magruder Park is a case in point. Turkey thicket and the Taft playgrounds are very open which means that toddlers are likely to wander off into traffic if you don't keep a constant eye. The structures at TT are too big for really little kids. And as one African American mom pointed out to me the other night, she stopped going to TT when she could hear the men swearing at the basketball courts and she didn't want her biblically named son to hear that language.

James Watkins pointed out the grumbling at the meeting on Wednesday. There was a small group of women who, after one speaker (white) mentioned that he's been in the neighborhood 3 years, had to say, harrumph, I've been in the neighborhood 40 years! Blah blah blah. But, curiously, and perhaps counter to their assumptions, it was this white man who pointed out that we should not assume that all young men in do rags hanging out on the bleachers and by the dumpster are dealers. And later on, it was an African American man who pointed out that shots had been fired recently near there, he who has lived in the neighborhood for decades. Bob Artisst was there and added to the grumbling (I think the gist of that was that newcomers should have been involved from the start.)

My impression is that the ANC commissioners have dedicated themselves to the community but that some of the ones who've been in service for a very long time would prefer to represent the long time residents like themselves and exclude the newer members. This is my impression. As far as I can tell only one of them have dependent children at home. Community activists are often retirees, but I would hope that they would welcome new people. What busy people need, with or without families, is plenty of warning about meetings, a sense of the agenda so we know what will come up, and then a properly run meeting (as church going as I am, no Lord's prayer please!). It would be gravy to be made to feel welcome. Call me picky. Call me demanding. But that would help. Okay, now I have to show up, and I'm going to try my darndest.

I've been reading "Its the Little Things: Everyday Interactions that get under the skin of blacks and whites" by African American NY Times writer Lena Williams. I read stuff I already knew, like I'd better not ever forget the name of an African American that I've met because if i do s/he will think that I think all African Americans look the same. I figured that out when I was the only white kid in my vocational high school at Penn Center (3rd & R NE). I'm already MUCH better at this than I am remembering white folks names, have been for years. I also learned something new: many black people think white people smell bad when wet! I had no idea! Maybe the grumblers think they don't want whites to come to the new pool for this reason so they better keep on grumbling so that the pool will be entirely utilized by African-Americans thereby enabling them to say white folks don't want to swim with black folks but inwardly grateful they don't have to smell us! I never knew. I'm saying this tongue in check guys. In all seriousness,

the book is fascinating: black think white folks look older than their age because "black don't crack". White folks don't like how noisy black folks are in movie theatres. I've been in integrated settings my whole life and I didn't know half this stuff. I also know that no matter how long I work on this stuff I will always be suspect as a white person and that's okay. Someday I'm going to read that reparations book by Randall Robinson (The Debt). I'm curious about his other book: The Reckoning: what Black owe to each other. Sometimes I think, when I'm grumbling about picking up litter at Turkey Thicket, that, heck, black folks have been picking up behind white folks for centuries: it's my turn. (Any body want to start an anti-racism reading group?) What do you all think? This is so taboo to even talk about.

I also read a book years ago that I commend to you all: "Why do all the black kids sit together in the cafeteria? Racial identity development" by Beverly Daniels, who is also African American. IF we are to raise compassionate children who are sensitive to race issues (whites to white privilege, for example, black to internalized racism) it helps to look at the terrific literature that is out there. I have next to read a book by a white man, "Uprooting Racism: How white people can work for racial justice" by Paul Kivel. I recommend novels by George Pellecanos, by the way, who, though white, grew up in DC, went to Cardozo, and writes in the hard-boiled noir genre of black and white working class DC that is otherwise completely ignored. I'm warning you: they are hard-boiled, but excellent.

Alright I'll stop now. My hands hurt and the kids are up. **Don't lose hope folks! Good things are happening! We are growing up as a community, regardless of what happens at TT!**
JL

Date: Fri, 21 Jun 2002 15:47:31 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] Meeting last night in Takoma

Last night I was at a meeting in **Takoma DC. As some of you know they are in the process of having their rec center done. From what I was told the preliminary design at first was to tear down the original structure and to build a more modern building. After citizens voiced their concerns, along with Friends of Takoma Recreation organization, that the design was not insync with the surrounding buildings DPR changed the design to preserve the current building and to build unto it.**

Just a thought. After driving around to the different older schools and libraries within the District I much prefer the design of the older structures the later. Brookland ES is a perfect example of how ugly sometimes modern architecture can be. I really feel sorry for Commissioner Currie having to reside so chose to a building that looks like a prison.

Also places like LeDroit Park and Capitol Hill when they built new housing it was pretty much insync with the surrounding architectural.

I wonder if 30 years from now we will think the architecture of the new rec still be cool. Maybe Brookland ES was cool 30 years ago.
By the way the people on my street & Sigsbee have 1920's bungalows with a little character. JW

Date: Fri, 21 Jun 2002 20:59:22 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] TT status
Than to JL for her excellent post.

Unfortunately, there will always be those who try to work race, age, class, geography, etc. lines to their advantage. As a relative newcomer to DC, I would say that this is far more prevalent here than in most places - when a white contradicts a black here, there is an excellent chance the white will be called racist.

I'm not saying that these lines do not exist, but they don't explain every difference in opinion. Those who would paint me as racist, classist, etc., are making a big mistake, not b/c they do me an injustice (which matters little), but b/c they hurt themselves by blurring the distinction between racists/classists and those who simply disagree with them - if everyone is a racist, then the word loses its meaning, so no one is a racist. Anyway, as I said, I take this kind of strategy for granted in this time and place, and don't let it bother me.

I'm more sympathetic to resentment against newcomers, or people new to Turkey Thicket discussion (though of course these terms are relative - I'm not sure that 3 years worth of Turkey Thicket meetings should leave one in the "new" class). I can understand that when people have worked hard for several years towards a goal, they don't want others coming in at the end to change the goal.

But there are two big issues: 1) those of us who didn't live here 13 years ago can't really be faulted for not being involved then; 2) even if the plans of 13 years ago were well conceived, they might not make as much sense now.

As far as the last meeting goes, I think the most important things now are:
1) According to the City, we're getting a big building with a pool and a gym, and there's not going to be any study or consideration of the appropriateness of that facility, or any determination of whether this community now wants that type of facility. They contend that the community has voted in favor of constructing that type of facility.
2) They are willing to hear input into the building design and site plan, and may even respond to it, but they don't want to talk about traffic or zoning.
3) They have absolutely no plan for hours, staffing, upkeep - anything past construction. They have made vague statements about bringing in people to talk about that at the next big meeting.
4) There will not be another big meeting until August at the earliest. A meeting of the Turkey Thicket committee (those who have signed up on the list) may occur before August, but it's unclear what will be discussed, since only minute details of construction are on the table, according to the City.
5) Construction will not begin until September at the earliest.

My understanding of their stance is that we get what they've shown us, without even promises regarding upkeep, or we get nothing - actually, "nothing" isn't even an option, according to them. For a while there have been efforts to paint those of us who do not want a bad facility

as being opposed to any facility. The City has now formally put us in that position: according to them, we must either accept or oppose what they have presented.

Given that choice, I'm not sure where I stand, but I'm leaning towards opposition b/c I don't trust them to maintain it properly.

I would greatly appreciate if someone could give me the following
1) Directions to a copy of the emergency relief from the zoning restrictions. I thought it was emergency legislation, but I've been told it came from the Board. For some reason, I also have trouble blindly accepting the legal interpretation of an attorney hired by DPR.
2) Currie's phone number or e-mail (if she has e-mail). I've lost the number, and I want to ask for a copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the community voted for this facility.

Thanks to all for your patience with this very long post.
DT

Date: Fri, 21 Jun 2002 09:48:02 -0400
Subject: RE: [Brookland] TT status

DT,
Thank you also for your excellent post. Mary Baird-Currie's phone # is 202.635.1970 and her e-mail is brdcurmbc@aol.com . Hope this helps.
MPR

Date: Sat, 22 Jun 2002 19:48:29 -0000
Subject: [Brookland] I really appreciate this group

When I first decided to start looking for housing in the District I had no intention in being as involved in things as I am now. For the past 12 years my primary focus has been being a good father, a good provider and just merely surviving, of which I am not ashamed. In all these years, especially since becoming a single parent, I have found that you must be prepared for the unexpected. Always with the unexpected I have found there are still lessons to be learned. I have found with this group and within this community there is so much to learn which is really great. The moment I stop growing, learning, and exploring that's the time to bury me and I am not ready to die yet. I have learned that I must stay involved in this community. If I don't raise my voice and don't stay connected that others will make decisions for me that I may not appreciate, I may find very imposing or just inconsiderate.

I am one who have opposed of a lot of things concerning the past planning of this project and community involvement prior to contracts being signed and a RFP being done. Although I am a newcomer the more I have talked to people both black and white which have concerns the more valid I feel my argument has been.

As far as racism is concerned I find the confederate flag offensive, a symbol of oppression and racist to my people not opposition to the Turkey Thicket process. Also I think the only criminals are not the ones dealing on the street corners but some of these corporate executives and politicians, for example Enron. Also let's be real, drug dealers come in all colors, shapes, sizes and backgrounds I believe that when most people are referring to drugs and crime that they know this is not only a black thing although a lot of us a in prison. Also I believe that when people talk about incompetence or lack

of good planning aren't being racist. I am quite sure that some who oppose some of the elements of this project are aware that are major companies (e.g. dotcoms, Kmart, etc.) which have followed because of incompetence or bad planning. Why is there such a thing as Chapter 11?

Hopefully in the future when people are accused of certain things that we are considerate enough to set aside the time to listen and not assume. Remember the saying about assuming makes an ass of…. I really feel our elected representatives need to be leaders and be the first to start a dialogue when it comes to misunderstandings and bridging the gaps of division, not foster an atmosphere of suspicion.

My piece earlier about discrimination was not about me being a victim but to point out discrimination comes in so many forms in various cultures.

I really don't want to give the impression that the elderly in our community are not needed. If it weren't for the influence of my parents, grandparents and other elders in my life I wouldn't be who I am today. To this day I call my father, mother and other seasoned individuals for their advice.

Last but not least a new recreation center I believe will not be the salvation of our youth but parents, grandparents, a community that is involved. We can build plenty of buildings or sports fields but if we as adults won't be committed or provided well run programs our labor will be in vain. I will always say that the family unit whether dual or single needs to be supported and encouraged. Right now at Turkey Thicket we have that entire field which is not being utilized by our local kids. Where are our soccer, baseball and football teams? Where are our soccer moms and dads?Oh and by the way soccer moms and dads are not just white and middle class who live in the suburbs. That's a stereotype and low income does not mean negligent parents or dirty. This is why I am government moneys being given to slumlords. As tough as things are plenty of us may consider ourselves low income. Believe me there were times when my cupboards were empty or I didn't have gas money to get to work yet I was always involved in my kid's lives. This is the reason why I don't get offended when people say soccer moms because I have seen sports parents come from a variety of backgrounds. Also I am quite that those who mentioned soccer moms was referring to white middle class.

In one of my groups we use "the ouch cause". Only say ouch if I am stepping on your toes, whether you are black or white.

Remember to stay involved. Let's be proactive instead of reactive.
JW

Date: Sat, 22 Jun 2002 19:48:29 -0000
Subject: Re: [Brookland] I really appreciate this group

JW, your e-mail letters are amazing and encouraging. Keep it up, please. For what it is worth, I am adding here a copy of a letter of mine to Common Denominator, an answer to the Currie and Broadnax letter.

I don't know if Kathy Sinzinger will publish it, so I am posting it here.
AH
##
To the Editor of The Common Denominator

Answer to Currie/Broadnax letter

The neighbors near Turkey Thicket Playground are being subjected to a rough learning experience: how to deal with a bureaucracy that has no connection with the neighborhood on which it is imposing its intentions.

Included in that bureaucracy are the ANCs, Currie and Broadnax:
they are more a part of the problem than part of the solution.

What the neighborhood has going for it is simple: laws must be obeyed.

The laws are there for a purpose: to protect the common good. Since the 1970's, we have learned that that good includes the air, the water, the ground, indeed, all of our created being here together.

So, there is no way out of our common dilemma except to obey the laws.

If Turkey Thicket is to be a good place, it must be brought under a common recognition that it has to obey limits: be a limited space, with limited capabilities, serving its neighborhood in its own way.

How to determine the dimensions of its functions is the responsibility of the people of this community.

A good government would recognize that, and work with citizens to make Turkey Thicket part of a string of small communal parks in the District of Columbia.
AH
Brookland

Date: Mon, 24 Jun 2002 07:35:59 EDT
Subject: [Brookland] race and Brookland

Well, I've certainly appreciated the postings on the last meeting, especially D's piece on the rhetoric of racism used as a mask for real disorganization on the part of elected leaders (that's what I took out of it).

As to this issue of race, it would be appreciated if more people, black and white, realized that
1. we are no longer living in 1950s black and white duality America, because
2. there are some of us who are neither "black" nor "white".

As a Latino I'm not sure how I'm supposed to approach these kinds of conversations when the very language has the effect of silencing (by omission) my own existence or perspective. So I shut off.

I refuse to participate in people's convoluted memories about fights (perceived and real) that took place in a past which I do not share. There are other Latinos in this neighborhood, and that's a reality I don't hear mentioned. I need to confess that when I hear "black and white" I am being sent a message ("not you" "you don't count here"). So I tune out.

If people are interested in being in a neighborhood in the hear and now of *multiple* cultures, I'd love to be at that table for that *real* conversation.
-D on Perry

Just a week ago, I heard Angela Glover Blackwell deliver a related critique in her keynote speech to a conference for nonprofit management consultants, grantmakers, and others. Head of an organization called PolicyLink (www.policylink.org), she's formerly of Rockefeller Foundation and also the Poverty & Race Research Action Council board. Her point was that the Black-and-White paradigm is no longer adequate for US policy, especially with growing Latino and Asian populations, yet it defines and constrains much of our public discourse--especially on 'gridlock' issues.

For instance, welfare, schools, and crime all tend--in the popular imagination and in political debate--to be associated with Africans in America . . . and so we lose sight of what's happening with, what's possible and right for, immigrants as well as residents of multiple generations who are not identified as Black or White.

That said, there is a rich and perplexing ambiguity to 'Brown' or Latino--since by many definitions Hispanic can mean Black or White or none of the above. And there's a narrowness and often overpowering silence about perceptions of 'Yellow' or Asian people in our communities--since many tend to either marginalize or press people into service as the model minority, and/or as honorary White. (Howard U law professor Frank Wu has a fascinating new book, YELLOW.)

Though it is surely complicated, I hope we'll accept D's invitation to seek out and be attentive to a greater diversity of voices. So who's willing to offer some alternative views on the politics of Turkey Thicket?
BR

Date: Tue, 25 Jun 2002 15:37:04 +0000
Subject: [Brookland] Re: Races in Brookland/DC

It is even more complicated to talk about races than Br's well-chosen comments suggest. My husband is from India, which is certainly in Asia. But no one thin of the "subcontinent" when they think of Asians. In terms of race, Indians call themselves "wheatish". They don't consider themselves to be white, although I think most American Caucasians would think of them as white. But why bother to decide? **I think it's enough to note that we cannot always classify folks conveniently by race, and that folks of many different races and ethnic backgrounds live here and participate in our community.**
SR, Girard St.

We are all in the same boat in a stormy sea and we owe
each other a terrible loyalty. GK Chesterton