

Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3F
Van Ness ▪ North Cleveland Park ▪ Wakefield ▪ Forest Hills

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3F02 – Alexandria Appah, Vice Chair
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3F06 – Monika Nemeth, Secretary
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UDC Campus Plan - 2021 ANC 3F Resolution
June 2021

Whereas, The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) is a pacesetter in urban education that offers affordable and effective undergraduate, graduate, professional, and workplace learning opportunities. The institution (UDC) is the premier gateway to postsecondary education and research for all residents of the District of Columbia. As a public, historically black, and land-grant institution, UDC’s responsibility is to build a diverse generation of competitive, civically engaged scholars and leaders.

Whereas, UDC’s “Equity Imperatives” includes education as a priority and a gateway to the middle class, and that the District of Columbia continues to invest in the public education of its children by dedicating significant resources to its capital budget for educational facility renovations. UDC represents the best opportunity to fulfil the equity imperative for many DC residents to achieve their full academic, professional, and/or technical training in order to reach the middle class and to fulfill their individual and societal potential. On February 18, 2018, ANC 3F passed a resolution supporting UDC’s “Equity Imperative”.

Whereas, UDC is an important educational and institutional land use in ANC 3F, a major employer and economic engine, with its flagship campus on Connecticut Avenue, is one of the main commercial land owners at the Van Ness Metro stop, whose growth and development is critical to Van Ness and surrounding community’s continued vibrancy, inclusivity, diversity and therefore success.

Whereas, every 10 years, UDC prepares a “Campus Plan” that complies with Chapter 11-X1 – Campus Plans, School Plan, and Medical Campus Plan and Section 210 the District of Columbia Zoning Regulations as an educational use by a college or university and is permitted as a special exception.¹ The Zoning Commission (ZC) reviews applications and makes a determination as to whether the proposed use meets the standards and conditions that apply to the proposed use. The ZC will approve applications where the standards and conditions are met. Campus plan uses are to be located so that they are not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, parking, number of students or other objectionable

¹ Chapter 11-X1 - Zoning Ordinance link: <https://dcregs.dc.gov/Common/DCMR/RuleList.aspx?ChapterNum=11-X1&ChapterId=3548>

conditions.² For more information on campus plans in the DC Zoning Regulations, see footnote #2 below.

Whereas, the UDC “Campus Plan” should be consistent with relevant Elements of the District of Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan.

Whereas, the UDC “Campus Plan” and requisite community involvement during its development and implementation is key component to mutual success, ANC 3F continues to welcome and urge UDC’s outreach to the community and its various stakeholders.

Whereas, UDC and its consultant team in 2020 and 2021 prepared “The University of the District of Columbia – Van Ness Campus Plan 2021-2030” and has presented it to the community and sent a draft to the DC Zoning Commission for review and the DC Zoning Commission has scheduled its public hearing on the Draft Campus Master Plan for June 21, 2021.

Whereas, ANC 3F will submit a written report to the Zoning Commission in advance of its June 21, 2021, meeting as an attachment to Form 129 that reflects feedback from community members up to and including its June 15, 2021, meeting.

Therefore, be it resolved that ANC 3F provides its overall support of “The University of the District of Columbia – Van Ness Campus Plan 2021-2030” as its roadmap to future growth and development over the next ten-year period and commits to being a partner in helping UDC achieve its urban education and equity imperative missions.

Therefore, be it resolved that ANC 3F provides its overall support of the Draft UDC Campus Plan and offers the following comments in response to concerns it has about the Draft UDC Campus Plan in these key areas:

1. Plan for increased population of students, faculty and staff. ANC 3F appreciates that UDC increased its student population objective from 6,500 to 7,000 students. That said, ANC 3F is concerned over how UDC plans to meet this enrollment objective when the Van Ness campus student population decreased by over 50% between 2010 and 2020 (from 5,855 to 2,359). ANC 3F supports a student (and faculty and staff) enrollment consistent its stated mission to “Provide an important economic engine for the District of Columbia and region.” Source: UDC website. ANC 3F also supports the modest increase in building FAR as outlined in the Plan (170,000 square feet; total FAR would increase from 1.37 to 1.56; the maximum by-right FAR allowed for the Van Ness Campus is 1.80).

² More detailed description is contained in this link: <https://handbook.dcoz.dc.gov/zoning-rules/general-procedures/campus-plans/>

2. Student Housing. ANC 3F is concerned about UDC’s capacity to house 600 students on site as it was an unmet objective from 2010. The 2011-2020 Campus Master Plan, like the 2021-2030 version identifies 2 potential sites that ANC 3F would support. Furthermore, ANC 3F would support UDC’s consideration of housing for its staff – faculty and support – located on site, or in cooperation with other partners including Howard University (their Law & Divinity Schools are but several block apart).

3. Campus Plan transportation and sustainability elements. ANC 3F supports many of the proposed improvements that make the Van Ness campus more accessible to more modes of transportation but has raised several questions that need to be more fully addressed in advance of the ANC 3F vote in June. It also supports many of the proposed improvements on building and landscape sustainability. ANC 3F considered both the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan – Exhibit 5.3 – as well as comments from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). ANC 3F and its Streets & Sidewalks Committee has attached written feedback on both elements and will work with UDC and other stakeholders to implement Plan elements that benefit both UDC and the surrounding community.

4. Applicable Zoning Commission Conditions from 2011-2020 Campus Plan approval. The Zoning Commission Conditions (27) from the June 27, 2011 hearing regarding the 2011-2020 Campus Plan (Z.C Case Nos. 11-02 and 1102A) should be updated and carried over, as applicable, to the 2021-2030 Campus Plan.

5. University Community Task Force. ANC 3F applauds the formation of this Task Force when the 2011-2020 Campus Plan was adopted. However, it is concerned about its effectiveness in helping UDC achieve the goals and objectives that were defined in that 2011-2020 Campus Plan (1 of 4 2011-2020 Campus Plan objectives were achieved – the new Student Center). ANC 3F requests that this Task Force be strengthened and prepared a draft document memorializing this understanding for UDC review and joint approval.

Therefore, be it resolved that ANC 3F supports the UDC Campus Plan and as a condition of that support at the June 21, 2021, Zoning Commission Hearing, requests that UDC continue its commitment to a community engagement process involving ANC 3F and other community stakeholders over next ten years as it implements its Campus Plan (2021-2030). This process shall commence within 90 days of UDC Campus Plan approval by the Zoning Commission.

Be it further resolved that ANC3F authorizes Commissioner(s) ____ and ____ to speak on behalf of the Commission on this subject with the Zoning Commission, Zoning Commission staff, the Mayor’s Office and cabinet, and the DC Council.

The above resolution was moved, seconded and voted on as follows: yes__ no __ abstain __ at

the ANC 3F meeting held on June 15, 2021.