



Chevy Chase

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3/4G

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Mayor Muriel Bowser
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser:

The Chevy Chase Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3/4G is writing you regarding the Modernization of Lafayette E.S. School Project and the new DDOE storm water retention requirements for the project.

As you know the first construction phase of the modernization of Lafayette E.S School is underway and the final aspects of the design along with efforts to meet the storm water run-off regulations are still being worked out. Under Mayor Gray's administration, even though the community opposed the timing of the renovation of the Lafayette Park playgrounds, the Play DC project was completed. The community requested the Park renovation wait until such time as the plans for the upcoming school modernization project were completed and /or the school project was completed. The community request was to treat the school and Park site holistically to ensure that the design of the Park would complement the school project. Now we are dealing with one of the consequences of the decision to not postpone the Park project: the storm water run-off from the Park is impacting the School Modernization project.

The Lafayette School Modernization Project is the first school project required to meet the new DDOE storm-water retention requirements. The school project must not only handle the significant storm water run-off from the school property, but because the Park is at a higher elevation, it must now assume the added responsibility of handling the significant storm water run-off from the Park. Currently, the Park does not capture enough of its own storm water, which negatively affects the school project with water flowing down from the Park onto the school property, gushing down the steps onto 33rd Street NW, causing a river-like effect.

The problem is further exacerbated by the inadequacies of the antiquated DC sewer system. It is our understanding that the DC sewer system was built to handle the storm water for a 15-year storm. Thus, whatever water capture features are put in place, they may not be effective in a heavier storm and could potentially add to flooding in the immediate area. We have already begun experiencing more severe storms due to climate change, and the experts predict that trend to continue.

The Chevy Chase Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3/4G voted 6 to 0 (a quorum being four) to request that the District government allocate monies and authorize an emergency contract to analyze approaches to deal with the storm-water issue from the Park to capture as much the storm-water runoff possible and divert the remaining water away from the school project. Because the School Modernization Project has already begun, there is an urgent need to develop a viable plan.

Lafayette Elementary School is breaking new ground in its efforts to meet the new DDOE storm water run-off retention regulations. We urge the District government to realistically assess whether these objectives are reasonable in this context or even possible within the available budget. The District government should consider whether some waivers are appropriate in this instance.

In summary, ANC 3/4G requests immediate funding for the Park to handle its own storm-water run-off retention and/or consideration of an exemption to the new DDOE storm water retention regulations for the school modernization project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Randy Speck
Chair