

AU Neighborhood Partnership
Student Life and Safety Working Group

5:00 pm to 6:30 pm

December 14, 2021

Draft Notes

Disclaimer: This summary, based on notes taken by Justice & Sustainability Associates staff, is a draft only and not an official document of the AU Neighborhood Partnership.

Steering Committee Co-Chairs (2): Chuck Elkins (ANC 3D), Phil Morse (AU)

Attendees (7): Jeremy Del Moral (ANC 3D) Maria Barry (AU), Bruce Klein (Fort Gaines), Diana Gregg (McLean Gardens), Rima Sifri (AU), Jeff Brown (AU), Andrew Meehan (Wesley Heights)

JSA Attendees (3): Brian Schwartz (Facilitator), Josh Babb (Notetaker)

Invited Participants (4): Karen Frosliid-Jones (AU), John Wheeler (Ward 3 Vision), Tony Ciccone (FGCA), Carol Wells (Westover Place)

Next Meeting: TBD

Highlights	
Key Discussion Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome and Review Agenda ● Review Fall Student Conduct Incidents ● Review Draft of Survey to Neighbors who File Student Conduct Reports ● Adjourn
Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Co-chairs will reach out to connect with Commander Bedlion ● Karen Frosliid-Jones will update the current draft of the student conduct survey

Discussion Recap	
Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Phil: Welcome, everybody. We tried not to have that large of an agenda tonight, but we have a few items we thought were important. ● Chuck: I share that sentiment, let's get started.
Review Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thought it might be good for this committee to look more in depth at the Student Conduct report from Fall, with a focus on the process as opposed to the individuals. ● Jeff: AU had 14 reports for the Fall Semester.

- Aug. 29th: Complaint in the Tenleytown area for a noise violation/party
- Sep 12th: Another report from for the same address from the same reporting party

- Jeff has met with this set of students, think it is fair to say the neighbors and students have harassed each other back and forth. Met with the students as we normally would for a first-time incident like this, they reported some concerning behavior on the neighbors' part. They confirmed they have had some incidents with parties in the past though.

- A lot of time we get tied up with a lack of hard evidence. Students have assured me that they will be compliant and try to connect with this neighbor.
 - Chuck: Did you advise the neighbors to call the police?
 - They are always advised to call the police, yes.
 - This is the residence where there were 4 reports from the same reporting party. Probably makes the most sense to focus on this one residence first.

- The 4th report happened on Halloween, a report of a party with no specific information or police report. Have re-iterated to the neighbor that they need more specific information. The neighbor stated they were going to go the MPD, but we have found no indication that they did. I know the neighbor was also in contact with Jonathan McHugh regarding this situation. The students are well aware of the reports.
- Chuck: Do you have the sense that the MPD came out?
 - Jeff: The neighbor claims he called, but we have no reports from MPD.
- Maria has asked for follow-up, but they haven't done so. Has repeatedly shared her contact info with the neighbor.
- Phil: Jeff will contact me in cases like these, I do have access to the police reporting system. If the police are responding and they don't write a report, it's because there is no violation of the law or any DC ordinances that they observed.
- Chuck: It's one thing to say there was no violation of the laws, it's another thing if they just didn't record or report it. I'm willing to go back to Commander Bedlion to touch base about this, and make sure MPD is writing reports.
- Jeremy: Isn't there a lot of discretion over whether MPD writes a report or not? I get that AU has no way to confirm. When police come out for noise, I would guess they often do warn first and likely not write a report.
- Chuck: Let's keep in mind when a noise violation is after 10:00pm. I'm pressing this because we spend a lot of time getting the police to record reports, I think we just need to re-iterate the ask.
- Jeremy: I'm a little concerned by that response because I just don't think you're always going to get a report from the police. A lot of times they aren't interested in doing that extra work.

- Jeff: The lack of a police report doesn't mean we can't have a conversation with a student, it hampers AU during the student conduct process if there is little to no evidence. We need some type of documentation.
- Phil: In the cases where AU does have enough information, they are able to act. There are minor crimes that MPD won't even take reports for, there is a computer dispatch system that shows where the police have visited, even if there is no formal reporting.
- Jeremy: I brought this up at the ANC a couple of months ago with a noise issue, my concern is when they show up and I'm already asleep; in your log can you see the time a 911 call was made versus when they responded. That also doesn't exempt the student from the violation.
- Phil: The dispatch will record those data points, unless there is no report. We don't know if they saw anything or talked to the caller.
- Chuck: This reminds me of when we started this working group, here we have a case with 4 instances, suggest maybe having a meeting with the Commander.
- Maria: Just wanted to add the varied nature of the complaints, one was a trash complaint, one was a parking issue, they were not all for the same issue.
- Chuck: Would you accept a sworn affidavit with this neighbor?
 - Jeff: To be blunt these students are claiming discrimination against this neighbor. There are some other dynamics at play.
- Andrew: There were some catcalls over the fence at some point during my incident several years ago, it wasn't that bad. With respect to my incident, we had the police out several times, but I don't think they filed a report.
- Jeremy: Is it a demographic thing? Was recently interviewed by a student about the new non-smoking rule ANC 3D passed. Had to explain my issue with smoke in multi-unit dwellings.
- Jeff: AU got a report from a condo in Cathedral Heights with a general noise complaint, worked with the property to issue a warning letter.
- Another additional complaint: The Student was throwing a 21st Birthday party and informed the neighbors, the neighbors think it got out of hand and shared a letter with us to that intent, but asked that no further action be taken.
- Two complaints from a single-family residence in Bethesda, the person states she has found fraternity tags carved close to her house. Don't have any further info on who may have done that, shared this info with the fraternity and sorority life staff.
- One additional report from after the CLC reporting period. AU did get a report from the Foxhall neighborhood today about noise and maybe an illegal hot tub.
- Jeff: One reminder that every case is different, but in general if we get a complaint from a residence the first step is always to bring them in and have a conversation around our student conduct guidelines.

Review Draft of Survey to Neighbors who File Student Conduct Report

- Karen: Very helpful listening to this conversation. I think the value of the qualitative information is very important when dealing with these smaller numbers.
- Part of the issue we want to be able to track is to make sure neighbors know the full extent of what AU is doing to solve student conduct issues.
- Jeff: Often we are waiting on responses from others. A lot of the neighbors also do not give us email addresses, which would prevent sending the survey without follow-up.
- The last concern is what will this data tell us with low reporting numbers.
- Chuck: Think it's important to consider what we really want with this. Need to know whether the neighbors are happy, if at the end of the process they are then that is success.
- Question 1: Were you happy with the Universities response?
- Question 2: What's your understanding of how American University addressed it?
- Andrew: I Hope with this survey, it would be tied to the original case info in some way.
- Chuck: I would say it's important to know at the end of the process whether the neighbors are happy and satisfied with the University's response.
- This is part of AU's PR campaign.
- Karen: I think the University would alter the first question to be when you reported the conduct incident, so they could have that for their records. Then AU would likely send the requests to fill out the survey at the end of every semester to those who reached out to the University.
- Chuck: I disagree, I think AU should send one out after every conduct report. It is highly unusual for someone to file repeated reports. We don't want the University to make people feel like they are brushing their complaints off.
- Karen: We can only send it via email, would need to be sure that info is collected along the way during the initial reporting process. You wouldn't want to use a number, rather their first and last name.
- One other thing to add is sometimes neighbors may not want a response.
- Chuck: Who would this come from?
- Phil: I think it might make sense to be sent from the Dean of Students, maybe two weeks after the meeting is resolved, they would serve as the means for a follow up.
- Chuck: That makes sense.
- Brian: Just to clarify, this is an initiative of the Partnership.
- Andrew: Would just like to add that multiple incidents are not the exception to the rule. I think that more information would be to AU's advantage.
- Karen: I think AU would be collecting info for each complaint date, and each specific person that it is tied to.
- Chuck: Sounds like we've made a lot of progress today, is Karen willing to send around a new draft?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Karen: I can do that. Will need to loop in Jeff on these developments.● John Wheeler: Jeff raised an important point on the issue of discrimination.
Meeting Chat:	N/A