



Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G

Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, Hawthorne

5601 Connecticut Avenue N.W. P.O. Box 6252 Washington, D.C. 20015
3G@anc.dc.gov | <http://www.anc3g.org> | YouTube: ANC3G | Office: 202.363.5803

COMMISSIONERS

3/4G-01 - Lisa R. Gore, Chair 3/4G-02 - Bruce Sherman
3/4G-03 - James Nash, Secretary 3/4G-04 - Michael Zeldin 3/4G-05 - Peter Lynch
3/4G-06 - Peter Gosselin, Vice Chair 3/4G-07 - Zachary Ferguson, Treasurer

ANC 3/4G Resolution On
The Encampment Eviction at McPherson Square
February 13, 2023

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

1) The National Park Service plans to clear a homeless encampment on federal land in McPherson Square on February 15th, two months ahead of its previously planned eviction, and during hypothermia season. The rationale for the expedited eviction is unclear and claims of lack of safety are unsubstantiated. Many of the 70 people living at McPherson Square reside there due to being displaced from other encampments. According to the *Washington Post*¹ only 15 of the estimated 70 people living at McPherson Square have been placed in housing.

2) ANC 3/4G believes that the wellbeing of our city-wide neighbors—housed and unhoused—is our shared concern and responsibility. In 2022, at least 77² of our unhoused neighbors died without the dignity of a home. And in 2020, one of our local unhoused neighbors was found dead in the park located at the Chevy Chase Circle³.

¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/01/30/dc-homeless-mcpherson-square-camp/>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/12/20/dc-homeless-deaths-vigil/>

³ <https://wtop.com/local/2020/10/woman-found-dead-at-chevy-chase-circle/>

3) The ANC believes in the dignity of each person, and that each person deserves safe and secure housing. These evictions counter those values.

4) Evicting encampments in February without a plan to place unhoused residents in housing risks the safety of our unhoused neighbors and causes undue harm. It is an affront to our conscience.

5) We believe the solution to homelessness is housing. Removal and relocation does not help our most vulnerable neighbors achieve that end. Forced removal, of which some of these neighbors have already been subject to several times, will likely sow distrust, further isolating these neighbors from the help they need and deserve.

6) The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁴ states: “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

7) Local service providers such as Pathways to Housing DC offer this guidance: “Homeless encampments are a rational response to the dangers of living isolated on the streets. People congregate in encampments seeking safety, companionship, pooled resources, and other practical needs. They can be a rare place of stability for individuals who may normally move from place to place, and our outreach teams provide ongoing services to encampment residents in our geographic coverage area. Unfortunately, encampments can also present threats to health and safety. Local actions to close encampments permanently or periodically conduct ‘clean-ups’ (often throwing away personal belongings, medications, identification papers, etc.)—without first ensuring safe housing—can put vulnerable persons at great risk for additional trauma as well as fracture relationships between service providers and encampment residents, disrupting continuity of care⁵.”

RESOLVED

1) ANC 3/4G calls for the National Park Service to cease its eviction of unhoused

⁴ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

⁵ <https://pathwaystohousingdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Pathways-to-Housing-DC-Encampment-Statement-2021.pdf>

neighbors at McPherson Square during the winter months.

2) ANC 3/4G calls for the District government to offer clear, timely, and dignified opportunities to be housed to each person within McPherson Square.

3) ANC 3/4G request the Executive and the National Park Service partner with outreach organizations to mediate and offer solutions for the people residing at McPherson Square including but not limited to the voucher program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Commission designates the Commissioner Peter Lynch, ANC 3/4G-05, to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

APPROVED at a regular public meeting, notice of which was properly given and at which a quorum of four (4) or seven (7) members was present on February 13, 2023, by a vote of (6) yes (Gore, Sherman, Nash, Zeldin, Lynch, Gosselin), (0) no, (1) abstentions (Ferguson).



Lisa R Gore, Chair



James L Nash, Secretary

Signature:



Email: 3g01@anc.dc.gov