



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

Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, Hawthorne

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ANC 3/4G Resolution
Seeking an Explanation for the
Removal of the Newlands Wayside Exhibit at
Chevy Chase Circle and Its Timely Return.
November 10, 2025

Background and Rationale

- 1) The fountain at Chevy Chase Circle is dedicated to the late Francis G. Newlands (1846-1917), carrying three commemorative elements, an engraved stone, a brass plaque and the coping stones of fountain basin, all bearing Newlands' names. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is in the national park system and is administered by the National Park Service as part of Rock Creek Park.
- 2) Newlands was a U.S. senator from Nevada, the founder of The Chevy Chase Land Company and the developer of Chevy Chase DC and Maryland. While in Congress, he supported measures expanding women's rights and protecting public lands. He also perpetuated racial prejudice in words and actions.
- 3) Examples of Newlands' racial prejudice:
 - He is quoted in a ***New York Times*** story of June 17, 1912, as saying, "I believe this should be a white man's country, and we should frankly express our determination that it shall be."
 - As part of the "White Plank" for the Democratic Convention of 1912, he called for amending the U.S. Constitution to prohibit voting by Black Americans and limit immigration to whites only. (William D. Rowley, "Reclaiming the Arid

West: The Career of Francis G. Newlands," 1996.)

- 4) ANC 3/4G and the Chevy Chase community have repeatedly discussed how to respond to the fact the fountain is dedicated to Newlands.
 - In 2014, the ANC considered and tabled a resolution calling for the removal of the fountain's commemorative elements carrying Newlands' name and the renaming of the fountain.
 - In 2020, a Change.org petition garnered more than 2,000 signatures calling for the removal of the Newlands name from the fountain.
 - Also in 2020, the ANC approved a resolution calling for the removal of the commemorative elements and installation of a wayside exhibit laying out Newlands' views. It anticipated a recommendation from its Task Force on Racism for changing the name of the fountain.
- 5) In December 2022, after several years of negotiations between the ANC, the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle (FoCCC), a volunteer group of Chevy Chase DC and Maryland residents working to revitalize the Circle, and NPS, park service installed an exhibit on DC public space along the sidewalk on the east side of Connecticut Avenue as it enters the Circle.
- 6) The text of the exhibit read:

"What's in a Name?

"In 1932, Congress authorized that a fountain be built here to honor Francis G. Newlands. Why is it dedicated to such a controversial figure?

"Newlands served as congressman, then senator, from Nebraska from 1893 to 1917. Newlands was the primary author of the Reclamation Act of 1902, which provided for large-scale irrigation projects in the arid West. He also supported the creation of the National Park Service, the Federal Trade Commission, and the right of women to vote.

"At the same time, Newlands held and promoted White supremacist views. He saw the United States as a nation for Whites only and advocated for denying immigration, voting rights, and even citizenship to people of color.

"As a wealthy and powerful real estate developer, Newlands founded The Chevy Chase Land Company in 1890. The company developed farmland on the outskirts of the nation's capital into the residential communities of Chevy Chase, DC and Chevy Chase Maryland. The high cost of homes and racial bias limited who could live in these developments. The consequences of historic housing discrimination endure to this day.

"Thus Newlands' legacy is a mixed one. Some believe the fountain has become a symbol of racial discrimination and injustice and that Newlands' name should be removed from the fountain. What do you think?

"Today the fountain is managed by the National Park Service."


The exhibit included a photo of Newlands and an image of a newspaper headline reading, "Newlands Would Bar all Aliens."

- 7) In September 2025, NPS officials notified FoCCC that it would seek to make unspecified revisions to the text and visuals of the wayside exhibit in response to President Trump’s Executive Order 14252, “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History.”
- 8) At some point during the weekend of Nov. 1-2, 2025, with no prior notice to the community, the ANC understands that an NPS crew abruptly removed the exhibit in its entirety, including its foundations.
- 9) To date, ANC and FoCCC have been unable to learn who at NPS removed the exhibit and what are the agency’s intentions.

Resolved:

- 10) ANC 3/4G requests that the National Park Service explain why the Newlands wayside exhibit was removed, whether the agency intends to replace it, what text and images it intends to use in any replacement exhibit and what its schedule is for handling the issue.
- 11) If NPS does not provide an explanation or a schedule for the timely return of the exhibit or if the proposed replacement text and images do not include substantially the same information as was in the previous exhibit, ANC 3/4G will work with relevant local groups to erect a wayside exhibit that substantially reproduces the removed exhibit and, if possible, be located at the same spot.
- 12) ANC 3/4G will continue to work with the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle and other relevant community groups to remove the Newlands’ name from the and coping-stone inscription on the Chevy Chase fountain.
- 13) Commissioners Gore and Gosselin are sponsors of this resolution and shall be ANC 3/4G’s representatives in matters related to it.

This resolution was adopted at a duly noticed public meeting on November 10, 2025, with a quorum 4 of 7 Commissioners present, voting: 7 Yes, 0 No, and 0 abstain.



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 Lisa R. Gore, Chair



box SIGN 47RVI67X-4QVQXXWV
 Elizabeth A. Nagy, Secretary

Nov 17, 2025
 Date

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