



CLEVELAND PARK
SMART GROWTH

2020 ANC Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for running for Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner! ANCs play a key role in our neighborhoods and we are fortunate for those of you willing to dedicate volunteer service to making our communities better. This year, Cleveland Park Smart Growth is asking all candidates running in ANCs 3C and 3F to respond to our Candidate Questionnaire below. We will publish your responses on our website so voters can learn more about you.

There is no space limit to your responses so use as much space as you need under each question. Please use this document to enter your responses, save it with you last name in file name, and return it (ideally as a PDF) via email to cpsmartgrowth@gmail.com by **5pm on October 5th**.

Name: Beau Finley
SMD: 3C04

1) As you may know, DDOT is studying the future operations of Connecticut Ave from Chevy Chase through Woodley Park. As an ANC Commissioner, what would your priorities be for the future configuration of Connecticut Ave?

My priorities for Connecticut Avenue are safety and sustainability. Unfortunately, District policies have long preferenced car-commuter traffic at the expense of safety and the environment. These policies have turned Connecticut Avenue into a six-lane highway every weekday morning and evening, cutting through the middle of many neighborhoods, including ours. I would like to see an end to the reversible lanes, the addition of bicycle lanes, and the reconfiguration of intersections to prioritize pedestrian safety.

I believe the [Streetscape and Drainage Improvement Project](#) will provide long-term help to our neighborhood, making it a safer and more inviting place to walk around. This, in turn, will likely help the businesses along the commercial corridor. I worked closely with DDOT to ensure that the intersection of Quebec and Porter remains signalized and am continuing to work with DDOT to ensure that businesses are not disproportionately affected by the sequencing of construction. After a number of years of planning and significant community feedback, DDOT is almost ready to break ground on Phase I of the project. Once the Connecticut Avenue portion of the project is complete, DDOT will move to Phase II, which relies upon the work of Phase I, to address much of the drainage issues that affect the west side of our community.

Numerous studies have shown the benefits of making our neighborhood more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. Doing so will create positive health impacts, economic benefits, and reduce reliance on cars. Removing the reversible lanes will eliminate dangerous confusion and reduce the jockeying and right-lane passing so enjoyed by our neighbors in Maryland. It might even encourage some of those commuters to shift to Metro. I currently serve on the Citizen Advisory Committee of DDOT's Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lanes Study where I advocate for a dynamic reimagining of our corridor to help make our neighborhood safer, more sustainable, and more economically vibrant. It's important to remember that Connecticut Avenue was designed to be the center of our community - a unifying place where we can congregate, shop, and dine - not a superhighway.

2) What policies should the city pursue that you would support as an ANC Commissioner to help reduce car-dependency?

1. An automobile excise tax tied to emissions standards, as was supported by ANC 3C in a [resolution](#) I drafted and passed in July 2018.
2. Increase the cost of residential parking permits, with discounts for low-income residents. Permits are currently at \$35 per vehicle, no matter how many vehicles one owns. This is well below market price. Additional vehicles should be subject to escalating RPP fees.

3) Should this part of the city be contributing more new housing as the city grows? Why?

Our part of the city absolutely must contribute more new housing as the District grows. We need to do so for reasons of racial justice, equity, economics, and the environment. Over the past decade-plus, as other parts of the city grew and changed, we did not add housing, which, given our community's history, has further cemented segregation, accentuated inequity, hurt our local economy, and done little to prevent sprawl.

Ward 3 has an unacceptable history of removal and exclusion of non-white residents. From the removal of the black community near Fort Reno to restrictive racial covenants, the District and its affluent residents segregated Ward 3. It is the whitest and wealthiest Ward in the District. Is this campaign of segregation something that any current residents engaged in? Probably not, but that doesn't mean we should sit back and enjoy the fruits of others' oppression. In the District, race and class intersect at a high level due to centuries of policies designed to make and keep Black people poor. White households in D.C. have a net worth of 81 times greater than Black households.¹ This results in frequent conflation of race and class, and due to our policing priorities thanks to the War on Drugs, crime. We've read about this prejudicial conflation on the Cleveland Park listserv when an allegedly vigilant white resident spots someone who they think does not belong in our community because of the color of their skin. We've read about it when a neighbor of ours complained on the listserv that people, likely "renters," were walking around the neighborhood probably looking for something to steal. But

¹ See Kilolo Kijakazi, et. al., *The Color of Wealth in the Nation's Capital* (2016) at p. vii, available at <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/color-wealth-nations-capital/>.

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we have the opportunity to begin to turn the page on our community's racist housing policies of the past by adding housing and embracing our new neighbors. If the cost of addressing this lengthy injustice is mere inconvenience, then those of us who are privileged should consider ourselves lucky that the cost is so low.

We also lack housing equity in Ward 3 and Cleveland Park. D.C. residents are paying a greater share of their income for rental housing than ever before, which disproportionately affects low-income residents. In our neighborhood, many point to the prevalence of rent-controlled housing as proof that we have plenty of affordable housing. Rent-controlled buildings are neither income-restricted nor income-assisted and do not constitute affordable housing. While we can and should expand the housing voucher program and reduce the thresholds necessitating inclusionary zoning, these programs alone won't address the affordable housing crisis in the District *unless we build more housing*. The existing housing in the District is inadequate for the expected demand over the next decade. Even if that expected demand decreases by 10% due to the ongoing pandemic, we will still need significantly more housing units in the District, both market-rate and affordable. For those who think that the District does not need to build more housing and that we can address the affordable housing crisis through existing programs (which have not yet fixed the crisis in which we find ourselves), please revisit this concept from Economics 101: if supply remains constant and demand increases, then price increases. If we do not add significantly more housing, especially in places that have room for it like Ward 3, then we will see price increases that further gentrification and prevent more and more people from enjoying housing stability.

Our local economy, consisting of our businesses that contribute heavily to the vibrance of our neighborhood, is struggling mightily. Locally owned shops have been replaced by national chains. The Uptown, Nam-Viet, Ripple, and Artisan shuttered before the COVID-19 pandemic. Talk to business owners past and present - they understand that more housing means more residents who make up the majority of their customers. If we add more people to our community, we can expect our businesses to do better.

Finally, adding housing in our community is a boon for the environment. We are facing a global climate crisis. As we watch California, Colorado, and Wyoming burn while we march slowly through a record-breaking Atlantic Hurricane season, we all know that our individual efforts are necessary but will do little to prevent further climate change. The policies we adopt at the local, national, and international levels can help save us, though. The actions we take now can help preserve the planet as we know it not just for our grandchildren, but even for our children. A new unit of housing in Ward 3 reduces the need to build a new unit of housing in distant commuter suburbs. An apartment building with family units built in Cleveland Park means that a housing development does not need to be built in Warrenton. That alone could mean hundreds of fewer car commutes per day which translates to many thousands of car commutes per year. But we cannot prevent those lengthy car commutes without building more housing.

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As residents of a larger community - the District - we must work to do our part to add housing throughout Ward 3, including Cleveland Park. I have advocated for this for four years on ANC 3C and will continue to do so if re-elected.

3a) If yes, what are some of the ways in which your Single Member District and your broader Advisory Neighborhood Commission area can add housing?

I believe the best place to add housing is on Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park. In 3C04, there is room for more housing at the Park-n-Shop and above the commercial strip. I support rezoning the commercial strip for 5-6 story mixed use buildings. While some in our community will find this to be heresy and the equivalent of demanding that Cleveland Park be flooded with skyscrapers, this proposal is still substantially shorter than many of the residential buildings in our neighborhood, including several on Connecticut Avenue. I believe our community is talented and creative enough to develop thoughtful ways to add housing on the commercial strip while maintaining the historic character of our neighborhood.

4) ANC 3C includes the Woodley Park Historic District and most of the Cleveland Park Historic District, while 3F includes part of the Cleveland Park HD (Sedgwick & Tilden Gardens). How will you approach Historic Preservation applications in your SMD (if applicable) and in your ANC generally?

As attorney, I believe precedent and process matter. That means holding each applicant to the same standard, regardless of whether they are a personal friend or an unknown developer. I've seen quite a bit of Historic Preservation applications over the past few years as the Commissioner for 3C04 and I think ANC 3C can do better. We must review each and every application fairly. We must also only review each application in relation to the historic guidelines. We must never use "historic preservation" as a cudgel to extract unrelated concessions. And we must be transparent with the applicant and not surprise them at the last minute conditioning our approval on a novel ANC-proposed change to their plan.

5) What steps would you take to make your ANC more transparent, inclusive and engaged with your community?

We should continue with online participation. Online participation during the pandemic has greatly increased the variety of viewpoints at ANC 3C's meetings. Neighbors who would normally be commuting or home with family responsibilities have been able to join ANC 3C virtually to let us know what they care about. Once we are through the pandemic, I hope we will be able to adopt a hybrid model of in-person and online meetings to ensure continued participation and inclusion.

ANC 3C should post draft resolutions on the ANC website when it posts the agenda. Too often, applicants and neighbors are surprised about what ANC 3C proposes. These draft

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resolutions should include a standardized history of the application before the ANC, including what ANC commissioners requested and when, how the applicant responded, and what, if anything, the relevant agency has stated about the application so far. This will increase the precedential value of what ANC 3C produces and will demonstrate ANC 3C's commitment to fairness and transparency.

I have tried to increase engagement with the ANC by hosting office hours and keeping people apprised of what is going on through [Facebook](#). Moving forward, I would like to engage more with the various community organizations in our neighborhood. I have presented before the Ordway Gardens Board and the Cleveland Park Citizens Association and am happy to do so for other community and building organizations. While we may not always agree, I promise to always be open and honest with you.

6) What else do you want neighbors to know about you and why you are running to represent them?

I'm running for re-election for a number of reasons. I want to continue to advocate on behalf of 3CO4 to make sure that when decisions are made about Cleveland Park, we're not left out or dismissed as we have been in the past. I also want to continue to be a voice of reason that pushes back against those in our community who disdain renters or view us as less worthy of having a say about the community we've chosen. In addition, I want to ensure that projects that I have helped initiate, such as the Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lanes Study, and projects that I have helped guide, such as the Cleveland Park Streetscape and Drainage Improvement Project, have positive effects for our little slice of the neighborhood.

Over the past 22 years of working and living in Cleveland Park, I've gotten to know many residents, business owners, and others who work and shop in our neighborhood. I still run into folks who remember me as a teenager working in my dad's shop, Parcel Plus. (He's doing well and highly recommends retirement.) I am committed to open communication, sustainability, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and ensuring a vibrant business corridor along Connecticut Avenue. Cleveland Park has a unique historic, leafy charm that we can maintain as we grow as a neighborhood in an increasingly bustling and world-class city.

Please reach out with any questions - beaufinleyanc@gmail.com. In addition, I have a web page: <https://www.facebook.com/BeauFinleyANC3CO4>. It is accessible to those without Facebook accounts.

And finally, if you find me at the bottom of your ballot, please vote for me. Thank you.

Use as much space as needed in your responses. Please save your responses to PDF format, include your last name in the file name, and email to cpsmartgrowth@gmail.com by 5pm, October 5th. Thank you!

About Cleveland Park Smart Growth

CP Smart Growth is a community of over 500 Cleveland Park-area residents who share an interest in promoting and discussing urbanist issues. Our mission is to advance smart growth policies in Cleveland Park to ensure an economically vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and socially inclusive neighborhood. We do this through education, organizing, and advocacy.

Learn more at cpsmartgrowth.com