



CLEVELAND PARK
SMART GROWTH

2020 ANC Candidate Endorsements

Cleveland Park Smart Growth, a community group with members in Cleveland Park, Woodley Park, Van Ness and the surrounding areas, asked candidates in ANC 3C and 3F to respond to a questionnaire focused on local issues like the Connecticut Avenue Reversible Lanes study, housing and ANC transparency.

There are three races in these two commission areas where more than one candidate is on the ballot: 3C05, 3C08 and 3F05.

Cleveland Park Smart Growth enthusiastically endorses Sauleh Siddiqui in 3C05 and Ryan Keefe in 3F05.

Full responses to the candidate questionnaires can be found [here](#).

3C05

In ANC 3C, single member district 3C05 is an open seat that covers the Broadmoor, the west side of Connecticut Ave from Newark to Rodman Streets, up to Wisconsin Avenue and to the border of Hearst Park. The candidates in this race are **Sauleh Siddiqui** and **Trish Berman**. A third candidate, Meena Aladdin, appears on the ballot but has since dropped out of the race. Both Siddiqui and Berman responded to our questionnaire.

Transportation

On transportation, Siddiqui articulated an approach based on the Complete Streets approach and is committed to apportioning more of our public infrastructure to more sustainable modes.

My approach to our physical transportation infrastructure stems from the idea of Complete Streets. Complete Streets is a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. If the physical infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people using buses is not safe or adequate, we must improve it in order to promote equity... Currently, Connecticut Avenue is designed solely for car commuters and not the community or other users of the public infrastructure. We need to shift the balance away from car infrastructure towards more sustainable infrastructure. - Siddiqui

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Siddiqui said he would prioritize protected bicycle lanes on Connecticut Ave and noted interest and support for the lane configuration "[Concept E](#)" developed by the CPSG Connecticut Ave Working Group.

Berman highlighted her concern about the safety issues brought by the reversible lanes, but did not endorse bike lanes.

*While I lean towards alleviating reversible lanes, I also have concerns that the result may cause other safety issues. For example, frustrated drivers cutting through the side streets at high speeds. - **Berman***

On a related topic the candidates addressed how they would approach making D.C. less car-dependent. Berman focused on the pandemic's impact on our transit system.

*The policy which I think will be most important for the city to pursue to help reduce car dependency will be to provide safety and cleaning protocols for metro and buses. The public must be reassured that the public transportation systems are safe to ride. - **Berman***

Siddiqui noted his experience as an academic studying transportation systems and called for an increase in transit service and multimodal options like bike lanes.

*I would use my experience in urban transit to improve public transit in Cleveland Park by encouraging the city to increase Metro and bus frequency and safety. Second, the city needs to construct protected bicycle lanes, which make it easier for people to bicycle between city hubs. - **Siddiqui***

Housing

On housing there was a clear contrast in looking at the problem: does our area need more housing for a growing city? Siddiqui believes there is a need, as well as a benefit, to adding new homes in our neighborhood.

*I agree with Councilmember Mary Cheh when she says that all of Ward 3 needs more housing and more affordable housing. In fact, our neighborhood contributing towards more housing will help reduce the gentrification going on in other parts of the city, help the city grow sustainably, and increase foot traffic to local businesses. - **Siddiqui***

Berman questioned the premise, noting that effects of the pandemic are not yet known and more housing may not be needed in D.C.

Whether new housing is necessary for our growing city should be revisited and more recent data should be analyzed. Pre-Covid expected growth in the city had begun to

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*slow and during this pandemic there is evidence that families have relocated away from urban centers. - **Berman***

The candidates also differed on where new housing should go in our neighborhood. Siddiqui mentions Connecticut Ave as the most likely starting point. He cited the Macklin project at Newark and Connecticut as a good example, and noted Berman's opposition to this project.

*We should welcome well-designed apartments along Connecticut Avenue, like the Macklin project, which I support but my opponent does not. Such projects promote equity and are good for business and the planet. The proposal to expand Inclusionary Zoning that requires a percentage of affordable units for upzoned properties is something I will be looking into as well. - **Siddiqui***

Berman would look to the reuse of closed buildings as the first place to add new housing, but does not cite any possibilities in Cleveland Park.

*I would like to see investigation into creative reuse of existing structures. Spaces that have closed due to the pandemic could possibly be redeveloped into affordable housing options. It is very possible that hotels, offices and other building closures may be able to serve the need for more housing in the immediate area and greater Ward 3. - **Berman***

Historic Preservation

On historic preservation, both candidates offer support for continued stewardship of the Cleveland Park Historic District. Siddiqui notes that future changes to our commercial area should balance preservation goals with other public priorities.

*I think we can make balanced decisions about historic preservation that ensure our community maintains its historic look and feel. This is one area where our neighborhood excels. We have a strong track record of preserving historic architecture on our residential streets. However, we have recently had to make decisions about historic preservation in our commercial area. Here, we need to balance preservation and other public policy priorities. - **Siddiqui***

Berman indicated a view on preservation that would look at HPRB applications on a case by case basis and listen to others.

*I would approach Historic Preservation applications with an open mind and view each application through its own unique lens. I would educate myself on each aspect of the application and listen carefully to those who are trained in historic preservation as well as the stakeholders and give weight to the needs of each particular project. - **Berman***

ANC Transparency

Siddiqui articulated a clear view that community involvement in ANC activities is a priority that is not being addressed. He supports continued virtual interaction post-COVID as a supplement to in-person meetings. He also expressed support for an expanded ANC committee system with community participation.

*The interactive online option should be continued even if in-person resumes. This increases participation and is fair to people who have work or family obligations that cannot show up in person. I would also advocate for more transparency in general by publicly posting draft resolutions at the same time commissioners share them with their fellow commissioners. This gives the public a sense of where the debate is headed and time to weigh in. I would also like our specific ANC 3C to have more community input through a more robust committee structure. We have experts among us who live in our community, but 3C has only one active committee. There are no community committees focused on housing, transportation, pedestrian infrastructure, schools, parks, or recreation. - **Siddiqui***

Berman said she would listen to her constituents, be engaged on the neighborhood listserv and hold office hours.

*I will always need to make certain that all are included in the discussion about any issues they consider important. I will listen and learn. I will respond to all questions and when possible, hold in person or virtual office hours on a regular basis. My intention is to use the Cleveland Park listserv as well as a newsletter specifically for my SMD to communicate with my constituents. - **Berman***

Endorsement: Sauleh Siddiqui

Sauleh Siddiqui's approach to transportation and housing resonates with our urbanist view. Trish Berman's responses seem rooted in the status quo, and perhaps even in a time gone by. Issues of equity, sustainability and urban vibrancy require the forward-looking approach exhibited in Siddiqui's answers. Siddiqui demonstrated that he has thought about these issues comprehensively and is engaged and up to speed on what is happening around our neighborhood. His commitment to more community involvement is a breath of fresh air in what has been an opaque ANC for many years. Berman's answers were more superficial and non-committal and lacked any voice for urbanist issues.

Siddiqui is active in the community as a board member of the Cleveland Park Citizens Association, chairing their Transportation Committee, and a volunteer for the effort to stand up a Main Street organization in Cleveland Park. **Sauleh Siddiqui is well prepared and ready to work for the future of the neighborhood and is our choice for ANC 3C05.**

3F05

ANC single member district 3F05, which surrounds the area near Politics and Prose Bookstore, is being contested by Ryan Keefe and Claudette David. Only Ryan Keefe returned a questionnaire. Ryan is a well known advocate for urbanist issues not only in his neighborhood, but in Ward 3 generally, serving on the Steering Committee of Ward 3 Vision and testifying in favor of the Macklin project in Cleveland Park.

I have spent years attending ANC meetings across DC to advocate for better projects and policies as well as to learn many of the best practices in how the diverse set of commissions operates in all 8 of our Wards. I hope to use my passion for advocacy and knowledge of DC Government to make government work better for our current residents and for those who will come after us.

Keefe is a strong supporter of bike lanes on Connecticut Avenue and elsewhere and will prioritize increasing the frequency of bus service. His answers to our questions display a deep knowledge of housing and transportation issues and commitment to equity. Calling for more housing in Ward 3 and in ANC 3F he says:

Growth can not only strengthen our neighborhood social and cultural ties but our local business community as well that have struggled in past years even before Covid-19 as Ward 3 has become less of a regional destination. Allowing more growth can not only have a positive impact on our neighborhood but help to relieve the housing crisis regionally and displacement that has been happening across the rest of DC. - Keefe

Endorsement: Ryan Keefe

While we regret not having the opportunity to hear from Claudette David, **we enthusiastically endorse Ryan Keefe in the race for 3F05.**