

**Joint Meeting of the Community Advisory Committee and
Community Campus Plan Task Force with Dr. Sidney Ribeau
7 October 2010**

Attendees

Mrs. Jenny Robertson, Pleasant Plains Resident
Mr. John Robertson, Pleasant Plains Resident
Mr. Kenny Gilmore, Owner, Howard Deli
Mr. Lawrence Guyot, LeDroit Park Resident
Ms. Alice Aughtry, LeDroit Park Resident
Ms. Sylvia Robinson, Emergence Community Arts Collective
Ms. Anita Rice, LeDroit Park Resident
Mr. Thomas Dawes, Development Corporation of Columbia Heights
Mr. Patrick Nelson, Georgia Avenue Community Development Task Force
Rev. E. Gail Anderson-Holness, Chair ANC 1B
Mr. Darren Jones, President, Pleasant Plains Civic Association
Mr. Richard Myers, President LeDroit Park Civic Association
Mr. Tony Norman, Chair ANC 1B Design Committee
Bishop Ginwright, Highway Christian Church
Mrs. Ginwright, Highway Christian Church
Mr. Kelvin Esters, Pleasant Plains Civic Association
Mr. Robert Brannum, President, Bloomingdale Civic Association
Ms. Danielle Ricks, LeDroit Park Resident
Mr. Lenwood Johnson, ANC 1A10
Re. Dr. Earl Trent, Pastor, Florida Avenue Baptist Church
Ms. Shari Rastegan, Pleasant Plains Resident
Mr. Derrek Niec-Williams, Brailsford and Dunlavy
Ms. Sybongile Cook, Executive Office of the Mayor
Ms. Maxine Brown-Roberts, D.C. Office of Planning
Mr. Howard Wilson, Howard University Alumnus
Ms. Susan McKenzie, Office of the SVP of Howard University
Mr. Christopher Hopson, Office of the SVP of Howard University
Ms. Diane Kenney, Office of the SVP of Howard University
Ms. Marian Jones, Howard University Community Association
Dr. Steven Johnson, Howard University Special Events Coordinator
Dr. Ernest Quimby, Professor, Sociology/Anthropology, Howard University
Mr. A.K. Adams, GADGET Center
Ms. Maybelle Taylor Bennett, Director, Howard University Community Association
Ms. Terry Thompson Mallett, Howard University Hospital
Dr. Hassan Minor, SVP Howard University

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. and was held at the Banneker Recreation Center on Georgia Avenue, N.W.

Meeting Highlights

Following opening remarks from Maybelle Bennett and introductions of members in the audience, Dr. Minor brought greetings and introduced President Sidney Ribeau.

The President began by describing the importance of his meeting the members of the community. He went on to describe one of the difficulties the University was facing, namely, the loss of 25% of the value of the endowment due to the economic recession. He told the audience he was from Detroit and how the official unemployment rate was 30% there, and the unofficial unemployment rate was 50%. He said that the lesson he learned from hardships like these was that the strengths that emerge despite such problems reside with the people in the community, and that all successes are collective.

The President described his vision for Howard University:

Howard University Becomes a Stronger Research Institution

- Howard needs to be a more involved research University. The University is being compared nowadays, not just to HBCUs but to Vanderbilt, Georgetown and Washington University. His vision is for Howard to become one of the best metropolitan research institutions in the nation.
- Howard is competing for students who are not just looking at HBCUs, but who are applying and gaining acceptance into schools like Harvard, Yale and MIT. As a result, Howard's educational quality and facilities need to be attractive and be competitive with those of universities like these.
- Howard needs to be able to recruit outstanding faculty members, and to do so, it needs to have the facilities, compensation and classrooms that will draw them to the University. Teaching, learning and research quality all require good faculty. The demographics of the University's faculty reveal that within the next five years, 60% of the faculty will be eligible to retire. The University is exploring the development of a retention retirement program that will help to keep faculty by allowing them to teach one or two courses without carrying a full 40 hour work week.
- The compensation currently offered to the faculty is insufficient for them to afford housing in the area, and the President would like to be able to develop affordable housing for faculty. He described his experience at UCLA where the university had to purchase property in the areas around the campus and develop it into faculty housing. He spoke of the value to the students who benefit from one-on-one contact with faculty who reside in close proximity to the school, and who can spend more quality time with students.
- Howard has a rich tradition upon which to build as an institution whose faculty has high expectations for their students. At Howard, the experience for students is intended to be a transformative one, unlike that of some other

institutions where the assumption is that students are enrolled because of affirmative action.

- STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects should be a focus. The University has 181 academic programs, which are more programs than can be sustained, and some decisions must be made about where to place academic emphasis so that the University can invest in these areas in a manner that will make a difference.
- Translational medical research will need to focus on diseases like diabetes, cancer and hypertension, conditions that are prevalent in the African American community.
- Research in other issues that disproportionately affect African Americans should be considered areas of concentration, in keeping with Howard's mission. There is no reason, for example, why students should have to go to the University of Michigan for expertise in urban education.

Howard University Becomes a Partner in Developing the Community

- The University's presence in the community should contribute to an improvement in the quality of life in the community, and this can only be done through collaboratively working with other partners. This should be reflected in :
 - the strengthening of schools (the President described his experience in turning around a struggling middle school in Toledo, Ohio);
 - an improvement in retail offerings;
 - an improvement in safety; and
 - the development of affordable housing.

Howard University Expands Its International Presence

Howard University can strengthen its Diaspora Studies, with emphases on African Americans, the Caribbean and Africa. The University can position itself to be a leader in the issues that affect these populations.

Community Comments

Lawrence Guyot complimented the President on his remarks made at the funeral of Dr. Ron Walters, which was held at Shiloh Baptist Church. Dr. Minor informed the audience of Dr. Walters' intention to return to Howard University after having spent some years at the University of Maryland. President Ribeau acknowledged that Dr. Walters was the kind of faculty member whose brilliance actually made a difference in the lives of students and whole communities. It is this kind of example that the University hopes to replicate within this community.

John Robertson described the numerous adverse impacts that can affect a neighborhood's residents who live within close proximity to the University. He lives close to Drew Hall, and described the noisy student gatherings outside of the building on Fridays and Saturdays until 2:00 a.m. and the apparent inaction of the Campus Police who are frequently on the scene. He went on to describe the late hours of band practice, the University's failure to clean up after games, even though there is quite an effort to clean up prior to games. He expressed concern about the fact that many students he witnessed seem to have a lack of basic respect for community members, and some engage in illegal drug activity in the alley behind Drew Hall. Students need to be held accountable for their actions. Mr. Robertson acknowledged that he knew he was living near a university when he moved to Gresham Place, and was aware of the fact that these are young people. However, he expected the University to be able to hold them accountable for their behavior off campus. Mrs. Robertson said that some of the concerns could be alleviated if the logistics changed. For example, the large gatherings that take place when busses unload after returning from an athletic event would no longer become an issue if the busses were to unload elsewhere, like the interior of the campus rather than in areas adjacent to residences.

The President indicated that he would have staff contact the RAs and have them address these issues. He did point out that to some extent Howard is dealing with a different kind of student, but that nevertheless, they must be held accountable for their behavior. Steve Johnson acknowledged that Mr. Robertson had come up with good recommendations in the past for remedying disturbing situations, and invited him to work with him on the issues being raised in the meeting.

Kelvin Esters complained about the maintenance of the fence around the parking lot located between Hobart and Harvard Streets. He noticed that the maintenance of the fence had deteriorated over time, and said that trash was not being picked up regularly.

Harold Wilson noted that Georgia Avenue has never looked like a thriving area, and asked what the University was doing to address that. The Howard Town Center, and the new development that the University hopes will take place at the Tech Center were mentioned as initiatives that were being undertaken.

Sylvia Robinson expressed an interest in seeing an initiative develop where Howard students would learn about the neighborhood's history and culture, and have opportunities for volunteering in the community. She lauded the work of Dr. Quimby's Community Technical Assistance Project classes where students work regularly in the community as a part of his course offering.

Anita Rice acknowledged that students have changed over the years and are not as mature as many adults think they should be. She opined that perhaps residents could help teach students about the need for respect. Ms. Rice went on to ask whether Howard was considering purchasing properties in the area in order to build housing for faculty. President Ribeau responded that the University already

has assets and needs to figure out exactly what the University needs and where it needs to go. He also mentioned again that it will be necessary to enter into partnerships with others when it comes to the development of the University's assets.

Lawrence Guyot said that he felt the plan that is to be submitted to the Zoning Commission is something the University and the community will need to agree upon early, and the University should use all of the media at its disposal to publicize it (e.g. WHUT, WHUR, etc.). He recognized that the campus master plan is part of a much larger strategic process that should not end with the filing of the campus plan with the Zoning Commission. Finally, he recommended that Howard's buildings should have exterior signage that allows visitors to the campus and passers-by to readily identify each building.

Tony Norman acknowledged that this meeting with the President was a historic meeting and mentioned that the reason why he thought the Community Advisory Committee worked so well was because Howard has ensured that a high-level decision-maker attends the meetings. He encouraged the President to agree that that practice would continue in the future.

Kenny Gilmore asked the President if he would allow students to use their dining cards in community retail establishments like his own. Dr. Minor responded that the University was testing the technology that would allow that to happen. Mr. Gilmore also mentioned that if needed, he could arrange for the University to gain access to the grounds of Walter Reed.

Richard Myers announced the LeDroit Park Community Day, which was being organized by the University's Community Association and Student Affairs departments in cooperation with the LeDroit Park Civic Association. The activities would focus on beautification and clean-up, and would provide an opportunity for students to meet with their resident neighbors.

Patrick Nelson noted that the University owns vacant properties it could make available to businesses at a lower than market rate rent, and might want to consider doing so during the process of redevelopment. He also suggested that the developer of the Town Center might consider earmarking space for new entrepreneurs and minority businesses at lower rents.