

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER—June 2013

Dear Neighbors,

At long last, the **District has a plan for replacing our demolished recreation center**. At the Eastland Gardens Civic Association meeting on May 21, DPR's Chief of Staff, John Stokes, walked us through a timeline that would have a recreation center co-located with Kenilworth ES built no later than April 2016. There's a long way to go yet, and we must continue to stay involved to make sure we get what we have been promised, but this is good news.

It was only because of our community's involvement that we did not lose the recreation center forever. You may recall that last year DPR suggested that we go along with their idea of using the money that had been set-aside for rebuilding our recreation center to build a recreation center in River Terrace instead. We insisted that DPR rebuild the recreation center in *our* neighborhood, as promised. We also insisted that DPR explore the possibility of building it on the same site as the school because legal issues with NPS could forever prevent rebuilding the recreation center in Kenilworth Park. **DPR is now implementing our idea!**

In contrast, the future of Kenilworth ES building on the same site is unclear after DCPS closes the school later this month. The day before our May meeting, the Mayor's Office issued a press release: "*Gray Administration Announces School Buildings Being Made Available to Charters for Use*". DCPS's Shanita Burney explained at our meeting that the District had created a website for community organizations—including public charter schools—to express interest in leasing the closed school buildings. The press release states that educational uses will be prioritized for all buildings. Deputy Mayor for Education, Abigail Smith, is now in charge of what happens.

Some schools were put on a list of buildings available for *long-term* lease—DC law requires that public charter schools get the first opportunity to use any school on that list. Other schools, including the Kenilworth ES building, were put on a *short-term* lease list. Most public charter schools will not apply to use a building on a short-term lease, so **the District's decision to put the Kenilworth ES building on the short-term lease list effectively prevents the use of the building as a school.**

Can you follow this logic? Because so many parents in our neighborhood decided to send their children to public charter schools rather than Kenilworth ES...enrollment got so low that DCPS decided in January to close the school...but DCPS is so strangely confident that parental demand to enroll their kids in a reopened Kenilworth ES will triple between now and 2017...that DCPS has decided not to make the building available for long-term lease to the kinds of public charter schools that have been so attractive to the parents in our neighborhood!

DCPS's assertion that Kenilworth ES will reopen in 2017 is not credible. The real question facing our community now is: ***would we rather have a public charter school open in our neighborhood or would we rather have the building used as something other than a school?***

-The Eastland Gardens Civic Association Executive Committee

To request City Services, dial 311 or visit 311.dc.gov

MEETING REMINDER!

**EASTLAND GARDENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, June 18, 6:30pm
@KENILWORTH ELEMENTARY**

Focus this month:

Transportation

Guest Speakers from DDOT will answer your questions!



- We will not meet again until Tuesday, September 17
- Elections will be held on November 19...interested?
- We still need ANC (7D02) representation...interested?