

ANC 2B DUPONT CIRCLE ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009 Brookings Institution

The December Regular Meeting of the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (Commission or ANC 2B) was called to order by Vice Chair Stephens at 7:00 pm. The Commissioners identified their Single Member Districts (SMDs). Present were: Mike Feldstein (2B01), Bob Meehan (2B03), Jack Jacobson (2B04), Victor Wexler (2B05), Phil Carney (2B07), Will Stephens (2B08) and Ramon Estrada (2B09). Commissioner Bhavna Patel (2B02) was not present. Commissioner Mike Silverstein (2B06) was not present. The Vice Chair noted the presence of a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Estrada made a motion to approve both October and November minutes, with technical corrections. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Public Announcements

Commissioner Stephens asked for volunteers from the public to join the Commission's committees.

Commissioner Meehan noted that DDOT would conduct a walkthrough on Sunday, December 13 at 10 am ensuring establishments are providing wheelchair access.

Robin Diener and Rick Busch thanked the Commission for its support regarding 1841 16th Street NW.

A representative of Jack Evans' office briefly spoke about graffiti and rats in the neighborhood.

Erika Wadlington, Advocacy & Outreach Coordinator, Friends of Choice in Urban Schools announced it would hold an event on January 9 at the DC convention center (dccharterexpo.org).

Representatives of DDOT briefly announced that DDOT would address public questions when Director Gabe Klein arrives at the meeting.

Commissioner Estrada thanked Rick Busch for his service as DCC President for the past three years.

Public Safety

Commissioner Jacobson noted that MPD representatives were not present. He noted that crime was up since the last meeting.

The Dupont Circle Public Safety Committee normally meets every third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) station at 1620 V Street NW.

Commissioner Carney noted that the GLLU was disbanded. He noted that Chief Lanier said that MPD received more applicants for training in a separate unit outside of Dupont Circle.

Committee Reports

17th Street Working Group

Commissioner Jacobson asked to address this item when Gabe Klein of DDOT arrives.

ABRA Policy Committee

Commissioner Estrada announced that the Committee is seeking volunteers.

Preservation & Development Committee

There were no announcements.

Community Development Committee

There were no announcements.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Stephens Adams Morgan ANC 1C recently launched a new website:
www.anc1c.org.

General

Commissioner Estrada noted that Jeff Coudriet from Jack Evans' office requested ANC 2B's position on creating an extended parking permit program. An urgent hearing will take place tomorrow. Commissioner Estrada expressed concern over the effect on our neighborhood. Commissioner Stephens asked that the Commission craft a motion during the meeting.

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

Resolved, that ANC 2B requests that the Department of Public Works/Committee on Public Works and Transportation conduct an impact study of the effects on neighboring Ward 2 of implementing EPP in Ward 1 and delay further consideration and implementation until the ANC reviews the results of the study.

Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Request for public input into possible projects for Dupont Down Under from the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. Neil Goradia.

Neil Goradia briefly presented information on an RFP solicitation for Dupont Down Under. He noted that the Mayor's office would like to issue the solicitation quickly. He asked for the Commission's input on criteria for the project. He noted that they would review bidders for the RFP in the second week of January 2010. More information can be found at dcbiz.dc.gov. Neil Goradia also mentioned that the developer's presentation for the West End Library will take place on December 17 at 6:30 PM at 2425 N Street NW.

Commissioner Meehan inquired why the process was accelerated and who gave the order. Mr. Goradia responded that the Deputy Mayor gave the order. Commissioner Meehan noted that this plan would bypass community and business ideas and previous discussions. Commissioner Estrada suggested holding two meetings with the Deputy Mayor. A representative of Washington Project for the Arts noted that various organizations have been talking about this project with ANC 2B for the last five years, and that this solicitation bypasses community discussion. Commissioner Jacobson asked why this project was taking place during the holiday season. He pointed out that the project has already taken decades and could wait till after the holiday season. Representatives stated that they were instructed to pursue the RFP solicitation. Commissioner Jacobson stated that this was an insufficient answer and requested an answer within the week.

Commissioner Stephens made a motion to request the Mayor's office to push off the solicitation for one month. Commissioner Jacobson made a friendly amendment that the motion should not say "one month", but rather follow normal processes for developing this space. Commissioner Stephens requested a Commissioner to craft a motion during the meeting.

Commissioner Jacobson made the following motion:

Resolved that the Dupont Circle ANC 2B requests that the Office of Planning & Economic Development follow a regular community input and RFP process for the development of "Dupont Down Under;"

Be it further resolved, that the Commission requests a formal response from the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development for our inquiry as to why it is necessary to conduct an accelerated process for developing this space, which will limit the opportunity for proper planning and community input;

Be it further resolved, that ANC2B requests to be formally involved in the RFP review process and we request to have a seat and be included on any city review panel for Dupont Down Under.

Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

The Commission requested Mr. Goradia to attend the January 2010 meeting regarding this matter.

Discussion with Gabe Klein, DDOT Director and John Thomas, UFA director re: 14th/17th/18th/U Street projects, 15th St. bike lane, DDOT communication & coordination, speedhumps, ginkgo tree removal, pay-by-phone parking

Commissioner Stephens introduced topics for discussion and then asked Commissioner Meehan to give a status update on trees cut down in the neighborhood. Commissioner Meehan attended two walkthroughs. He stated he would present motions regarding the tree issue and wheelchair access. Commissioner Stephens noted that DDOT does good work on projects, but that the notice and communication to the community could be improved.

17th Street Reconstruction Streetscape

Director Klein noted that DDOT funds must be acted upon quickly and projects must be completed within 26 months. He noted that DDOT must handle \$125 million of new projects which nobody had foreseen. He stated that DDOT could have done a better job in communicating with the community.

Pay by phone

Director Klein stated that the program is on track to go, but the issue is with DDOT lawyers and its contract with ACS (which manages metered parking). He noted that the pilot will take place citywide by the end of next year. The initial pilot would take place at Union Station, K Street and Dupont Circle.

Bikeshare/Bike lanes

DDOT is rolling out a bigger bikeshare program. Director Klein stated the bike lane program aims to have a zero fatality metric for cyclists.

Speedhumps

Commissioner Stephens stated that the Commission was concerned that DDOT was not following policy as written regarding speedhumps. Director Klein stated that he inherited a formal traffic policy. He noted that the policy is problematic and would take three to four years to conduct a traffic study. He noted that the result was an informal policy to provide relief now. He noted that DDOT will look at speedhumps if you get 75% of people on your block to sign a petition, DDOT will look at speedhumps for your street. He stated that DDOT prefers to do traffic studies. DDOT has budgeted for traffic studies over the next three years. DDOT will conduct the studies and communicate with the ANCs. He noted DDOT would let ANCs know when a traffic study would happen.

Ginkgo Trees

Residents from Corcoran Street expressed concern over the recent cutting down of six trees (five more are marked for cutting down). The Ginko female tree removal policy is administered by the Urban Forestry Administration. A representative explained that the formal policy requires that the owner of the property give approval and a petition be filed with at least 60% of the property owners agreeing to cut down the tree. The petition must then go the City Councilmember and to the ANC for its opinion. A representative also noted that general tree structure and health are taken into consideration when cutting down trees. The Commission suggested reviewing the issue at a separate meeting.

17th Street Upgrades

Commissioner Jacobson expressed his displeasure with the lack of communication from DDOT regarding upgrades. Director Klein stated he would go back and dissect what happened regarding 17th Street and ANC letters regarding canopies, wheel chair access, and effects on businesses. Commissioner Jacobson asked him to look at the staging of projects and their time periods and reduce parking meter fares along 17th Street. He expressed concern that DDOT's lack of communication and project timetables would have a negative economic impact on 17th Street businesses.

Commissioner Meehan made the following motion:

Resolution to support a tree plan for the 17th St Streetscape project

Whereas the design of the 17th St Streetscape Project included installing new types of tree boxes that would permit tree roots to expand in a five foot strip under the sidewalk along the curb without pushing up the sidewalk in the pedestrian right of way, thus encouraging faster and healthier tree growth, and

Whereas the specifications for such new tree boxes requires the removal of all existing trees in the sidewalk sections between roads and alleys where the new tree boxes would be installed, and

Whereas these new tree boxes were to be installed in the business strip from Riggs Place to P St thus removing all existing trees except one, and

Whereas the overall engineering requirements of the project also required the elimination of additional trees, resulting in the tagging, on November 30, 2009, with orange ribbons of a total of 39 trees in response to the agreement reached at the November 23, 2009 public meeting to show the community the potential impact of the project on the 17th St tree canopy, and

Whereas vociferous community and business objections to such massive removal of healthy, mature trees caused DDOT to remove the orange ribbons on December 1, 2009, to prepare on December 4, 2009 an alternative tree plan that called for the removal of only seven trees, and to

conduct a walkthrough in the sleet and snow Saturday morning, December 5, 2009 to show the impact of the revised plan to 20 residents and business leaders, and

Whereas the walkthrough resulted in a much better understanding of the health of trees on 17th St and of the merits of installing the new tree boxes in four stretches along 17th St, now

Therefore, ANC 2B resolves to support the following tree plan for the 17th St Streetscape project:

1. For the length of 17th St between New Hampshire Ave and Q St, remove two trees on the East side between McDonalds and Artistic Shoes and install two new tree boxes in this area. The sapling in front of McDonalds must be removed to accommodate a doublewide catch basin and the tree in front of Artistic Shoes should be removed because it is severely damaged by large trucks maneuvering at the opening of the alley. Its removal allows for the installation of the new tree box system between Corcoran St and the alley to the North.

2. For the length of 17th St between Q St and Church St: remove the tree on the East side in front of JRs in order to install a double-wide catch basin. Install the new tree box system between the PEPCO box in front of JRs and the alley to the North. Try to plant two trees between JRs and Jack's. This means reopening a tree box in front of Jack's. In addition, to make up for the removal of the tree in front of JRs, plant one to two trees along the side of JRs on Church St. Also add a second tree on the South side of Church St.

3. For the length of 17th St between Church St and P St on the East side: remove the sapling in front of Yogato and the sick rosebud in front of Komi. Install the new tree box system between Church St and the alley South of Church St and include three tree boxes.

4. For the length of 17th St between Church St and P St on the West side:

1. For the area in front of the Copley Plaza (Church St South to the alley, there are six healthy trees on the lawn in front of the Copley Plaza (6 crepe myrtles and one magnolia) which already provide a canopy over the sidewalk. Remove the tree in the tree box next to Church St because it is badly damaged and competes with the trees on the Copley Plaza lawn. Remove this and the empty tree box. Install the new tree box system under the sidewalk but do not reinstall the tree boxes until the trees on the lawn fail. This is an investment in better street trees for the future.

2. For the area between the alley and P St to the South, remove the tall tree in front of 1508 17th on the basis that it has less than 10 years to live. Also remove the sapling at the corner of P and 17th in order to install the new tree box system between the alley and Church St. Replant two trees.

5. For the length of 17th between P St and O St on the East side: install a new tree box in front of 1413-1415 17th St.

6. For the length of 17th between P St and O St on the West side: remove the tree and tree box in front of the steps leading to Brunswick House and move the tree box and a new tree South of the steps.

7. For the length of 17th between O St and Mass Av on the East side: remove the large, decaying mulberry tree near the alley inside the sidewalk. This is an invasive “weed” tree and also creates a choke point there in the sidewalk.

8. For the length of 17th between O St and Mass Av on the West side: remove the tree and tree box opposite the South side of O St in order to accommodate a new street crossing with handicap ramp and a double-wide catch basin. Re install the tree box and tree to the South. Plant a new tree in the empty tree box at the SW corner of 17th and Mass Av.

9. For the full length of 17th, use caution in removing and reinstalling curbing so as not to kill otherwise healthy trees.

10. Where roots are uplifting the sidewalk, use gradual concrete ramps for the minor upheavals and rubber matting for the extreme upheavals.

The ANC appreciates that DDOT is planting 11 additional trees within the streetscape area.

ANC recognizes that in segments of 17th Street in which the existing canopy is retained, DDOT'S innovative root protection system which will support large and longer-living trees will not be installed.

Furthermore, ANC 2B understands that construction may damage the existing canopy resulting in tree loss, but that in those section, saplings will be replaced without installation of an innovative root protection system.

Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. Commissioner Jacobson made a friendly amendment (reflected above). Commissioners Meehan and Carney accepted the motion. The motion carried 7-0-1 with Commissioner Jacobson abstaining.

Regulatory

Resolution urging renaming of Q Street NW between Connecticut Av NW and 19th Street “Diego D’Ambrosio Way.” (2B01)

Commissioner Feldstein made the following motion:

Resolution in Support of Q Street, NW, between Connecticut Ave. and 19th Street, be titled “Diego D’Ambrosio Way”

Whereas Diego D’Ambrosio, has for the past 47 years been a vital member of the District of Columbia and especially the Dupont Circle community.

Whereas Diego D’Ambrosio has owned and operated one of the, if not the longest standing businesses in the Dupont Circle area.

Whereas Diego D’Ambrosio business has served to bring the community together, acted as a catalysts for improvements, for social interchange and the overall growth and development of the social capital for the Dupont Circle area and the District as a whole.

Whereas since 1965 Diego D’Ambrosio, using his business as a base, has gone out of his way to keep the area clean and made special efforts to beautify the neighborhood.

Whereas a testament Diego D’Ambrosio is his well known title as the “Mayor of Dupont”.

Therefore be it resolved that Dupont Circle ANC 2B joins Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets in urging and supporting Q Street, NW, between Connecticut Ave. and 19th Street, be titled “Diego D’Ambrosio Way”.

Commissioner Meehan seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Request for Entertainment Endorsement for Bread and Brew, 1247 20th Street NW, to allow karaoke and acoustic music in basement. (2B06)

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

Whereas Bread & Brew, 1247 20th, St NW, has applied for an entertainment endorsement to allow karaoke and acoustic music in its basement;

Whereas this location has operated karaoke and acoustic music in the basement since prior licensees, and the above-referenced application will bring the license into ABRA compliance;

Therefore be it resolved that ANC 2B supports the application, for the basement only.

Commissioner Feldstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0)

Request for Substantial Change to ABC License No. ABRA-071179, El Tamarindo (1785 Fla. Ave. NW) for new 14-seat sidewalk cafe with hours Sun-Sat 11am-12am (1C07, across U St. from 2B08)

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

Whereas El Tamarindo (1785 Fla. Ave. NW) has applied for a Substantial Change to ABC License No. ABRA-071179 for new 14-seat sidewalk cafe with hours Sun-Sat 11am-12am;

Whereas El Tamarindo sits in ANC 1C, directly across the Florida/U Street intersection from ANC 2B, and the outdoor cafe would affect residents of U Street in ANC 2B;

Therefore be it resolved that ANC 2B protests the application on the basis of peace, order, and quiet, subject to the successful negotiation of a voluntary agreement or the amendment of the application to close the outdoor cafe at 11pm Sunday through Thursday (rather than 12:00am).

Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Representatives of El Tamarindo agreed verbally to change the closing hours of the outdoor cafe to 11pm Sunday through Thursday. We will be working with them to memorialize this in a Voluntary Agreement or have them amend their application accordingly. Once that is formalized, the Commission would plan to withdraw its protest.

Public space application for placement of a fixture (menu board) at Hotel Dupont/Cafe Dupont, 1500 New Hampshire Av NW. (2B04)

Commissioner Carney made the motion to approve the application and authorize a letter of support. Commissioner Meehan seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Public space application for placement of a payphone outside 1706 U Street NW (2B08)

The Commission took no action.

Presentation and request for letter of support for bond application for Mayfield Gentry Realty Administrators LLC, for renovation of 1522 K Street NW and conversion for office building to mixed-use office building and condominiums. Emery Matthews (2B05)

Representatives requested support for a bond application for renovations and a conversion at 1522 K Street NW. The applicants plan a redesign for a better work environment and energy efficiency. They stated that the project would be targeted at non-profits and would bring 400 to 500 new jobs to the area. Commissioner Meehan pointed out that there appear to be no restrictions

for the amount of space allocated to non-profits. Commissioner Stephens suggested taking no action. Commissioner Stephens suggested that the Commission take one month to review the matter in more detail. He asked the applicant to appear at the January 2010 meeting.

Application #ABRA-083265 for nightclub license (CN) for 1140 Hospitality LLC t/a Sweet Spot, 1140 19th St NW, for lounge offering mixed fare tapas food, music provided by DJ's and dance floor. Occupancy load ranges from 250 to 350. Hours: Sun-Thurs 8am-2am. Fri-Sat 8am-3am. Andrew Kline, atty. (2B02)

Commissioner Patel made the following motion:

Whereas 1140 Hospitality LLC t/a Sweet Spot, 1140 19th Street NW has applied for a nightclub license (CN) (occupancy no more than 225, hours Sun-Thurs 8 am - 2 am, fri-sat 8 am - 3 am), #ABRA- 083265;

Whereas it is located on one of the corridors in 2B of that is highly saturated with nightclubs

Whereas this corridor is approaching maximum security management capacity for MPD

Whereas this application should not serve as an example for additional applications and requests in the same corridor

Whereas Sweet Spot had no prior notice of these issues and concerns;

Be it Resolved that the ANC support the application for a night club license (CN)

Commissioner Stephens made a friendly amendment which is reflected above. Commissioners Meehan and Carney suggested protesting this on the basis of peace, order and quiet in terms of allocation of Police resources. Commissioner Stephens suggested taking no action on the application and then have the ABRA committee review and let ABRA know the Committee's thoughts. Commissioner Stephens stated that he would oppose a resolution supporting the application.

The motion failed (2-1-5) with Commissioners Jacobson and Feldstein voting in favor, Commissioner Patel abstaining, and Commissioners Meehan, Wexler, Carney, Stephens and Estrada voting in opposition.

Ana Maria's

The matter was not listed on the public agenda so the Commission could not take action on this matter. The applicant seeks support in renovating its building by adding an edition on the fifth

floor consisting of four condos which are not visible from the street. The applicant will appear at the January 2010 meeting.

Administrative/Financial Matters

Purchase of ad space in new DC Agenda

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

Resolved that ANC 2B spend an amount not to exceed \$2000 for ad space in the first several issues of the new DC Agenda.

Commissioner Meehan seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Desi Deschaine Memorial Internship

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

Whereas the Commission was deeply saddened by the passing of Desi Deschaine, a community activist who served most recently as the liaison to the Commission from the office of Ward 2 Council Member Jack Evans;

Whereas in July 2009, the Commission established a public policy internship position;

Therefore be it resolved that the Commission formally name the position as the Desi Deschaine Memorial Public Policy Internship in honor of Desi Deschaine's youthful and energetic civic activism and engagement;

Be it further resolved that the Commission allocate a total of \$1500 per year as an honorarium for the Desi Deschaine Memorial Public Policy Internship — \$500 for the Fall Semester (September 1st through December 31st), \$500 for the Spring Semester (January 1st through May 15th), and \$500 for the Summer Session (May 16th through August 31st) — beginning with Summer Session 2010;

Be it further resolved that the Commission shall aim to seek an exemplary graduate-level candidate in the area of urban planning, local government, or related fields for the Desi Deschaine Memorial Public Policy Internship, ideally for a commitment of one full calendar year;

Be it further resolved that the Commission post a description of the Desi Deschaine Memorial Public Policy Internship on the Commission's public website;

Be it further resolved that the Commission devise and approve a competitive process for selecting the awardee of the Desi Deschaine Memorial Public Policy Internship, no later than the Commission's February 2009 public meeting, in order to facilitate selection for the 2010 Summer Session.

Commissioner Feldstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Policy & Procedure

Commissioner Stephens made a motion to approve the manual circulated last month. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. Commissioner Estrada inquired about the appropriateness of committee officers. Commissioner Stephens tabled his motion. Commissioner Stephens circulated a proposed revised Policy & Procedures manual.

New Website Draft & Launch

The Executive Director will distribute a draft version of the new website by December 24th.

Letters

Commissioner Stephens requested all letters be completed by the weekend.

Commissioner Carney made a motion to buy a plaque in the amount not exceeding \$200, commemorating the Lambda Rising Bookstore, since it will close in the near future. Commissioner Feldstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

At 10:00 PM, Commissioner Stephens moved to adjourn the meeting, which passed by acclamation.

The next regular meeting of ANC 2B will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2009, 7:00 PM at the Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue, NW - 1st Floor, Falk Auditorium .

Respectfully submitted,

Alfred E. Blicher, Jr.
Executive Director
Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B
ADOPTED: January 13, 2009