

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
DUPONT CIRCLE ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMM.
HELD
APRIL 12, 1989

DRAFT

Follow
up:

A regularly stated meeting of the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 2B) was held on Wednesday, April 12, 1989 at 7:30 p.m. Present were all commissioners (Bass, Evans, Gaugler, Grandis, Maggi, Moses and Rieffel).

1. Mr. Maggi announced that a memorial service will be conducted for Vernon Palmer on Saturday, April 29 at 10:30 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, 16th and O Streets, N.W.

2. The following citizens' concerns were raised:

-Former commissioner Renee Schwaeger noted that 814 18th Street appears to be facing demolition and offered to investigate the situation.

Evans

-A representative of the 2nd District Police announced that ANC 2B within the 2nd District has experienced a decrease in every type of crime except theft.

-Ruth Kogan asked for the assistance of the ANC in removing a number of homeless persons who have made a home on a platform in the rear of the commercial building at 1630 Connecticut Avenue. Citizens in that area have complained to the police repeatedly over the course of three weeks, to no avail.

Moses

3. The motion of Mr. Grandis, seconded by Ms. Moses, to approve the minutes of the last meeting, held March 22, was approved unanimously.

Rieffel

4. Ms. Moses made, and Mr. Grandis seconded, a motion to support Bill 8-80 [Closing and Dedication of Public Alleys in the 2200 block of Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. (Square 66, S.O. 86-119)], a request of the Cosmos Club, with the following conditions:

Evans

a. The Cosmos Club would agree not to seek an increased f.a.r. for any new building on the site.

b. Any new building on the site would have 50' of open space, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

c. Landscaping will be included for the benefit both of the Cosmos Club and of area residents.

d. Appropriate "No Parking" signs will be erected at the egress of the new alley and on private property where appropriate.

e. Consistent with the proposal submitted, the Cosmos Club will provide all funding necessary for the improvement of the alley.

f. The Cosmos Club will make a commitment to seek no PUD or zoning change within the next 20 years.

Mr. Maggi moved, and Mr. Evans seconded, a motion to amend the motion by deleting the six conditions. The motion to amend was defeated, with Mr. Maggi, Mr. Bass and Mr. Evans voting in favor and other commissioners voting against the motion.

The original motion by Moses was approved with Mr. Evans voting in opposition and all other commissioners voting in favor of the motion.

5. The motion by Mr. Bass, seconded by Mrs. Rieffel, to oppose BZA Application No. 14996 [of J.C. Associates for a special exception for the proposed conversion of an existing rooming house into professional offices and a flat in an SP-1 District at premises 1523-25 16th Street, N.W. (Square 194, Lots 814 and 815)] was approved unanimously.

Evans

This motion was based on the following factors:

-The number of tenants and the lack of parking will create objectional traffic congestion and parking problems.

-The proposed use will adversely affect neighboring residential property on the alley and on Church Street.

-The conversion to commercial space would contribute to the imbalance of residential and non-residential uses on 16th Street by removing one of the few remaining residential buildings between N and Q Streets.

-The proposed design would not provide for access by handicapped persons.

In addition, commissioners noted comments of the public present that the most recent use of the premises was residential, that the property could and should be continued for residential use, that under the Comprehensive Plan, no commercial space should be added north of Massachusetts Avenue, that there had been a 20% loss of residential property in the Dupont Circle area between the last two censuses, and that the developer, Mr. Ingersoll, was responsible for the recent demolition of a number of Logan Circle buildings in violation of agreements with the Logan Circle community and in the absence of a demolition permit.

6. The motion of Mr. Gaugler, seconded by Mr. Bass, to:

-oppose BZA Application No. 15020 [of George Mallios for a variance from the use provisions or, in the alternative, a special exception to change a nonconforming use from an artist studio to an ice cream and pastry store in an R-5-B District at 1622 Q Street, N.W. (Square 180, Lot 30)] and

Evans

-to ask BZA for a waiver of the notice period because, due to the death of the ANC's staff coordinator, the ANC lacked sufficient time to notify constituents, and because the applicant had requested that the matter be considered at the April 12 meeting,

was approved unanimously.

This action was based on the following factors:

-This site is now zoned residential, although a variance has permitted its most recent first floor use of art studio. The commissioners are opposed to the further encroachment of commercial space into residential space.

-Double parking at this location is already a problem, especially since delivery vehicles for Trio Pizza double park on Q Street to load and unload.

-Residents of the building facing the proposed ice cream and pastry store stated that their enjoyment of their homes will be adversely affected by the intensification of vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, trash and noise.

-Commissioners considered statements by the applicant that numerous individuals had signed a petition stating that their first choice for a new business in the area would be an ice cream parlor. However, commissioners did not feel that this justified placing an ice cream parlor in a residential space.

-Commissioners also considered statements by the applicant that there is limited available commercial space along 17th Street and that the available space is prohibitively expensive. Specifically, applicant stated that available commercial space at 17th and Q is being offered at \$42 per square foot, while the applicant would be able to rent space at 1622 Q Street for \$20 per square foot. Commissioners did not feel, however, that this is a valid argument for extending commercial space into a residential area, noting that residential space is invariably less expensive than commercial space and that the neighborhood is not obligated to make commercial space affordable by expanding the commercial areas of the neighborhood to the detriment of residents of the neighborhood.

7. The motion by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Gaugler, to oppose BZA Application No. 15049 [of 1714 Mass. Associates Limited Partnership on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Turkey for permission to locate a chancery in an SP-1 District at premises at 1714 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. (Square 158, Lot 834)] was approved with all commissioners voting in favor except Mr. Maggi, who recused himself, based on the following grounds:

Evans

-The Foreign Mission Act has put ANC's in an untenable position since the Act's criteria for opposing new chanceries are unrelated to criteria which would be used by an ANC in considering an application. Hence, letters of opposition from an ANC tend to carry little weight, even when supported by substantial constituent opposition.

-Residents of the area that would be affected by the Turkish chancery and the owner of the Tabard Inn, which is located across the alley from the proposed chancery, are opposed to placing a chancery there because it would be the fifth chancery on the block. Residents of the block are frequently disturbed by bomb threats against existing chanceries; these result in the closing of the block and the annoyance of public address systems, helicopters, search lights and similar activity, frequently in the middle of the night. Residents also expressed concern

that bombs may in fact explode, and that the government of Turkey is more likely than most governments to be the object of a bomb attack.

-The Turkish Embassy at its previous location in Ward 1 has created a number of widely publicized problems for its neighbors in Ward 1, who have been vocal in their opposition to the continued existence of the chancery in their neighborhood.

8. The motion by Ms. Moses, seconded by Mr. Bass, to take no position on BZA Application No. 15025 [of East-Side-West-Side Receivership on behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas for permission to locate a chancery in a D-R-3 District at premises at 2131 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.] was approved with Mr. Grandis and Mrs. Rieffel voting in opposition and other commissioners voting in favor. In doing so the commissioners noted that this property, while neighboring ANC 2B, is located in ANC 1B, which has opposed the application due to parking problems. Since then, the applicant has made an effort to address the parking problems, and in any event, only 3 employees drive. The applicant proposes to waive its rights to diplomatic parking space. However, commissioners also noted that this project would be an encroachment into a residential zone, as the premises are currently a rooming house.

Evans

9. The motion by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mrs. Rieffel, to oppose HPA Application No. 89-255 [of the Brookings Institute for Alteration, New Construction, Conceptual Design Review, of a project in the 1700 block of P Street, N.W. (Lots 113 and 863, Square 157)] was approved unanimously, based on the following reasons:

-The application is essentially the same as the one submitted at a recent ANC meeting, which the ANC voted to oppose.

-Residents of the area are almost unanimous in their opposition to the application.

-The Chairman of the ANC was instructed to attach by reference the letter to the HPA stating the ANC's opposition to the earlier application, and that the concerns expressed previously have not adequately been resolved.

10. The ANC received a presentation by the Association of American Medical Colleges concerning their

Evans

application for industrial revenue bond financing for property located at 25th and N Streets, N.W. This location is not within ANC 2B, but is within 600 feet of the ANC. The commissioners agreed that this matter will be set for a vote at the May 10 meeting.

11. Mr. Grandis moved, and Mr. Evans seconded a motion that the ANC send to the ABC Board a letter stating the ANC's position on "Taste of Lemon Grass" as adopted at the March 22 ANC meeting. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Grandis

12. Mr. Gaugler submitted to the Commission a letter of resignation. Commissioners expressed consternation, noting that he is a valued commissioner and urging him to reconsider.

13. The motion by Mr. Maggi, seconded by Mrs. Rieffel, recommending on behalf of the personnel committee that a new staff coordinator be hired as an employee rather than as a consultant, be supervised by the chairman of the ANC, and be responsible for drafting the newsletter, was approved unanimously.

Maggi

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 p.m.