

**Minutes of the November 11, 1998 Public Meeting of  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B (Dupont Circle)**

Chairman Pitsor called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. All commissioners were present. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as distributed.

**OPEN FORUM**

**Commissioner Rosenthal** reported that she has been unable to reach the attorneys for the property at 21st and P Sts regarding their proposal to rezone the property to fully commercial and would be discussing this property further under new business.

**Commissioner Jackson** announced that flyers were available for the current season of the Thomas Circle singers, a choral group whose proceeds benefits community service groups.

**Chairman Pitsor** announced that next month we would discuss the proposed zoning change for restaurant Nora and that the Dupont Resource Center would celebrate its grand opening on November 12, 1998 at 11:30 a.m. and be open for public viewing from 1 pm to 6 p.m.

**ISSUES**

**1616 Rhode Island Avenue Development** Phil Feola of Wilkes, Artis returned to update the ANC on the plans for this site. He summarized past presentations changing the PUD to two buildings: one building for academic and housing use by the University of California and the other building an extended stay hotel. Previously the ANC had questioned the community amenities to be provided for by UC in exchange for lost tax revenue. We were reminded that the original PUD developers had given \$150,000 to Ross School for new windows. The hotel developers now are planning to add five feet to the existing alley around the building, donate \$25,000 to the Park Service for upgrades to Dupont Circle Park and donate \$10,000 to DCCA for the Resource Center project. UC will be sponsoring a mentoring program at Ross School for as long as they own the building. Finally, Mr. Feola announced that the BZA has scheduled the hearing for 7 p.m. on December 3, 1998.

Commissioner King asked about the tax loss. Mr. Feola reported it is estimated at \$600,000 per year, however, Homestead Village would be paying approximately that amount plus \$1,000,000 in hotel taxes. Chairman Pitsor asked about the developers commitment for minority and DC resident hiring. Mr. Feola responded that 35% of construction jobs and 51% of operating jobs would be committed to minorities and DC residents. Resident Desmond Foynes questioned about restaurants and ABC licenses and was told that there would be no restaurants or ABC licenses at the Homestead Village building.

Chairman Pitsor noted that the Office of Planning was supportive of the two building plan since the original single building was not in character with neighboring buildings. When he asked about the colors used on outside walls, no specifics were given other than it would not be dark red brick or plain white. A resident asked about parking availability and was told that UC would have 45 car

spaces below ground and bicycle parking in the rear above ground and the hotel would have 57 spaces. Commissioner King expressed his disappointment with the public benefits provided by the proposal. He felt the amount proposed was unconscionable in light of Homestead Village's \$20 billion budget and the size of the UC system. Commissioner Jackson indicated that he too was disappointed but that he would still support the project. Commissioner Rosenthal offered her complete endorsement to the project.

In summary, Commissioner DeHart noted that UC commitment to the site and the neighborhood would be an asset to the city and that they have discussed the possibility of future computer donations to the Resource Center and to provide community meeting space in the building. She then made the following motion which was seconded by Commissioner Newton:

ANC 2B supports the proposed development at 1616 Rhode Island Avenue, NW by the University of California and Homestead Village, Inc. given the overall amenities provided to the community. The motion passed 6-1-0 with Commissioner King opposing.

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## **POLICE REPORTS**

Sgt. Kutniewski of PSA 308 reported that in the last month there was an increase of assaults by 4 but that there had been 2 arrests. Other crimes were at the same or a slight increase in their level and that several arrests were made for crimes along Connecticut Ave. The Third District is attempting to again have additional officers assigned to Connecticut Avenue for the Christmas shopping season. He was questioned about the planned police presence at the new resource center. He indicated it would not be 24 hours, but that officers should be seen there on a regular basis and that only PSA's 307 & 308 would be allowed to use the facility. They plan to use it to prepare reports and interview witnesses, but not suspects. Finally, he reported that he now has 4 mountain bikes in operation and we should see officers on them rather than on foot.

## **ISSUES (continued)**

**1600 16th Street, NW (Solar Building)** Alison Prince of Wilkes, Artis presented plans for the redevelopment of the building. The case will go before the BZA on December 17, 1998. It is over 40 years old and is split zoned: C-4 and SP-2 to comply with the characters of both K and 16th Sts. The entire outer skin will be replaced as will all mechanical systems. An additional 40 feet of floors will be added on the K Street side and will be set back, in two steps, from 16th Street. There will be significant upgrades to the lawn on 16th that will include paving stone sidewalks instead of poured concrete. Additionally, two floors of parking will be added creating 95 spaces with a new entrance on proposed 16th Street. They anticipate all new tenants, but no fast food establishments. As a PUD development, signage restrictions written into the PUD plan will be permanent.

As required by the PUD process, the developers proposed amenities of a \$50,000 payment to Ross School, up to \$50,000 in payments to a project in Marshall Heights to keep the purchase price affordable, and the improved 16th Street landscaping. These amenities would not be required had the project been proposed as a straight rezoning rather than a PUD.

Chairman Pitsor noted that we have previously supported the Office of Planning's protections of 16th Street. Kathryn Timeo of the Retail Planning Agency expressed her complete support for the project. Desmond Foynes a resident of 16th St. noted this would be the first garage driveway on 16th St and expressed concern over the precedent of losing SP zoning on 16th St. and that the project is in conflict with the Office of Planning's plans for Lower 16th St. Commissioner DeHart noted there was a possibility that the Hilton Hotel could use some of the parking. Ms. Prince was asked about moving the parking entrance to the rear alley. Because of a tenant with a long term lease, there was no way to build the ramp in the rear of the building. Commissioner Jackson requested the developers consult Metro on the impact construction would have on the Bus Stop on 16th St since it is a transfer point.

Commissioner DeHart began her summary by indicating that the project was troublesome. She appreciated the the improvements to the building, but has reservations about the potential change of the view of 16th St from Scott Circle and the change in character of 16th St resulting from the rezoning. Therefore, she would not support the project at this time and recommended tabling until the December meeting. Commissioner King recommended that the commissioners walk 16th Street between Scott Circle and K Street and consider the issue of precedent on zoning cases.

**ABC License Renewals** Chairman Pitsor read the list of establishments applying for renewal of thier ABC licenses and asked for comment from commissioners and the audience. No comments were made at this time.

**Leonardo's (1724 Connecticut Ave.)** Commissioner Rosenthal presented the application for a new ABC license. Previous restaurants at this address were Petito's and Cafe Parma. Leonardo's focus will be food and they are trying for a higher quality restaurant. Chairman Pitsor asked about trash service. They are sharing recepticles and pick-ups with Demetri's a few doors north on Connecticut. Commissioner Rosenthal recommended that the recepticles be secured. Seeing no objections from commissioners or the audience, she recomended that no action be taken by the ANC.

**Levante's (1320 19th St.)** Ed Grandis, attorney for the application, presented his client Mr. Pistar, manager of the Bethesda location. The restaurant will feature Turkish, Greek, and Jewish cuisine. The plan includes a sidewalk cafe within existing boundaries of a sunken patio. Anne Scanley asked about the impact on residential properties across the street. Mr. Grandis indicated that he would determine if adjacent properties were residential, not commercial, and seek their input on the project. Since no other concerns expressed, no action was taken on the application.

**Fuzio International Pasta (1630 Connecticut Ave., NW)** David Castalano presented John Curillo from the San Francisco headquarters who gave an overview of the menu and planned operations. Commissioner Rosenthal asked about the proposed outside cafe. Demetri Malleos, attorney, indicated the idea had been abandoned and that they would sign a letter of agreement with Commissioner Rosenthal in order for her to withdraw any protest. Chairman Pitsor inquired about trash arrangements. Mr. Castalano indicated that there was 6 day pickup from a gated area used by the entire building and that they would consider improving the appearance of the fence. Commissioner Rosenthal indicated that she had spoken with several residents on Hillyer Place and none had objections to the restaurant itself.

## **Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Jackson noted that he had been in contact with the Jewish Community Center regarding recently increasing parking problems that were unrelated to their liquor license. The JCC attributed the problem to a change in management by the parking service that operates the lot.

Anne Scanley, a resident, followed up on the ABC license mention by asking about the patio at the Governor's House and felt that it was not consistent with the ANC Public Space Guidelines. Several commissioners noted that the garden was adequately separated from the sidewalk and the hotel had reason to prevent nuisances since there would hotel guests directly above the space.

Anne Scanley then strongly recommended that the ANC take action against the Dupont Italian Kitchen during their license renewal since they had lied to the commission during their expansion application. Commissioner Cary noted that she had received no complaints about the operations of the restaurant. Commissioner Jackson noted that the issue had been sent to the ABC Board for review when the expansion was completed and the ABC Board indicated the changes by Italian Kitchen were not substantially different from the original plan and that the previous commission had therefore considered the matter settled. No action was taken.

Commissioner Rosenthal reported that she had been unable to contact A & M Investments who plan to rezone their currently mixed use building at 21st & P Sts to a fully commercial building. She indicated that she planned to attend the November 19 BZA meeting to oppose the change. She would also be investigating the relationship of Cafe Japonese and A & M Investments. Commissioner Newton moved and Commissioner King seconded the following motion.

ANC 2B opposes the zoning variance requested by A & M Investment for their property at 21st & P Sts. and that Commissioner Rosenthal would be designated as the ANC representative at the BZA hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Newton reported that the Association of Medical Colleges would be attending the December meeting to discuss a bond referendum to finance equipment upgrades at local hospitals.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Pitsor announced that the Grand Opening and ribbon cutting of the Dupont Circle Resource Center would be on November 12 at 11:30 a.m. There are still some interior details to complete before the tenants may begin use of the facility.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Pitsor reported that the Committee of the Whole would be meeting to consider changes to the Comprehensive Plan that would change the Dupont Circle Overlay area by exempting the area bounded roughly by 16th and 20th Sts on the east and west, M Street on the south and Massachusetts and New Hampshire Avenues on the north. Chairman Pitsor moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that:

ANC 2B oppose the above changes to the Dupont Circle overlay in the Comprehensive Plan because it is inconsistent with the overall plan and defeats proposed benefits of the plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner King asked Commissioner Jackson about the Abdo Development Project at 1529 Q St. NW in light of the apparent expansion. Commissioner Jackson reported on the lack of cooperation from DCRA research past applications and then indicated that any additions should be minimal since parking is planned behind the building and that Mr. Abdo had been quite generous in relocating the former residents of the building. Mr. Pitsor noted that this issue could be discussed with Mr. Lloyd Jordan of DCRA who would be attending our December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Donald J. Jackson, Secretary