

## MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 1999 PUBLIC MEETING OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 2B, DUPONT CIRCLE

Vice Chair Marilyn Newton called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Commissioners King, Rosenthal, Shannon, Jackson, and DeHart were present. Chairman Pitsor was out of town.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved as distributed with Commissioner Shannon abstaining.

### POLICE CRIME REPORTS

**Sgt. Kutniewski spoke for PSA 309.** Crime was down 25% for the first 3 months of 1999 compared to the same period in 1998. There have been rash of robberies in PSA 308. Several cases have been closed and the same person is suspected to have committed most of the other incidents. Sgt. Kutniewski credit the PSA concept and resulting communication improvements for the success in crime reduction.

**Ofc. Santiago represented PSA 209.** Office theft continues to be their biggest problem. A recent traffic enforcement day, cosponsored by the Golden Triangle BID, resulted in 1164 red light and jay walking tickets being issued at selected intersections in the BID.

**Lt. Niebeling represented PSA 307.** He indicated that the statistics given by Sgt. Kutniewski included his PSA. Also, like PSA 209, they have a problem with theft of office equipment.

### OPEN FORUM

1. A resident spoke about an initiative by ANC 2B resident Jim McGrath to oppose the closing of the **Sholl's Cafeteria** at 20th and K Sts. After several supportive comments, Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Shannon seconded that:

ANC 2B send a letter to the Mayor's Office and the Office of Economic Development urging them to assist Sholl's Cafeteria in maintaining a presence in the city.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Ms. Newton announced that on May 18 a meeting would be held at Council member Evans' office at 3 pm to talk about **Stead Playground** renovation and she reminded the community that the parking study needs volunteers.
3. Ms. Newton announced that at the June meeting we would have a discussion on the **West Dupont Liquor License Moratorium.**

4. A resident asked about the possibility of enforcing the closed status of the field at **Stead Playground** given it is supposed to be baited for rats.
5. **Commissioner Rosenthal** reminded the assembly that this would be her last meeting and thanked everyone for the support during her one and a half year term.
6. **Chab Dunn** requested that we encourage the police to increase the enforcement of misdemeanor crimes as they often have the greatest impact on the quality of life. He felt the process needed to be simplified (e.g. issuing tickets) to encourage enforcement. Commissioner Jackson agreed to take the issue up with PSA 309.

#### **ISSUES:**

1. **Clean City Initiative** Commissioner Newton reported on the initiative chaired by Vince Spaulding. Its purpose is to coordinate efforts among city agencies to clean neighborhoods, tow abandoned cars and take action against abandoned and other nuisance properties.
2. **Scott Circle.** Commissioner DeHart reported that we were unable to have representatives of DPW or the Park Service present for this meeting to discuss plans to renovate Scott Circle. Her understanding of the project from various phone discussions is that it would include the repairs to circle, sidewalks, and the underpass and relandscaping the circle and adjoining park areas. A public meeting was scheduled for May 13, 4 pm at the Quality Hotel, 16th St & Scott Circle.
3. **The Regent, 16th & R Sts.** Commissioner DeHart introduced Gary Squires and Tom Barringer of The Regent currently under construction. They were asked to speak on the neighborhood impact of the construction project. Mr. Barringer indicated that the adjoining alley would have to be closed until the roof and windows are installed. They plan to use the garage for construction workers and need the alley for access so there is incentive to reopen it as soon as possible. Trees that were removed will be replaced and the lot will be relandscaped. They have not decided whether the building will be rental or condominium.

Questions arose concerning the public space parking in front of the Baptist Association building. Mr. Barringer reported that temporary permits were issued for the duration of the construction project and that numerous neighborhood amenities were provided in the course of construction of the Spencer on  Street and thus have a track record of being good neighbors. Resident Jeff Hopp responded that the temporary parking problems will be worth the end result. Another resident responded that the changes in the neighborhood were consistent with the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Commissioner King responded that the rent control in DC is the most rigorous in the nation and there are rent controlled apartments even in Dupont Circle.

4. Commissioner King reported there is a pending rule making for **All Way Stop signs** at the intersection of New Hampshire Ave. and S Street. Commissioner King moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that:

ANC 2B whole heartedly supports the All Way Stop sign legislation for the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and S Street, NW

The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Public Pay phones, 1618 17th St.** Commissioner Shannon reported that Cairo Liquors was in the process of acquiring public space permits for their long term pay phones when the phones were removed by Public Service Commission. Ms. Shannon had no objection to the replacing the phones. A resident at the Admiral Dupont condominiums (17th & R Sts) felt phones bring in a bad element. A bike messenger spoke in favor of pay phones since the were necessary for his business. An elderly resident of the Queensborough Apts. indicated that he regularly used the phones to make and receive calls because he did not have a phone in his apartment.

Resident Judith Leon of 16th St asked how the commission could consider supporting these phones when we opposed the request for new phones at Frontera Cantina. Commissioner Jackson responded that we gave conditional approval based upon their phones being located within the patio and that the Cairo phones were previously not in the pedestrian path. Commissioner Shannon moved and Commissioner King seconded that:

ANC 2B supports the public space request for two pay phones at 1618 17th St. and that the phones be for outgoing calls only.

The motion passed five to one with Commissioner *King* opposed.

6. **Class A Liquor license renewals.** Vice Chair Newton read the list of establishments applying for renewal of their liquor licenses. No comments were received from commissioners or audience and thus, no action was taken by the commission.
7. **Mr. P's 2147 P Street.** Commissioner Rosenthal introduced the ongoing discussions regarding our opposition to the renewal of their liquor license which was based on peace, order, and quiet issues. We have been encouraged to develop a voluntary agreement and Ms. Rosenthal has received a proposed agreement from Mr. P's since the last meeting. Some key points of the document included limiting entertainment to that which is appropriate for a CT license, hiring a door person, better control of the patio and painting the front of the building. The protestants did have a hearing where they introduced an ABC investigator's report that showed numerous ABC violations and they expressed their concern about enforcing the proposed agreement.

John Mako, owner told of his business commitments: first to provide a safe, clean place for neighborhood socializing, second, a commitment to the gay community, and third a commitment to Dupont Circle as a whole. He indicated that the drag shows are benefits for community organizations. Further, he tries to discourage entrance by intoxicated persons and he has called cabs for patrons who became intoxicated. Finally, he indicated that based on the community benefits he provides, only homophobia could be motivating the protestants. A resident of the St. George condominium concurred with the latter statement.

Commissioner Rosenthal made the following motion which was seconded by Commissioner Jackson:

ANC 2B supports the proposed voluntary agreement in that it addresses ANC 2B peace, order and quiet concerns and that a letter be sent to the ABC Board supporting their imposing appropriate fines and suspensions of Mr. P's license based on the investigators report.

Resident Frank Hornstein noted that the investigators report contradicts Mr. Mako's comments. Resident Eli Gottesdiener, a protestant, noted that since no one has object to any of the protestants complaints, we should consider them valid and that no changes at Mr. P's should be expected. Andrew Klein, attorney for Mr. P's, commented that the investigators report was a surprise. Further, the present proposal is community based where the previous versions sought to appease only a few people. A resident commented that noise is part of the urban experience and that he does not complain about activities at Stead playground near his house.

An attendee complained that a copy of the agreement was not available for the audience. Commissioner Rosenthal then read the entire proposal. Two people requested that we hold off voting on the motions until a later date. Another person who lives at 17th St & Massachusetts Ave. felt that voluntary agreements such as this should apply to all bars because he has seen worse activities in straight bars.

Commissioner King requested that the above motion be separate into two separate motions to insure appropriate action at the ABC Board. Commissioners Rosenthal and Jackson agreed to the change. The vote on the first part, supporting the proposed voluntary agreement, passed with a vote of 4-1-1 with Vice Chair Newton opposed and Commissioner Shannon abstaining. The vote on the second part, supporting fines and suspensions, passed with a vote of 5-0-1 with Commissioner Shannon abstaining.

## COMMISSIONER REPORTS

**Commissioner DeHart** reported that the United Mine Workers Building whose renovation project was presented at the April meeting had received its historic preservation landmark status.

**Commissioner Jackson** reported that neighbors had alerted him to non-permitted construction of a handicapped ramp was initiated at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. A stop work order had been issued.

**Commissioner Newton** reported that a meeting with Donahoe Construction concerning the new Marriott Hotel on P Street would be held at the Resource Center on May 20, 4:30 pm.

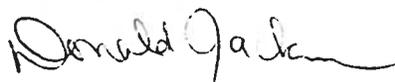
## NEW BUSINESS

A resident pointed out that there are numerous problems with **storm drains** backing up and asked about the possibility of installing screens across them as is done in other cities. Vice Chair Newton indicated that the matter would be referred to DPW.

A resident asked about the process to fill the vacancy created by Commissioner Rosenthal's resignation. Vice Chair Newton explained the notice and petition process.

Vice Chair Newton announced the next meeting for June 9, 1999. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald J. Jackson,  
Secretary