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## Minutes of the September 8, 1999 Public Meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B (Dupont Circle)

Chairman Pitsor called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. Commissioners King, Micone, Shannon, Jackson, DeHart and Newton were present.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS** The minutes of the July, 1999 and August, 1999 meetings were approved as distributed.

### **POLICE AND CRIME REPORTS**

**Sgt. Kutniewski spoke for the Third District.** Most crimes are down, with household robberies down 40 percent, but office robberies are increasing. Chairman Pitsor asked if Third District had implemented any of the Clean City Initiatives. Sgt. Kutniewski responded there was one officer on the A shift assigned to poster, construction, and trash violations, although no arrests have been made yet. When asked about the new curfew law, it was reported that no additional officers were being assigned and that it was not expected to be a problem for the Dupont Circle PSA, but could be for the PSAs near North Capital St.

**Capt. Berberich and Lt. Klaus spoke for the Park Service.** There was a major arrest effort over the last six months resulting in dramatic decrease in drug activity. Working with MPD and the US Attorney's Office they have issued 25 stay away orders prohibiting criminals from coming within 5 blocks of Dupont Circle. Because robberies appear to be increasing the arrest effort will continue. Sgt. LaCascio was assigned to the Circle and the Resource Center.

### **OPEN FORUM**

**Carol Mitten** announced that the Ward Two Democrats are having a fund raiser at the former United Mine Workers Building, 15th & I Sts, on October 4, 6:30-8:00 pm.

**Nancy Fiedler** complained that DCRA has not been responsive to neighborhood questions concerning the construction of the Marriott Hotel on P St. Also, Mr. P's is beginning to cause disruptions again.

**Chairman Pitsor** announced that Dupont Circle resident Phyllis Kimmel of the Office of People's Council would give a presentation on that office's purpose and work at the October meeting and that Andy Altman, the new Director of the Office of Planning would speak at the November meeting.

### **ISSUES**

- 1. Enforcement Division of HPRB** Stephen Raiche introduced Toni Cherry, the first historic preservation enforcement inspector. Mr. Raiche gave an overview of the divisions' work and

stressed that calls reporting potential violations of historic preservation laws are not "snitching," rather a civic duty. Given the amount of construction in DC, Ms Cheri is quite busy and more inspectors are probably needed. Ms. Cheri encouraged residents to use digital cameras since the photos can be sent over the Internet and also have time stamps.

A resident asked if there was an attorney assigned to HPRB. Mr. Raiche responded that a policy change would be needed for an attorney with enforcement authority. Mr. Rick Bush of the DC Preservation League encouraged residents to send a message on the importance of historic preservation to Mr. Altman during the November meeting.

- 2. Proposed extension of the 16th Street Historic District** The presenters were Laura Tishman of Traceries, Inc. and Donna Hanouek of the DC Preservation League. Ms. Tischman reviewed the areas covered by the existing designations and reported that the entire street was surveyed north to the Maryland line in preparation for the proposal. They are recommending including the area from Lafayette Square to Scott Circle and the Meridian Hill neighborhood.

The proposal for the southern portion includes 40 buildings built between 1910 and 1990. The original period of significance for historic designation was 1875 to 1930. The proposed period for the new designation will be 1875 to 1960. The proposal will also include the 1970 I.M. Pei Christian Science Church at I Street and the National Geographic Complex at M St even though some of those buildings date from the 1970's and 1980's. The next step is to file the proposal with the DC HPRB. The ANC will be asked for a decision at that time.

Recognizing the amount of work involved in developing the proposal and past ANC actions on historic preservation, Chairman Pitsor moved and Commissioner Shannon seconded the following resolution:

ANC 2B supports the activities of the DC Preservation League and Traceries, Inc. investigating the concept of historic designation for Lower 16th Street.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 3. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority building plans.** Rose McKinney spoke for the sorority. The have approximately 1000 local members and 7000 national. Membership requires a record of public service activities. The sorority originally purchased ~~1075~~ 1709 New Hampshire in 1988 and performed an extensive renovation. Because of increased membership and programs their staff of 33 is inadequate and the sorority needs to expand. The sorority recently purchased 1703 NH and is planning to restore the 4th floor that burned and was never replaced and to add three floors to 1705 so that it will be the same height as the adjacent buildings.

Lee Allen, David McArthur and Jameel Hamilton of McKisick & McKisick Architects of Richmond presented historical information on the sites and their conceptual plans for additions to 1703 and 1705 NH Ave. Several design options were presented for the infill building at 1705.

A BZA application will be filed for exceptions to existing FAR and lot occupancy limitations. Dudley Cannada of the Dupont Conservancy and others in attendance spoke in favor of the additions to both buildings.

Commissioner Shannon moved and Commissioner DeHart seconded the following motion:

ANC 2B send a letter to HPRB supporting in concept the design proposal of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. for the addition of a fourth floor to the structure at 1703 New Hampshire Ave. NW and the addition of three floors to the structure at 1705 New Hampshire Ave., NW.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 4. Furioso Development project at 1612 16th St.** Bill Bonstra, architect and Logan Circle resident described the project. It calls for the demolition of the existing building which is an 1870 period wood frame structure that has had more than 10 permits for major renovations both inside and out. He did not view the building as contributing to the fabric of the street. He has designed an in-fill building of 4 duplex units and single level basement unit. The duplex units will have a mezzanine style second level. There will be two parking spaces which meets the requirements for a five unit building.

The proposed building is shorter than allowed and the building will have a 3.5 FAR in an R-5-D zone, also less than allowed. The height is 83.5 feet and the width is 21' 10". There will be a projecting bay with the front wall angled in toward the building, not parallel to 16th St. The front wall will be primarily glass. He described the overall image he tried to create a stacked jewel boxes.

Commissioner Shannon then moved and Commissioner Micone seconded that:

ANC 2B send a letter to HPRB indicating that we have no objection to the proposed demolition at 1612 16th St, NW because it is not seen as contributing to the street scape. Further, we have no objection to the preliminary plans of Furioso Development and view this proposal for new residential construction to have architectural merit.

Commissioner King objected to the motion on grounds that we were not competent to evaluate whether or not the existing building contributed to the street scape or to a historic district. He was also concerned about the precedent that would be set by approving the demolition in a historic district. A number of alternatives were offered during the discussion. Finally, Commissioner Shannon moved and Commissioner Micone seconded a substitute motion as follows:

ANC 2B send a letter to HPRB indicating that we have no objection to the proposed demolition at 1612 16th St, NW provided the building is found to be non-contributing to the 16th Street Historic District by HPRB. Further, we have no objection to the preliminary plans

of Furioso Development and view this proposal for new residential construction to have architectural merit.

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0-1 with Commissioner King abstaining.

5. **Dupont Circle Parking Task Force** Commissioner Micone reported that the next meeting will be September 28, 6:30 pm at the Women's National Democratic Club. He plans to divide attendees into groups to review the detailed findings from the walk-around surveys. The task force decided not to do a mail survey of residents because it would probably provide no helpful information given the potential number of new spaces is limited.
6. **Report on Public Payphones** Chairman Pitsor reported that the application for a phone at 1514 21st St was withdrawn and that the PSC denied the request by Frontera Cantina at 1633 17th St. Commissioner Stephens of ANC 2F reported that DPW has finally been responsive to his ANC's request for assistance with problem phones and that Council member Jim Graham has requested suggestions for changes within the Public Space Committee.
7. **Stead Playground Renovations** Chairman Pitsor reported that there would be a one day work event on-site at Stead on September 17.

## COMMISSIONER REPORTS

**Commissioner Newton** reported that DCCA has filed a petition in the DC Court of Appeals to reverse the decision granting a liquor license to the *Mansion on O St*. DCRA has not responded to the letter she wrote concerning potential height and square foot violations at the Marriott Hotel on P Street.

**Commissioner King** reported that Mediterranean Blue has applied for a public space permit and would probably be at the October meeting.

**Commissioner Micone** reported a meeting was being planned on September 16 at the Resource Center for both sides of the Cafe Japone issue to share their issues and views. The exhaust problem at Fuzio Pasta has resurfaced and Steve Nelson of DCRA is reviewing the situation.

## OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Chairman Pitsor** reported the following items:

- He received a report that a one year rehabilitation of the Q Street bridge began in August.
- BZA had approved the zoning exception requested by Cafe Nora and that BZA included the requirements requested by ANC 2B, one of which is the applicant must meet periodically with the ANC to review the restaurant's operation and neighborhood impact
- There was a film event in the 1700 block of Massachusetts Ave. Several residents reported they had been given adequate notice and the event went well.
- He received notice from Metro proposing to install an emergency back-up generator on the NW corner of 19th and Q to support the Dupont Circle station. Metro will probably come to the October meeting to discuss the proposal.

A resident reported that school children crossing 16th St. at P St. are not obeying traffic signals. She has contacted the schools but received not response. The matter will be referred to Lt. Sichon of PSA 309 for assistance.

Chairman Pitsor announced the next public meeting on October 13 and adjourned this meeting at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

