

## **Minutes of the May 10, 2000 Public Meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B (Dupont Circle)**

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

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS** None were discussed at this meeting.

### **POLICE AND CRIME REPORTS**

**Officer Santiago spoke for the Second District, Sgt. McDowell and Lt. Hill represented the Third District.** The officers reviewed crime stats and received questions. In the Third District, there were slight increases in burglaries and in thefts from autos but other areas saw no change. Phil Carney requested the police work with the Dept. of Recreation on a plan to control graffiti at Stead Playground. Commissioner Jackson requested that the Q St truck and bus restrictions be enforced. Sgt. McDowell indicated they were not forgotten, but staffing did not allow at this time. Commissioner Micone reported that he had a walk around planned for 5/21 with Lt. Taliaferro.

Kathryn Talmidge, Sarah Morgan and John Ryan of the 1800 block of Corcoran St reported there was an increase in crime on their block. The crimes include burglary at gunpoint and peering in street level windows. Despite reporting the incidents, there has been no increase police presence on the block. Commissioner Micone offered to discuss the situation with Cmdr. Beach.

Ms. Talmidge also complained of a loud party on the roof of The Corcoran House during the previous weekend and asked how to deal with these situations. Commissioner DeHart also reported the lack of response to her calls of thefts of building materials from a construction site near her house. Also, there is an increase in the presence of large groups of teenagers on bicycles.

### **OPEN FORUM**

**Jonathan Heller** reported that he did not find any meeting notice signs posted in Chairman Pitsor's SMD. Commissioner Micone agreed to address the issue.

**Commissioner Jackson** read announcements received from DC agencies: 1) a planning workshop May 19-21 for the Anacostia Waterfront sponsored by the Office of Planning and 2) a household toxic item pickup at Carter Barron on May 13.

**Phil Carney** requested that during our later discussions with the Recreation Dept. we request they repair recent vandalism at Stead Playground and that we note the Sulgrave Club trash problems during the ABC license renewals.

## ISSUES

1. **Religious Action Center, 2027 Massachusetts Ave.** was represented by Mark Palabin and Paul Andresino. It is a Reformed Jewish Organization and has been located at the site for over 40 years. Their HPRB request is for an addition to make the building handicapped accessible. The additions will be on the Q Street (rear) side. It will involve filling in a corner cut on the east end and adding a bay for consistency with the original building. Architect renderings were presented for review. The Dupont Conservancy has given their endorsement. Commissioner Micone reported that they will be going to HPRB in two weeks and that the project will return since the bay will protrude into public space. The latter is permitted but requires an exception.

Commissioner DeHart inquired about dumpster location. Kathryn Talmadge indicated she is opposed to any additions. She feels organizations should move to a new building rather than expand an existing building to meet their needs. Commissioner Micone then moved and Commissioner Newton seconded that

ANC 2B support the Historic Preservation application by the Religious Action Center for additions to the building for handicapped accessibility provided that a voluntary agreement is finalized to hide the dumpster and clean the parking area on Q Street.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Coalition of Hispanic Health & Human Service Org. 1501 16th Street.** The organization was represented by Cynthia Giordano, attorney and Brian McCarthy, architect. Ms. Giordano reported this is an information and research organization specializing in high risk health issues. They are within a historic district and the building currently has about 4300 sq. ft. A portion of the third floor is unenclosed behind the 16th Street facade. They wish to complete the walls and cover the entire space. It will add approximately 400 sq. ft. This exceeds the maximum 2.5 FAR by about 196 sq ft HPRB has approved the concept.

In response to her question, Commissioner DeHart was told that there would be no additional staff after the addition. Ms. DeHart also felt that left turns on 16th St from the driveway were a problem for that site. There being no other comment on the request, Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Shannon seconded that

ANC 2B support the request of the Coalition of Hispanic Health & Human Service Organizations to enclose the roof terrace adding approximately 400 sq ft and minimally exceeding the allowed FAR.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. **2000 Capital Pride Festival.** This year's gay-lesbian-bisexual pride festival is again being sponsored by Whitman-Walker Clinic and One-In-Ten. They were represented by Tom Holmes

and Robert York. The festival will take place from June 2-11. The parade route was reviewed as were plans for the festival on Pennsylvania. The organizing committee will handle all signage for parking restrictions for the parade. The restrictions will begin at midnight, Saturday, June 10 near the organizing grounds at Francis School and at 7 am Sunday in other areas.

- 4. Public Space Rental Fees** Commissioner Micone reviewed a report from the Public Space Committee detailing delinquent fee payments for use of public space. One particular problem is renewal of ABC licenses where public space fees are outstanding for several years. Commissioner Micone then moved and Commissioner Newton seconded that

ANC 2B authorize the chair to send a letter to the Public Space Committee recommended non-renewal of licenses where public space fees are in arrears.

The discussion that ensued focused on two issues. First, Commissioner Shannon was concerned that this would penalize businesses who were unaware that the property owner was negligent. Commissioner King felt that business owners were in the best position to assist in collection of the fees. In second issue, resident Jonathan Heller questioned whether enforcement of laws was the ANC responsibility. Commissioner Micone responded that the ANC has the right to recommend that government agency enforce regulations. After discussion the motion was amended as follows with the agreement of the sponsors:

ANC 2B authorizes the chair to send a letter to the Public Space Committee recommending they develop an appropriate enforcement mechanism to notify licensees of delinquent fees.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 5. Playground at Francis School** Charles Hooker of the Dept of Parks and Recreation gave a history of the removal of the playground equipment at Francis School. The primary reason was safety and the perception that it was seldom used as intended, rather than by older children from the neighboring junior high school. Several residents expressed concern that there was nothing in the neighborhood for small children and that we needed to support neighborhood families. Mr. Hooker responded there was a park just a few blocks away, but across Rock Creek Park. He would recommend replacement of the equipment with safer models if the community requested. Commissioner Newton then moved and Commissioner Shannon seconded that:

ANC 2B recommend that the Department of Parks and Recreation replace the playground equipment that was previously near the Francis Pool.

The motion passed unanimously.

## 6. ABC License Renewals

Skewers/Luna Commissioner DeHart reported there are major sanitation problems with this establishment. Tom Day of DPW is compiling a history of violations. Discussions are in progress about acquiring a common trash compactor for all the establishments that share the common alley. Commissioner DeHart moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that:

ANC 2B protest the renewal of the ABC license for Skewers/Luna pending the completion of a voluntary agreement that will resolve the sanitation issues.

The motion passed unanimously.

Peppers Commissioner DeHart reported Peppers has the same problems as Skewers/Luna. Commissioner DeHart moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that:

ANC 2B protest the renewal of the ABC license for Peppers pending the completion of a voluntary agreement that will resolve the sanitation issues.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mercury Grill Commissioner Shannon reported a complete turnaround in neighborhood opinion regard this location. Neighbors that had great difficulty with previous restaurants at this site report the current operators are very responsible and have resolved all the past sanitation and other operational problems

Cafe Japone Commissioner Micone reported on the progress with this establishment. He then moved and Commissioner Shannon seconded that:

ANC 2B support the renewal of the ABC license for Cafe Japone on the condition that it includes the existing voluntary agreement.

The motion passed unanimously.

Town House Tavern Commissioner Jackson reported that the public space fees for this site are in arrears and asked whether we should oppose the renewal given our position on the previous agenda item. Jonathan Heller questioned whether this was grounds for a protest. The commission felt we should move forward regardless. Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Newton seconded that:

ANC 2B protest the renewal of the ABC license for Town House Tavern until the public space fees are made current.

The motion passed unanimously.

Quality Inn Commissioner DeHart reported there are on-going violations of the terms of an existing voluntary agreement that include excessive noise from guests, assaults on neighborhood residents, and bus congestion which adds to the noise. Commissioner DeHart moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that:

ANC 2B protest the renewal of the Quality Inn on the grounds of peace, order, quiet and traffic impact.

The motion passed unanimously.

## COMMISSIONER REPORTS

**Commissioner Jackson** reported that he had contacted WASA about the water leak at 16th & Church Sts, but that there were still problems.

**Commissioner King** reported that Lauriol Plaza at 18 & T Sts is having regular problems with their guests blocking the sidewalk. Council member Graham has requested that he handle the matter rather than the ANC's.

**Commissioner Micone** reported on discussions with Erica Wilson in the mayor's office regarding our letter after last month's FY2001 budget discussion. First, DMV has opened an Express Renewal Office at 301 C St NW. Second, the budget calls for 44 more parking enforcement officers (above the current 73). Commissioner King reminded everyone that Congress must still approve the budget and we should contact Congresswoman Norton with our concerns.

Commissioner Micone also reported that O Street has become a bus and truck bypass for traffic normally on P Street. He and Commissioner Newton have requested a stop sign at 22nd & O Sts. and neighbors are requesting a review of traffic in the area. Commissioner Micone then moved and Commissioner Newton seconded that:

Chair of ANC 2B send a letter to the Bureau of traffic Services that the neighborhood is concerned about traffic on O Street between 20th & 23rd Sts. and that a report should be sent back to the ANC. Further, we are still concerned about the traffic problems at 20th & N Sts caused by the lack of a stop sign for 20th St vehicles.

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Micone reported that last month's protest of the ABC license renewal for the Thai Chef Restaurant on Connecticut Ave was hindered by HPRB's loss of paperwork regarding the improper signage. We must request an HPRB investigation for them to take additional action.

Commissioner Micone moved and Commissioner King seconded that:

ANC 2B request the Historic Preservation Review Board open an investigation regarding improper signage, in a historic district, at the Thai Chef, 1712 Connecticut Ave.

The motion passed unanimously. It was then noted that the matter originally came to our attention via DCMAP.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Jackson requested that we send a letter to Cmdr. Beach of the Third District MPD requesting enforcement of the bus and truck restrictions on Q Street since it has been 6 months since the rulemaking was published.

Ruby Van Croft of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 15th & P Sts. announced that they have made a BZA renewal filing for use of their parking lots. They will be holding a meeting for the immediate neighbors on May 30 to discuss their plans and learn of neighbors' concerns.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Judith Werdell asked who was responsible for the ugly replacement cover plates at the bottom of the street light posts. Commissioner Jackson reported that this was a city function as Mayor Barry had taken that responsibility back from PEPCO during his tenure.

Commissioner Micone noted that there continues to be problems with HPRB providing adequate notice of pending cases. There were no objections to requesting the chair write a letter requesting proper notice of all HPRB matters in ANC 2B.

Chairman Micone announced the next public meeting on June 14. This meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

