

**ANC 2B DUPONT CIRCLE ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING,  
Wednesday, April 9, 2008 Jewish Community Center**

The April Regular Meeting of the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (Commission or ANC 2B) was called to order by Chairman Ramon Estrada at 7:00 pm. The Commissioners identified their Single Member Districts (SMDs). Present were: Commissioners Curtis Farrar (2B01), William Hewitt (2B02), Bob Meehan (2B03), Jack Jacobson (2B04), Victor Wexler (2B05), Mike Silverstein (2B06), Phil Carney (2B07), and Ramon Estrada (2B09). Commissioner Will Stephens (2B08) was not present. The Chairman noted the presence of a quorum.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Carney stated that the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPW) delayed awarding the contract for Stead Park renovation because DPW failed to apply for the appropriate construction permit. He also announced that the Concert for Life Aids Fundraiser would take place at the Foundry Methodist Church on April 25th.

Commissioner Meehan noted that the S & T Street Parks working group would meet at the DPW Director's office on April 10th. The group will discuss the cost benefit analysis and construction plans with the Director. The final design will be considered by the ANC at its May meeting.

Commissioner Silverstein announced that Ron Leve, DCCA member, passed away. The Commission sent its condolences to Ron's friends and family.

Commissioner Farrar announced that DDOT's repaving and reconstruction of 18th Street between Massachusetts and Florida Avenues would appear on the ANC's May agenda.

Commissioner Carney and the Dupont Circle Environmental Committee announced a cleanup day on April 26th. They also announced a graffiti cleanup day on April 24th.

Rick Busch, President, Dupont Circle Conservancy, announced a remapping hearing by the Zoning Commission on April 28th at 6:30. He requested a Commissioner to attend the hearing.

A member of the Third Church of Christ, Scientist noted that at the ANC's March regular meeting, Councilmember Jack Evans announced he would introduce a bill supporting the rescinding of the historic landmark status of Third Church of Christ, Scientist. She noted that Councilmember Evans placed a hold on this bill. Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to offer the ANC's support to the legislation and to write to each Councilmember. Commissioner Wexler seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Christopher Ziemann, Transportation Management Specialist, Ward 2, DDOT, announced the final meeting on the 14th Street Streetscape Design and Transportation Study, on April 24th from 6:30-8:30 at the Reeves Center (2000 14th Street, NW).

## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The Commission heard a presentation by Borderstan on the continuation of PSA208 patrol officers in the Borderstan neighborhood, and consideration of a resolution in support of same. Representatives of Borderstan noticed increased criminal activity in their area. They expressed concern over their PSA being moved to the Second District.

Commissioner Jacobson made the following motion:

*Whereas, 15th Street, NW, divides the 2nd and 3rd police districts, including PSAs 208 and 307.*

*Whereas, 15th Street, NW, between P and T Streets, NW, is a particularly sensitive crime area, where citizens and police last year recognized that drug deals, petty thefts, robberies and other crimes had been occurring more frequently than in the majority of the 2nd police district.*

*Whereas, the citizens of PSAs 208 and 307 along 15th Street fought back by organizing themselves and engaging with the 2nd and 3rd police districts across borders to initiate an anti-crime organization called "Borderstan".*

*Whereas, as part of the anti-crime initiative, the 3rd police district dedicated 2 patrol officers to the "Borderstan" neighborhood and the 2nd police district dedicated 3 patrol officers to the "Borderstan" neighborhood to reduce and deter crime along 15th Street. Whereas, "Borderstan" has achieved enormous success in deterring crime along 15th*

*Street through effective policing and communications between citizens and police officers in PSAs 208 and 307.*

*Therefore, be it resolved by ANC 2B:*

*That ANC 2B commends the police lieutenants and participating “Borderstan” officers in PSAs 208 and 307 for the successful execution of the “Borderstan” program, and for continuing to dedicate the appropriate number of patrol officers to the “Borderstan” neighborhood to keep crime in check, and;*

*That the Metropolitan Police Department should attempt to replicate the success of the “Borderstan” program in other neighborhoods, where appropriate, to foster communication between police districts, and to promote effective communication between police, citizens and businesses.*

Commissioner Wexler seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

Rob Halligan, President, Dupont Circle Citizens Association, announced that the Dupont Circle Public Safety Committee meets every third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) station at 1620 V Street NW.

Commissioner Estrada thanked Rob Halligan for his work on building a strong relationship between MPD and the community.

## **GENERAL AGENDA**

The Commission heard a presentation by Capital Pride Parade organizers for community support for the 2008 Capital Pride Parade on June 14th from 6:30-8:30. Eric Reader, Co-Chair of the Capital Pride Parade, appeared before the Commission. He noted that the parade route would remain the same as in previous years. He requested a letter of support from the ANC. Commissioner Carney made a motion to support the Capital Pride Parade festival and requested a waiver for the MPD Police fee. Commissioner Farrar seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

The Commission heard a presentation by Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association on menu labeling. A representative appeared before the Commission and requested its support on menu labeling in the District. Commissioner Silverstein made a

motion to submit a letter suggesting that the Council support menu labeling for chain restaurants, without putting any undue burden on independent restaurants. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

The Commission reconsidered the 17th Street Streetscape Project and a revised resolution. Commissioner Jacobson noted that many people are opposed to DDOT using brick in the 17th Street Streetscape Project. He noted that DDOT's own design manual states that the standard for Dupont Circle should consist of concrete sidewalk. He stated he is opposed to DDOT installing brick sidewalks. Commissioner Estrada noted that other historic districts do not use brick sidewalks. Commissioner Hewitt stated that he thought the ANC's discussion should include something more substantial than anecdotal evidence before it demanded a specific sidewalk material. He commended Commissioner Jacobson's motion for requesting DDOT to conduct a review of sidewalk materials.

Commissioner Jacobson made the following motion. Commissioner Wexler provided updated language to the following motion.

*Whereas, brick sidewalks require constant maintenance and DDOT has historically been unable to service and maintain brick sidewalks satisfactorily to ensure the safety of pedestrians, especially the elderly and those with disabilities and mobility impairment; Whereas, even when well maintained, standard red bricks tend to be slippery when wet and tend to ice over more quickly than concrete, particularly in Washington where weather can change quickly and dramatically;*

*Whereas, bricks are difficult to keep on a uniform plane and create tripping hazards for pedestrians, especially the elderly and those with disabilities and mobility impairment; Whereas, utility maintenance and construction projects continually render brick surfaces dangerous and create additional hazards for pedestrians;*

*Whereas, the standard sidewalk finish for commercial and mixed-use zones in the Dupont Circle Historic District is not brick, but concrete, according to DC regulations, including the DDOT design and engineer manual, Section 31.2.8;*

*Whereas, in recent months DDOT has completed a similar streetscape renovation project on P Street, NW, in ANC 2B that included paving all sidewalks with standard red brick, where maintenance is already required to fix loose, popped and damaged bricks;*

*Whereas, DDOT has ignored the predominant opposition to standard red brick sidewalk construction expressed during the series of community meetings held by DDOT to receive public comment on the streetscape project;*

*Therefore, be it resolved by ANC 2B:*

*That standard red brick should not be installed as part of the 17th Streetscape project;*

*That DDOT should now consider alternative proposals to standard red brick and investigate alternative materials that reflect the broad community consensus in opposition to brick expressed at DDOT's public meetings;*

*That DDOT should be charged with finding an alternative sidewalk treatment that incorporates the safety of concrete and the aesthetic of brick, and which also follows DC regulations that note that the standard sidewalk finish for the Dupont Circle Historic District is concrete;*

*That no equipment or furniture be installed without budgeted maintenance;*

*That DDOT's budget, on an annual basis, direct adequate funding to maintain the renovated 17th Street to ensure the safety of pedestrians, especially the elderly and those with disabilities and mobility impairment;*

*That a business leader from the Dupont Circle Historic Mainstreet Project with P Streetscape experience be added to the 17th Streetscape Committee;*

*That DDOT is encouraged to work with businesses to use one design of public space fencing;*

*Resolved, subject to DDOT's and Dupont Circle Historic Mainstreet's acceptance of the above recommendations and resolution of all other issues, ANC 2B supports the continued development of this important and long-awaited project.*

Residents expressed support for the motion and letter.

The motion carried (8-0).

## **REGULATORY AGENDA**

The Commission reviewed revised plans for the Utopia project at 14th and U Streets NW (2B09). The applicant presented revised plans to the Commission. Commissioner Estrada noted that the project plans were getting better, but still needed refining. He noted that some of the materials needed to be revisited. He noted that the view of the building from south to north needed refinements. He expressed concern over the pedestrian experience on the southern side of the building. Commissioner Estrada noted that the Historic Preservation Review Board voted in support of the proposed height of the building. He noted that he remains opposed to the proposed height of the building. Commissioner Estrada stated that the Commission would request an explanation from HPRB on their support of the current height, when the Commission has expressly requested a lower height. He noted that the ANC was not given “great weight” by HPRB. He stated that the metallic style of the northern side of the building would need to be revisited by the applicant. Commissioner Estrada stated that a future traffic study would address the curb cut. Commissioner Estrada made a motion to request the applicant to continue refining its plan with the ANC’s suggestions, and to present the revised plans to the Commission at a future meeting. He noted that DCC agrees with the ANC’s proposed changes. Commissioner Silverstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (8-0).

The Commission considered BZA Application by the owner of 2021 N Street, NW for a proposed garage addition (2B06). Jeffrey Smith appeared before the Commission. He requested the ANC’s support allowing the addition of a garage. The garage would not extend past the property line or existing garages. Commissioner Meehan expressed concern over the applicant not meeting the zoning variance hardship test. Commissioner Silverstein made a motion support the BZA application request, as presented at the meeting. Commissioner Hewitt seconded the motion. Commissioner Jacobson requested the Commission review the paper application before executing the Commission’s decision. The applicant noted that their BZA hearing is in July, which would give the Commission additional time to consider. Commissioner Silverstein withdrew his motion, so that the Commission could reconsider at the May meeting.

The Commission considered BZA Appeal No. 17589 by Salvatore Gorgone (1417 17th Street NW), of administrative decision by Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, to deny the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy permit for a gourmet shop because the prior delicatessen use had been discontinued for more than three years

(2B05). The Commission had already considered this item at a previous meeting and did not consider at tonight's meeting.

The Commission considered Application No. 17785 regarding a Zoning Variance request for an area variance to complete an extension of the existing third floor at 1776 Willard Street, NW (2B08). The applicant was not present. The Commission did not consider the request.

The Commission considered Historic Landmark Application #08-06 to designate the National Permanent Building (1775 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW) as a historic landmark (2B06). The applicant did not appear before the Commission. The Commission did not consider the application. Commissioner Jacobson requested that the ANC request the applicant to appear before the Commission.

The Commission considered ABC Application No. 76218 by Save the Whale T/A Sign of the Whale (1825 M Street NW) for a substantial change request for a change in hours of operation to offer breakfast on Friday and Saturday nights (2B06). Commissioner Silverstein suggested the Commission take no action.

#### **UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Estrada made a motion to approve the March regular meeting minutes as amended. Alfred E. Blicher, Jr. is empowered to make technical changes to the March regular meeting minutes. The motion carried (8-0).

At 9:30 PM, Commissioner Estrada moved to adjourn the meeting, which passed by acclimation.

The next regular meeting of ANC 2B will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 2008, 7:00 PM at the D.C. Jewish Community Center at 16th and Q Streets, NW.

Respectfully submitted,

Alfred E. Blicher, Jr.

Executive Director

Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B

ADOPTED: May 14, 2008