

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

The January 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), Bob Meehan (2B03), Victor Wexler (2B05), Mike Silverstein (2B06), Phil Carney (2B07), Will Stephens (2B08) and Ramon Estrada (2B09). Commissioner William Hewitt (2B02) and Ryan Butler (2B04) were not present. Commissioner Butler resigned as Commissioner for 2B04. The Chairman noted the presence of a quorum.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Meehan submitted the following statement regarding ADA access for the 17th Street Streetscape project.

RESOLUTION ON ADA ACCESS FOR 17TH ST STREETScape PROJECT

Whereas ANC 2B passed a resolution in 2007 in support of the 17th St Streetscape with the provision that wheelchair access be provided to establishments with only a one-step high threshold above the sidewalk,

Whereas the spokesperson for the 17th St Streetscape contractor stated at its December 18, 2007 public meeting that their scope for ADA related issues was limited to the general pedestrian right of way on the sidewalk, not to access to buildings from the sidewalk,

Whereas ANC 2B believes that the statement of the contractor was not only bad policy but also violated ADA regulations when it is feasible to provide such access during the reconstruction of formerly non-conforming sidewalks and that it is the ANC's understanding that a one step threshold falls within the limits of the feasibility mandate,

Therefore, ANC 2B demands that the 17th Streetscape project include the incorporation of permanent wheel chair access for the 11 establishments list below where the front door threshold is no more than one step above the sidewalk grade:

- 1. 1711 17th Rosebud Liquors*
- 2. 1709 17th Picasso Gallery*
- 3. 1636 17th Meat Gallery*
- 4. 1636 R Teran Restaurant*
- 5. 1637 17th Italian Kitchen*

6. 1617 17th Prego Again

7. 1618 17th Cairo Wine and Liquor

8. 1609 17th Annie's (outside foyer threshold even with sidewalk; inside one step up to interior)

9. 1624 Q Hanks Oyster Bar

10. 1537 17th Fox and Hounds Lounge (Trios has ramp but not adjoining bar)

11. 1525 17th Jacks

Furthermore, it is ANC 2B's understanding that the financial responsibility for providing access to these 11 establishments as part of the streetscape project lies with the DC Department of Transportation because the access can be provided just by regarding the slope of the sidewalk or by adding short ramps during the sidewalk reconstruction phase.

Commissioner Carney thanked residents for supporting the Ross School Christmas tree sale. He also noted that the Stead playground groundbreaking would take place in March 2008.

Rob Halligan, President, Dupont Circle Citizens Association, announced the "Aging in Place" program for senior citizens. More information is available at www.dupontcirclevillage.org.

Sol Levine requested interested residents to serve as a block captain in the Neighborhood Network.

Commissioner Estrada recognized two candidates for the 2B04 vacancy: Marisa Uchin and Jack Jacobson. Mr. Jacobson noted that residents should visit www.friendsofjack.com. Commissioner Estrada noted that the filing deadline is January 28th.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

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 Carney noted that thefts from autos have recently increased on Q and P Streets NW.

Commissioner Silverstein noted a recent dog shooting by an MPD Officer on December 24th at the Francis School.

GENERAL AGENDA

The Commission held its election of ANC 2B officers. Commissioner Stephens made a motion to nominate all current office holders to continue serving in their current roles. Commissioner Wexler seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

The Commission heard a presentation by Department of Parks and Recreation regarding the impact of recently issued DPR regulations on the S&T Street parks design concept approved in 2005. Commissioner Meehan noted that tonight's discussion does not involve the issue of dog parks. He noted that ANC 2B previously approved designs for S and T Street Parks. The purpose of the discussion is to revisit the previously approved design, and discuss how recent DPR regulations will affect any dog park plans.

A DPR representative stated that his office wrote the new dog park regulations. He allotted \$600,000 for DC dog parks. He noted that a neighborhood group would need to provide any additional amenities to their dog parks. He noted that his office requires the creation of a Dog Park Application Review Committee to review and approve requested locations for dog parks. Commissioner Silverstein inquired when DPR would finish the S and T Street parks. The DPR representative stated that work would begin in Spring 2008. Commissioner Estrada recognized Iris Molotsky of Friends of S & T Street parks. She noted that the Circle Dogs group is defunct, but that the Washington Dogs group has agreed to take on the responsibility for providing additional amenities for the dog parks.

Commissioner Meehan made a motion that ANC 2B be added to the neighborhood design committee, in addition to Friends of S and T Street Parks and Washington Dogs. Commissioner Meehan will serve as the Commission's representative. Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. Commissioner Wexler made a friendly amendment to request ANC 2B also be added to the Stead Park design committee. Commissioners Meehan and Estrada accepted the friendly amendment. The motion carried (7-0).

Christopher Ziemann, Transportation Management Specialist, Ward 2, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) announced the 14th Street Streetscape Design and Transportation Study meeting on February 19th from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM at the Studio Theatre (1501 14th Street NW). More information can be found at www.14thstreetstudy.com. Additionally, Mr. Ziemann, Commissioners, and residents discussed DDOT's plans for 15th Street NW. The draft 15th Street plan is available at <http://ddot.dc.gov/ddot/cwp/view,a,1249,q,643030.asp>.

The Commission heard a presentation by representatives of Hilton Hotel regarding plans and the schedule for improvements, and their impact on ANC 2B residents. Peter Comey, Vice President, Lowe Enterprises, represented Hilton Hotel before the Commission. Lowe Enterprises plans to renovate the complete hotel over the next five years. He noted that Hilton Hotel would host a community meeting on January 23 at the hotel from 7-9 pm. Mr. Lowe stated that Hilton Hotel has preliminary plans to build residential luxury apartments and a new building on the hotel premises.

Commissioner Estrada inquired whether the Hilton Hotel had made a presentation to ANC 1C. Mr. Lowe responded that they he had not yet made a presentation.

Commissioner Silverstein inquired about how many residential units were included in their plan. Mr. Lowe stated that approximately eight to ten floors, or 200 units were currently planned. Commissioner Meehan expressed concern that the Hilton Hotel chain was putting pressure on the District to give all or part of the Adams School property to the Hilton Hotel for development. Mr. Lowe stated that the Hilton Hotel has no intention of developing any of the Adams School's property. Mr. Lowe stated he would return to speak with the community at a future ANC meeting.

Residents expressed concern over the Hilton Hotel loading docks. They noted that loading docks are inadequate to handle current hotel services, and that the loading and unloading of Hilton delivery trucks pose a public safety threat to children at the Adams School. Residents expressed concern over possible noise and traffic problems during the proposed five-year development time period.

REGULATORY AGENDA

The Commission considered an application by PNC DC HQ, LLC and VNO 1707 H Street, LLC, for the closing of an alley in Square 127, bounded by 18th Street, 17th Street, H Street, and I Street. The applicant intends to redevelop the site of the former Riggs Bank at the corner of 17th and H Streets NW. The applicant acquired three buildings: 800 and 808 17th Street and 1707 H Street. The proposal seeks to demolish the three buildings and build a twelve-story (360,000 square feet) office building. Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to approve the application and endorse the closing of the alley. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

The Commission considered HPA Application No. 08074 requesting concept/facade alterations at 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, NW. Commissioner Carney noted that the applicant was not present. He asked Rick Busch, Dupont Circle Conservancy (DCC), to address DCC's opinion of the application. He stated that DCC has concerns over the condition of the façade of the ground floor. Commissioners Farrar and Estrada suggested the Commission take no action on this matter. The Commission took no action.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to join the ANC security fund, which involves a \$25 deposit to the DC Treasurer. Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to allocate \$100 to Friends of West End Library

for the ANC's share in the library survey. Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Commissioner Estrada provided an update on HPRB regulations regarding the Utopia project at 14th and U Streets NW. Commissioner Estrada recently attended an HPRB meeting regarding this matter. He noted that HPRB did not have jurisdiction to comment on curb cuts and parking. Commissioner Estrada stated that Steve Calcott of HPRB, commented on curb cuts, parking and traffic in the HPRB report. Commissioner Estrada highlighted the HPRB regulations, which exclude HPRB from commenting on such matters. Commissioner Estrada stated that he requested a transcript of the HPRB meeting, because he believes that the HPRB report does not accurately reflect what transpired at the meeting.

Commissioner Estrada and DCCA attended a meeting with the Director of the Office of Planning and Steve Calcott. They expressed concern over the role of HPRB staff and their influence over design concepts. Additionally, Commissioner Estrada reviewed the ANC's position with the Director, and requested a traffic study. After the meeting, the Office of Planning notified the applicant that their application would not be considered until after a traffic study was performed.

Commissioner Estrada stated that he would request several follow-up meetings with the Director regarding the HPRB process by which projects are reviewed.

Commissioner Estrada expressed concern over the erosion of the ANC's "great weight". Commissioner Silverstein noted the increasing urgency of a Historic Preservation bill of rights. He suggested reaching out to other ANCs for support. Commissioner Silverstein noted that the ANC should consider the following rights:

1. Religious rights and religious land-use clauses
2. Racial rights
3. Disability rights
4. 50 year guideline for contributing structures to historic district
5. Planning and public safety

Commissioner Silverstein recommended ANC 2B reach out to other ANCs.

Commissioner Estrada made a motion to approve the November regular meeting minutes as amended. Alfred E. Blicher, Jr. is empowered to make technical changes to the November meeting minutes. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0-1) with Commissioner Estrada abstaining.

Commissioner Estrada made a motion to approve the December regular meeting minutes as amended. Alfred E. Blicher, Jr. is empowered to make technical changes to the December meeting minutes. Commissioner Silverstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

At 10:00 PM, Commissioner Estrada moved to adjourn the meeting, which passed by

acclimation.

The next regular meeting of ANC 2B will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2007, 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: February 13, 2007