

**ANC 2B DUPONT CIRCLE ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 10, 2008 Jewish Community Center**

The September Regular Meeting of the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (Commission or ANC 2B) was called to order by Chairman Estrada at 7:00 pm. The Commissioners identified their Single Member Districts (SMDs). Present were: Curtis Farrar (2B01), William Hewitt (2B02), Bob Meehan (2B03), Jack Jacobson (2B04), Victor Wexler (2B05), Mike Silverstein (2B06), Phil Carney (2B07), Will Stephens (2B08) and Ramon Estrada (2B09). The Chairman noted the presence of a quorum.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Silverstein: Francis Middle School opened on time after a number of renovations. Instead of 350 students, only 250 students are attending, which he fears will result in the loss of teachers.

Commissioner Carney: DPR stated that Stead Park renovations should be completed by the end of October. He noted DC public school system does not buy District flags for its schools.

Commissioner Jacobson: The High Heel race will take place on October 28th.

Michael Beidler, Office of Planning: DC Government is giving away \$1.25 million to homeowners for restoration of houses in historic districts. Contact Michael for more information at Michael.beidler@dc.gov.

Emily Yates, Community Planner, Office of Planning, introduced herself to the community. Contact Emily at Emily.yates@dc.gov or 202-724-4314.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Commissioner Jacobson:

- Sgt. McDonald (PSA 208) attended the meeting
- Burglary at 1500 R Street NW
- Assault and robbery at 16th and R Streets NW; arrest was made
- All stats for categories of robberies for previous month are down compared with last year
- Robberies down from 21 to 18
- Assaults up from 9 to 11
- Burglaries up from 8 to 11
- Drop from 188 total offenses to 176
- Overall crime down 17% since last year, same time
- 4 robberies have occurred at Adams Bank since April 3

Contact Sgt. McDonald at Johnc.mcdonald@dc.gov.

GENERAL AGENDA

Updates on Hilton and 17th Streetscape Project

Washington Hilton: Applicants are addressing operational/design concerns. The next community meeting will occur on September 16th.

Commissioner Stephens made the following motion:

WHEREAS the Hilton Hotel has reached out to the neighborhood to set up a process for dialogue with the community through a small working group made of up representatives of various stakeholders, including ANC 2B; and

WHEREAS the ANC 2B in July 2008 passed a resolution opposing the current design concept for the Hilton's new condominium construction and asking for delay from HPRB pending further community input and alternative designs;

THEREFORE be it resolved that ANC 2B respectfully requests the HPRB to postpone hearing on the Hilton design concept, so that ANC 2B and the community may make an informed judgment based on additional, forthcoming information from the Hilton on design alternatives.

Commissioner Silverstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

17th Street Streetscape: Commissioner Meehan stated that DDOT is willing to meet with the Commission and community on this matter at Foundry Methodist Church on September 24th.

Review of Revised Concept Plans for Utopia Project at 14th and U Streets NW (2B09)

The applicant presented revised plans. Commissioner Estrada made a motion to write a letter to HPRB for the September 25th hearing, repeating contents of ANC 2B's three previous letters, reinforcing the Commission's position that this project is too massive and tall. Commissioner Estrada crafted the following motion:

The Commission has consistently registered its position and concern about the compatibility of this project with the surrounding historic neighborhood. In its previous motions and testimony, the ANC2B has recommended that the height and scale of this project be reduced to mesh with the neighboring properties (see attachment).

The Commission was presented with revised drawings that showed the removal of one floor from the CR (northern) portion of the project. The plans also showed,

and the architect confirmed, larger penthouse structures on both the CR and C3A portions of the proposed buildings. Concern was expressed about the changes in the penthouses, which occupy a large percentage of the roof area. The architect stated that the penthouses were not for residential use and would only house mechanical systems. Expanded built-up of the roof area, which contradicts the previous HPRB actions and approved plans, increases the building height and we do not approve these changes.

Therefore, consistent with its position for lower height, ANC2B unanimously approved the removal of one floor from the CR portion of the project and expressed concerns about the increase in the square footage of the roof structures.

Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. Commissioner Jacobson made a friendly amendment to accept Dupont Circle Conservancy's recommendation to allow this project to move forward. Commissioner Estrada accepted the friendly amendment. Commissioner Carney seconded the friendly amendment. The motion carried (9-0).

BZA Hearing: Commissioner Estrada addressed the BZA hearing date for this same matter on Election Day, November 4th. He asked the applicant if he would agree to move the hearing to November 18th. The applicant agreed to move the date.

Traffic Study: Commissioner Estrada inquired about the status of the study. The applicant is reviewing a draft now, but will submit to a final version to the Commission.

Presentation by Bike DC regarding a community bike ride through ANC2B on closed streets on September 27, 2008.

Bike DC is a community bike ride through Washington on closed streets on September 27th from 8 AM – 12 PM. The event will be essentially a rolling enclosure so that once participants have passed, the streets can be reopened immediately. This means most closures are only 2-3 hours long. You can learn more about the event at www.bikedc.net or contact Sheba Farrin at sheba@bikedc.net. Commissioner Silverstein suggested that the Commission take no action on this matter.

Presentation regarding Breast Cancer Walk through ANC 2B

The Breast Cancer 3-Day Walk will be come through Dupont Circle on Sunday, October 5th. Approximately 3,200 people will participate between 10 AM and 4 PM.

Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to support this matter. Commissioner Estrada seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

Review of concept plans for 1433 T Street NW

The applicant stated that the building needs various repairs to bring the building into compliance with District building codes. Tenants would need to be moved out of the

building during the renovations. A representative of the tenants association expressed concern over residents' rights. The applicant stated that he is working with the residents. The Commission expressed concern over the tenants' rights. Commissioner Estrada made a motion to approve the HPRB application. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. Commissioner Jacobson stated that he does not want to reward building owners who don't respect their tenants. Joel Lawson, President, DCCA, stated that concerned residents can contact Johanna Shreve, Office of the Tenant Advocate, at johanna.shreve@dc.gov. The motion carried (5-2-2), with Commissioners Stephens and Jacobson voting in opposition, and Commissioners Silverstein and Farrar abstaining.

REGULATORY AGENDA

Chopsticks Restaurant request for public space for unenclosed cafe at 1020 19th Street NW

Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to support the application. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

Request for stipulated license by Nando's Chickenland, 1210 18th Street NW. (2B06)

Hours of operation will be 11 AM – 10 PM; 11 AM – 12 PM on Fridays and Saturdays. Commissioner Silverstein made a motion to issue a stipulated license with an understanding of the closing hours as requested, with no entertainment endorsement. Commissioner Hewitt seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

Presentation for a proposed sculpture in public space at 1800 Massachusetts Avenue NW. (2B07)

The Commission did not consider this item because the applicant was out of town.

Irregular Primary Vote Count

Commissioner Carney made the following motion:

WHEREAS, the vote count problems for the September 9, 2008 DC primary raise fundamental issues that threaten the very foundation of our democratic process;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Dupont Circle ANC 2B calls upon the District government to immediately conduct a complete investigation, recount and then promptly issue a public report with a complete and transparent explanation of the primary vote count discrepancies for Ward 2 Council and Council at Large.

Commissioner Silverstein seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

Francis Middle School

Commissioner Silverstein made the following motion:

Whereas, DCPS Chancellor Michele Rhee ordered a consolidation of Stevens Elementary School and Francis Middle School, and

Whereas, such a consolidation required a massive renovation of Francis School to accommodate Pre-K, and K-4 students, and

Whereas, the renovation work continued through the first week of school, and some is still not completed, and

Whereas, many Stevens parents and other parents chose to send their children to other schools, mindful of the DCPS past record of late and chaotic openings, and

Whereas, Francis-Stevens opened on time, with a splendid renovated facility and an outstanding faculty, but only 249 students,

Therefore, ANC 2B congratulates the DC Public Schools, Chancellor Rhee, Principal Maurice Kennard and the entire staff of Francis-Stevens, and strongly urges the DCPS to hold Francis-Stevens harmless for any shortfall in enrollment this year because of the consolidation and ongoing construction. We do not believe any teacher should lose his or her job or be transferred because parents enrolled their children elsewhere during the confusion and uncertainty of this summer's construction.

The motion carried (7-2), with Commissioners Wexler and Jacobson voting in opposition.

BZA Application for 1811 15th Street NW rear addition (2B09)

Commissioner Estrada made a motion to support the application. Commissioner Farrar seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Estrada made a motion for approval of a \$300 ad in the Dupont Circle House Tour program guide. Commissioner Wexler seconded the motion. The motion carried (9-0).

MINUTES

Commissioner Estrada tabled approval of August minutes.

Audit

Commissioner Silverstein stated that the Commission did not receive any negative comments from auditors.

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

The next regular meeting of ANC 2B will be held on Tuesday, October 7, 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: November 12, 2008