



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 9th, 2022; 7:00 p.m.
Online via Zoom

Call to Order

The regular March 2022 meeting of the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (Commission or ANC 2B) was called to order by Chair Matthew Holden at 7:02 pm.

Introduction of Commissioners

The Commissioners identified their single member districts (SMDs). Present were: Meg Roggensack (2B01), Jeffrey Rueckgauer (2B02), Robin Nunn (2B03), Mo Pasternak (2B04), William Herbig (2B05), Mike Silverstein (2B06), Michael Scott McKernan (2B07), Matthew Holden (2B08), and Kyle Mulhall (2B09).

Adoption of the Agenda

Chair Holden moved to adopt the ANC's meeting agenda. Commissioner Mulhall seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0).

Announcements and Public Comments

Update from Councilmember Brooke Pinto

Councilmember Brooke Pinto gave an update regarding her work on the DC Council.

Commissioner Announcements

Chair Holden and Commissioners Roggensack, Pasternak, McKernan, and Silverstein gave commissioner announcements.

Committee Updates

Commissioner Pasternak, Chair of the ANC's Mobility Committee (MC), and Commissioner Herbig, Chair of the ANC's Land Use Committee (LUC), gave committee updates.

Other Public Announcements and General Comments or Future Agenda Items

Bill McLeod, the Executive Director of Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets (HDCMS); Anna Noakes, a Ward 2 representative for the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services

(MOCRS); Nick DelleDonne, the President of the Dupont East Civic Action Association (DECAA); and Diane Quinn, a Board Member for the Dupont Circle Citizens Association (DCCA), gave other public announcements and general comments or future agenda items.

Land Use Agenda

1145 17th Street NW – Landmarking Application for the National Geographic Headquarters

and

1145 17th Street NW – Landmarking Application for the National Geographic Headquarters

Commissioner Herbig moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Rueckgauer seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, the DC Preservation League has submitted an application to the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) for the historic landmark designation of the building at 1145 17th Street NW (“Stone Building”), zoned D-6 and located within ANC 2B05, for the purpose of recognizing and preserving the building at that address,

WHEREAS, the National Geographic Society (NGS) has submitted an application to the HPRB for the historic landmark designation of the parcels located on the northern half of the block surrounded by L Street, 17th Street, M Street, and 16th Street NW, on which are located one building at 1145 17th Street NW (“Stone Building”), and two at 1156 16th Street NW (“Hubbard Hall” and “Administration Building and Addition”), zoned D-2 or D-6, for the purpose of recognizing the critical importance and significant contributions of the NGS to the culture of Washington, DC, the nation, and the world, and preserving the buildings and site which are the origin of the worldly contributions created by the NGS at those addresses, their international home,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B’s Land Use Committee (LUC) reviewed the submitted nominations at its duly-noticed monthly meeting on March 2, 2022,

WHEREAS, each of the buildings is old enough to be eligible for historic preservation status, with Hubbard Hall, the Administration Building and Addition, and the Stone Building having been completed in 1904, 1912-1931, and 1964, respectively,

WHEREAS, the buildings were designed by a series of architects renowned during their years of work, including Hornblower & Marshall, Arthur B. Heaton, and Edward Durell Stone, respectively, and serve as distinctive examples of successive historical architectural movements, including classical revivalism and new formalism,

WHEREAS, members of the LUC agreed with the applicants that each of these buildings offers an important contribution to the architectural and cultural history of Washington, DC and should be considered as an ensemble in this matter,

WHEREAS, each of the two applicants agreed that the other applicant's proposal was complementary and non-conflicting with their own application, and

WHEREAS, by law, the HPRB gives "great weight" to recommendations in duly adopted ANC resolutions and carefully considers the views of community organizations and citizens per DC Code 1-309-10 (d)(3)(a).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports both proposed historic landmark designations as presented to HPRB.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that the ANC's Chair, the Land Use Committee's Chair, and the ANC's Executive Director be sent copies of the final actions as approved by the HPRB and/or HPRB staff.

1527-1529 18th Street NW – Concept / Add Fourth and Fifth Floor Additions at Roof; Remove Fire Escapes

Commissioner Herbig moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner McKernan seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, the University of Utah has submitted Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) application #22-172 for a renovation and expansion of the property at 1527-1529 18th Street NW, zoned MU-15 and located within ANC 2B07, for the purpose of creating a dormitory and events venue called the Orrin G. Hatch Center for the university and affiliated students participating in internships in Washington, DC,

WHEREAS, the buildings at 1527-1529 18th Street NW are not on the historic register but are contributing structures within the Dupont Circle Historic District,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B's Land Use Committee (LUC) reviewed the submitted concept plans at its duly-noticed monthly meeting on March 2, 2022,

WHEREAS, the concept plans propose the renovation of two attached townhomes along 18th Street NW, plus minor improvements to a carriage house on the same parcel, located along the alley between Church Street and Q Street NW,

WHEREAS, the concept plans include accommodations for up to fifty students working in Washington during all parts of the year from the University of Utah and potentially other universities in that state,

WHEREAS, the concept plans would add a rear addition to the building's fourth floor, add a new fifth floor, create roof decks on the western and eastern sides of the building extending from the fifth floor, and remove accessory external stairs on the building facade,

WHEREAS, the concept plans show that the proposed additions to the building would not be visible by pedestrians on 18th Street or Church Street NW, but are visible on the secondary rear elevation from Church Street NW, which we find unobjectionable,

WHEREAS, the concept plans propose locating an emergency generator between the building facade and 18th Street and the public alley just north of Church Street NW, plus adding new condensing units in front of the existing carriage house, each enclosed by either landscaping or fencing, or a combination of the two,

WHEREAS, the LUC suggested the following changes:

- Placing a generator between the building facade and 18th Street NW would serve only to negatively impact the adjacent public realm in this context and set an inappropriate precedent for the community. It is recommended that an alternative location for the generator – prioritizing areas of least visibility and shielded from public space – be identified by the applicants, including the same or similar location in a below grade vault that is lined with sound absorbing material.

WHEREAS, by law, the HPRB gives “great weight” to recommendations in duly adopted ANC resolutions and carefully considers the views of community organizations and citizens per DC Code 1-309-10 (d)(3)(a).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports HPRB application #22-172 pursuant to the following:

- Relocating the generator to a location of least visibility, shielded from public space, and not between the building facade and 18th Street NW.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that the ANC’s Chair, the Land Use Committee’s Chair, and the ANC’s Executive Director be sent copies of the final concept design and actions as approved by the HPRB and/or HPRB staff.

1819 15th Street NW – Permit / Add Third Story and Reface Front and Side of Building

Commissioner Herbig moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Mulhall seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, applicant Nima Biabani has submitted Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) application #22-087 for the renovation and reconstruction of the property at 1819 15th Street NW, zoned RF-2 and located within ANC 2B09, for the purpose of creating two condominium units in a building that was previously occupied by a church,

WHEREAS, 1819 15th Street NW is located within, but is not a contributing building to, the U Street Historic District,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B's Land Use Committee (LUC) reviewed the submitted concept plans at its duly-noticed monthly meeting on March 2, 2022,

WHEREAS, the concept plans indicate removing and replacing the primary building facade, which is in poor condition, and adding a third level, which is permissible by right under the parcel's zoning,

WHEREAS, the concept plans for the third level show a height and mansard-style roof that is similar to that of the building just to the north across Swann Street NW, as well as a height that is similar to that of a building on the same block of 15th Street NW a few parcels to the south,

WHEREAS, the concept plans propose creating two condominium units, one occupying the basement and first floor and the second occupying the second and third floors,

WHEREAS, the concept plans would add two HVAC units atop the roof to serve the residential units, as well as an external ladder system on the eastern (rear) facade of the building,

WHEREAS, LUC members were in agreement that the project's general aesthetics and scale would not be incompatible with its contextual neighbors and other buildings in the historic district,

WHEREAS, LUC members noted that the concept plans had considerably improved compared to initial drawings introduced to other community organizations for consideration, and

WHEREAS, by law, the HPRB gives "great weight" to recommendations in duly adopted ANC resolutions and carefully considers the views of community organizations and citizens per DC Code 1-309-10 (d)(3)(a).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports HPRB application #22-087.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that the ANC's Chair, the Land Use Committee's Chair, and the ANC's Executive Director be sent copies of the final concept design and actions as approved by the HPRB and/or HPRB staff.

1776 Massachusetts Avenue NW – Concept / Façade Alterations

Commissioner Herbig moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Pasternak seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, Melissa Matthews has submitted Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) application #22-184 for the renovation of the property at 1776 Massachusetts

Avenue NW, zoned MU-15 and located within ANC 2B05, for the purpose of creating a Class A office building for a future tenant,

WHEREAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue NW is located within, but is not a contributing building to, the Dupont Circle Historic District and the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B's Land Use Committee (LUC) reviewed the submitted concept plans at its duly-noticed monthly meeting on March 2, 2022,

WHEREAS, the concept plans include reconfiguring the bay windows, increasing the roof height to a rear portion of the building, creating an activated rooftop penthouse space, and building an addition to the ground floor outdoor space,

WHEREAS, the applicant provided two concept plans and the LUC unanimously preferred the "tripartite" alternate plan,

WHEREAS, the LUC suggested the following changes:

- Reconfiguring the proposed ground level horizontal garage-style door to a vertical-style operable door system, such as NanaWall, that is more in keeping with the overall building composition. The industrial character that would be created by the garage-style door would detract from the overall proposed building design and negatively contribute to the Dupont Circle Historic District and the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District.

WHEREAS, by law, the HPRB gives "great weight" to recommendations in duly adopted ANC resolutions and carefully considers the views of community organizations and citizens per DC Code 1-309-10 (d)(3)(a).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports HPRB application #22-184 pursuant to the following:

- Advancing the "tripartite" alternate plan for the façade,
- Addressing ground level design concerns by replacing the garage-style door with a vertical-style operable door system, and
- Avoiding relocation of the transformer vault closer to the public sidewalk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that the ANC's Chair, the Land Use Committee's Chair, and the ANC's Executive Director be sent copies of the final concept design and actions as approved by the HPRB and/or HPRB staff.

General Agenda

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding Dupont Underground's Proposed Painting of a Mural on the Side Wall of Cairo Wine & Liquor at 1618 17th Street NW

Chair Holden moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Roggensack seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

ANC 2B's supports Dupont Underground's proposed painting of a mural on the side wall of Cairo Wine & Liquor at 1618 17th Street NW and supports any permits that may be required for the project.

Discussion Regarding the Ongoing Ward 2 ANC Redistricting Process

Austin Naughton, Chair of the Ward 2 ANC Redistricting Task Force, gave a presentation regarding the ongoing Ward 2 ANC redistricting process and answered questions from commissioners and meeting attendees.

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the ANC 2B Mobility Committee's Intersection Audit

Commissioner Pasternak moved to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Chair Holden seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 9-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, ANC 2B believes that pedestrian safety is essential and has passed a plethora of resolutions in support of improved safety,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B recognizes that Dupont Circle has safer infrastructure than other parts of the city but that all residents deserve safer streets than the ones that have contributed to the death of 80 people in the last 2 years,

WHEREAS, members of the Dupont Circle community mobilized to conduct an audit of 192 of the intersections across the neighborhood, demonstrating a concern for safety,

WHEREAS, the audit found 25 intersections that do not have ramps for wheelchairs or strollers to safely travel,

WHEREAS, the audit found that fewer than 10% of intersections in ANC 2B prohibit turns on red across all streets,

WHEREAS, the audit found that just 15 of the intersections have bump outs at every corner,

WHEREAS, the audit builds on existing efforts seeking to gain the attention of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) regarding these needs and was only justified based on the inadequacy of the pace of improvements, even as DDOT introduces new systems like the Traffic Safety Investigation (TSI) Dashboard,

WHEREAS, the audit helped identify priority intersections in all 9 of ANC 2B's single member districts that are unsafe and should be modified as soon as possible,

WHEREAS, the intersection of Florida Avenue and Connecticut Avenue NW was the subject of Notices of Intent (NOIs) #19-31-TOA and #19-32-TOA, which promised several safety improvements by the spring of 2019, yet, despite sustained effort by commissioners in ANC 2B and ANC 2D, these improvements have not been implemented,

WHEREAS, the latest design for the Connecticut Avenue Streetscape and Deck-Over Project includes additional improvements that go beyond those previously outlined in NOIs but is not expected to be completed until 2025,

WHEREAS, there is a Traffic Safety Investigation (#21-00348604) that is currently "Pending Installation" for Dupont Circle but efforts to learn more about the project from DDOT have been unsuccessful; concerns have been raised from the community both within and beyond the confines of the audit about this community gathering place,

WHEREAS, DDOT previously announced plans to close the inner lanes of the traffic circle following the P Street Streetscape Project, which was completed in 2007, but failed to implement the plan,

WHEREAS, the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and 17th Street NW was another high priority intersection identified by community members in the audit and there is a TSI (#21-00569230) pending DDOT review,

WHEREAS, the intersection of 15th Street and Corcoran Street NW is an unsignalized intersection that requires eastbound and westbound pedestrians to cross two bike lanes, two parking lanes, and three lanes of high-speed vehicular traffic,

WHEREAS, the intersection of 14th Street and Swann Street NW is similar to the intersection of 15th Street and Corcoran Street NW in that it requires pedestrians to cross a major street without the aid of a traffic signal and this intersection has the additional complication of bus traffic on 14th Street NW,

WHEREAS, the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and K Street NW and the approach towards Farragut Square is an avenue of high-speed approach that endangers those near the crowded intersection and the Golden Triangle BID has submitted a traffic safety investigation (#21-00566727) that is currently pending,

WHEREAS, Scott Circle represents a portal between "official" and "hometown" DC, sitting just north of Black Lives Matter Plaza, but the audit revealed conditions that fail to create a welcoming space for pedestrians due to signal timing issues that contribute to an unsafe pedestrian experience,

WHEREAS, drivers on 22nd Street and 23rd Street near O Street NW are often observed driving at dangerously fast speeds and this area is of particular concern given the proximity to the School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens,

WHEREAS, the audit identified issues with the intersection at 18th Street and Church Street NW, which, despite being an unsignalized intersection, has lacked high-visibility crosswalks for several years and there is already a pending Traffic Safety Investigation (#21-00569260), and

WHEREAS, the intersection of 16th Street and U Street NW was an area of concern identified in the audit and in previous actions by ANC 2B and while DDOT has taken action to close the northeast slip lanes, more work is needed to be done and the scope of the pending Traffic Safety Investigation (#21-00269818) is unclear.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B presents the attached summary and data and urges DDOT engineers to review comments and to think of pedestrians and people who live in neighborhood, not just trying to get cars through an area as quickly as possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B asks DDOT to expedite the installation of audible pedestrian signals within Dupont Circle, including options that transmit the signal at a lower volume that may be more appropriate for residential areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that DDOT expeditiously installs ramps at all intersections in need of this essential streetscape feature as identified by the audit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B calls on DDOT to expand the implementation of leading intervals for pedestrians to the extent that it is a near uniform practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B asks DDOT and the DC Council to enact reforms that advance safety in a systematic and automatic fashion that promotes safety through improved road design and increased bump outs without the need for an audit and targeted intersection-by-intersection advocacy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests a response on the status of each intersection identified in this resolution with a clear status update and timeline within 60 days of receipt of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B asks DDOT to install the improvements outlined in the Connecticut Avenue Streetscape and Deck-Over Project plans for the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Florida Avenue NW sooner than the current timeline outlines and to recognize that safety cannot wait for a large-scale and transformative project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests a public meeting to share with the community more information about the planned changes for Dupont Circle and asks that DDOT considers closing the inner lanes of the circle to vehicular traffic as was previously committed to more than 15 years ago after the completion of the restoration of Thomas Circle.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports the TSIs pending at 17th Street and New Hampshire Avenue NW; Connecticut Avenue and K Street NW; 23rd Street and O Street NW; 18th Street and Church Street NW; and 16th Street and U Street NW and urges DDOT to embrace transformative change at these intersections and to emphasize safety over the failed status quo.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B asks DDOT to continue to improve service length agreements and to focus on implementing safety improvements within a shorter timeline.

Administrative Matters

Approval of the ANC's Regular February 2022 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Pasternak moved to approve the ANC's regular February 2022 meeting minutes. Commissioner Rueckgauer seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 8-0-1).

Adjournment

Chair Holden adjourned the meeting at 10:39 pm.