



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

"Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C."

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 19, 2014; 7:00 p.m.
GW's Fungler Hall – 2201 G Street NW, Room 103

Call to Order

Chair Patrick Kennedy (01) called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Commissioners Rebecca Coder (02), Armando Irizarry (04), Graham Galka (05), Jackson Carnes (07), and Peter Sacco (08) were present. Commissioner Florence Harmon (06) arrived at 7:20 p.m.

Commissioner Irizarry made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Coder seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0).

Community Forum

Report from the Office of Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans

Kevin Stogner, General Counsel for Councilmember Jack Evans, was present to give an update from the Councilmember's office. Mr. Stogner said that the calendar for the upcoming legislative year was about to come out. He added that anyone with any constituent services issues should contact Sherri Kimbel, the Councilmember's Director of Constituent Services.

Report from the Ward 2 Education Network

Chris Sondreal, ANC 2A's representative to the Ward 2 Education Network, was present to give an update on behalf of the Network.

Mr. Sondreal said that the first meeting of the academic year for the Network had not been scheduled yet, but that it should be sometime in October. He added that the group is making more of an effort to schedule evening meetings.

With regards to the School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens, Mr. Sondreal said that the school's enrollment was hovering around 400 students, which included a growth of 90 students over the summer. Currently, the school was at approximately 80% of capacity. The school was also starting the planning for a large renovation.

Erin Martin, a representative from the Home and School Association (HSA) at Francis-Stevens, was also present. She said that the HSA was currently planning for their first annual Fall Auction, which would be on the lower level of GW's School of Media and Public Affairs building at 5 pm on Saturday, October 18th. The event would be free and open to the public, food and drinks would be served, and there would be plenty of great auction items to bid on.

Announcements and Public Comments

Chris Hammond, a candidate for the Office of the Chairman of the DC Council, was present and talked about the need for a public debate between the all of the candidates running for the Chairman position.

Commissioner Florence Harmon (06) entered the room.

Legislative Agenda

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Proposed Work Plan for the Rehabilitation of the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge over Rock Creek

Adil Rizvi, the Project Manager from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), was present to talk about the project.

Mr. Rizvi said that there were many structural deficiencies with the bridge. He said that the final design for the new bridge would be completed by the spring of 2015, with an anticipated start of construction during the summer of 2015.

With regards to the construction duration and hours, Mr. Rizvi said that the construction was expected to last for 15 months. The working hours would be 7 am to 7 pm, Monday through Saturday.

Mr. Rizvi reviewed the maps of how the eastbound and westbound traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue would be diverted to accommodate the construction work. He said that pedestrian traffic would be maintained during the construction.

Chair Kennedy suggested that the traffic light timing at M Street and Pennsylvania Avenue could be altered to reflect the changing traffic pattern.

Chair Kennedy also asked about changing the detour zone on 26th Street to possibly two lanes instead of maintaining two-way traffic on 26th Street. Mr. Rizvi said that it would be hard to change over the street, but that he would look into it.

The General Manager for the Westbridge Condominiums was present and said that changing over to one-way traffic on 26th Street for the duration of the detour could improve traffic patterns in the area.

Commissioner Coder asked about the original proposal, which called for overnight work hours; however, Mr. Rizvi confirmed that the work hours would now only be during the daytime.

Sara Maddux, a neighborhood resident, asked about adding minimum clearance signs along Rock Creek Parkway leading up to the bridge, as there had been many trucks caught under the bridge recently.

Commissioner Irizarry asked Mr. Rizvi to consider starting working hours at 9 am on Saturday instead of 7 am to give the neighborhood some relief from the construction. Mr. Rizvi said that DDOT may have a new standard for limiting work hours on Saturday to 9 am to 3 pm, and thus he was going to check on it.

A neighbor asked about how DDOT would consult with the Westbridge residents if DDOT intended to turn 26th Street into a one-way street. A representative from DDOT who was present said that DDOT could come back to the October ANC meeting to discuss what would happen to 26th Street.

Chair Kennedy recommended holding periodic check-in meetings with stakeholders throughout the duration of the project, which should also include the Georgetown business community.

Commissioner Coder read aloud a resolution she wrote on the matter.

Commissioner Coder made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Carnes seconded the motion. Commissioner Irizarry asked for a friendly amendment to include the name of the Project Manager in the resolution. The friendly amendment was accepted, and the final motion was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding Crosswalk Configurations at the Intersection of New Hampshire Avenue, 22nd Street, and L Street

Commissioner Harmon went over the history of the crosswalk, which was added and then recently removed from the intersection. She also talked about why the lights on 22nd Street by Washington Circle had not yet been electrified. She added that once the lights were electrified, DDOT would re-synchronize all of the lights on Washington Circle.

Richard Kenney from DDOT was present and said that the lights on Washington Circle has gone through multiple iterations, and that they were still being worked on now that the summer had passed. Mr. Kenney explained why the lights on 22nd Street were taking so long to electrify because of unanticipated problems with wiring, and that DDOT now thought that they had a fast solution to get them electrified. DDOT was also looking into raising the speed limit on the K Street Underpass to encourage less people to leave the underpass and travel through the circle.

A local resident was concerned about how drivers were ignoring the red turn light at the corner of Washington Circle and 23rd Street as they turned to go south down 23rd Street. Mr. Kenney recommended that the ANC reach out to the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to police the drivers.

Commissioner Irizarry reiterated the need for a second Metro entrance to the Foggy Bottom Metro Station. Commissioner Carnes agreed with Commissioner Irizarry's point, adding that the station was the busiest Metro station with a single entrance.

Chair Kennedy read the enacting clauses of a resolution Commissioner Harmon wrote on the matter.

Commissioner Harmon made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Discussion and Consideration of a Resolution Regarding Service Changes to the 30s Metrobus Routes and the Elimination of Metrobus stops in the 2500 block of Pennsylvania Avenue

Chair Kennedy went over the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) proposed changes to the 30s Metrobus routes. He said that in order to speed up the buses on the route and keep them on schedule, WMATA was proposing to eliminate bus stops along the route, including one at 26th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW.

Chair Kennedy said that the elimination of that particular bus stop was a problem for the neighborhood, adding that the bus stop had an overhang at the Westbridge Condominiums building for inclement weather.

Commissioner Coder added that only the westbound bus stop at 26th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue would be eliminated and not the eastbound one.

Chair Kennedy read the enacting clauses of a resolution he wrote on the matter.

Chair Kennedy made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Coder seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Application for a Rear Addition at 2431 I Street (HPA 14-625) in the Foggy Bottom Historic District

Steve Charnovitz, the owner of the property, was present to talk about the proposal for a rear addition to the house. Paul Wilson, the architect for the project, was also present to talk about the design for the project. Mr. Wilson gave a presentation of the plans for the project.

Mr. Wilson said they owner is constrained by zoning on the site, adding that the addition falls just under the 60% lot occupancy limit. He said that they are also proposing to restore the front elevation of the house, including restoring the front masonry. They are confident that the design means that the addition would not be visible from Eye Street.

Chair Kennedy asked about whether the design team had completed a flag test to see if the addition would be visible from Eye Street. The architect said that they did not, but that they used an existing chimney in the back of the adjacent building as stand-in for the flag test.

Mr. Wilson showed examples of existing three-story buildings, as well as three-story additions, in the Foggy Bottom Historic District.

Mr. Williams, a local resident, was present and representing the views of the property's immediate neighbor, Mr. Summers. Mr. Williams said that the vast majority of the homes in the historic district, especially on Eye Street, were two-story buildings. He also said that the Historic Preservation Office review staff was concerned about how a portion of the proposed third floor would be built on a portion of the existing second floor, meaning that it might be visible from Eye Street.

Mr. Williams pointed out how the materials that would be used for the project were very modern; however they did not mirror the historic character of the neighborhood. He also expressed concerns about privacy, since the side of the addition would have floor-to-ceiling windows and Mr. Summers had skylights, which could be looked into by people in the addition. He added that since Mr. Summers' existing chimney would be right next to the addition, Mr. Summers would have to increase the height of the chimney in order to continue to use his fireplaces.

Chair Kennedy asked Mr. Williams if Mr. Summers would be okay with a two-story addition instead of three stories. Mr. Williams said that Mr. Summers just wanted to see that his current concerns would be addressed.

The owner of the property talked about his efforts to collect community feedback regarding the proposal. Mr. Wilson added that the project was scheduled to be on the Historic Preservation Review Board's (HPRB) October 2nd meeting agenda.

Chair Kennedy said that the project would help build up the neighborhood's housing stock, but that community concerns and historic preservation concerns had to be addressed. He thus suggested that the ANC should request that the HPRB delay the hearing on the proposal. The owner of the property said that he would be open to a one-month delay with the HPRB.

Chair Kennedy made a motion to ask the Historic Preservation Review Board to issue a one-month delay on the hearing for the proposal, with the agreement of the applicant noted. Commissioner Irizarry seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Consideration of the Proposed "George Washington/West End Historic District" (Case 14-12) in Squares 58, 77-81, 101-104, 121, and 122

Chair Kennedy started the discussion by noting that the HPRB updated the proposed name of the historic district to the “George Washington/Old West End Historic District”.

Ms. Maddux reminded everyone that the proposal for the historic district was required under the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan.

Commissioner Coder recommended that the ANC put forward some recommendations on the name of the historic district.

Gary Griffith, a neighborhood resident, was present and said that he was not opposed to the existence of the historic district, but that the name of the district has to be accurate. Mr. Griffith read sections from the nominating petition for the district, highlighting inaccuracies, including the fact that the “West End” name never was used for a subsection of the neighborhood, but rather referred to the whole area between the White House and Georgetown.

John Williams, a local historian, objected to the George Washington University being included in the name of the district.

Ms. Maddux asked that out of respect for the all of the work that went into creating the Foggy Bottom Historic District, that no iteration of the “Foggy Bottom” name should be used for the new historic district.

Chair Kennedy made a motion to allow the Chair to draft a resolution endorsing the creation of the historic district, reiterating that the ANC did not want “West End” included in the name of the District, and recommending that the name of the District be “East Foggy Bottom/George Washington University Historic District.” Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion.

Commissioner Carnes asked for a friendly amendment to drop the “East” portion of the name. The amendment was not accepted as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Coder asked for a friendly amendment to ask the HPRB to reexamine the historical evidence they were submitting to make sure it was historically accurate. The friendly amendment was accepted by Chair Kennedy and Commissioner Sacco.

Commissioner Irizarry asked for a friendly amendment to switch the two portions of the district’s name to make it “George Washington University/East Foggy Bottom Historic District”. The friendly amendment was accepted by Chair Kennedy and Commissioner Sacco.

The final motion was voted on and passed (VOTES: 5-1-0).

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Deteriorating Conditions at the Square 37 Library Development Site (2301 L Street, 1101 24th Street)

Ben Sonett from Eastbanc was present to talk about the ongoing situation at the West End Fire Station and Library construction sites.

Mr. Sonett said that the cherry trees were moved from the library site to different locations around Foggy Bottom. He said that Eastbanc was a few weeks away from starting the remediation of the old police station and library. He added that Eastbanc would be closing on its financing and DC government obligations by the end of the calendar year. He ended by saying that the temporary fire station at the Stevens School property was still under construction, and that the apparatus bay would be installed on the site on the coming Saturday.

Commissioner Harmon expressed concern about the start time of the construction on the coming Saturday. Mr. Sonett said that the construction hours on Saturday would be 7 am to 7 pm. Commissioner Harmon said that the start time was too early for the neighbors and that she was also concerned about the fact that the street would be closed for the construction and that neither she nor her neighbors were informed about the early construction and street closure. Instead, Commissioner Harmon was finding out about a street closure that would block resident garage access to their vehicles all day at a public meeting, three days before it was to occur. Commissioner Harmon requested better coordination with her from EastBanc and DMPED on matters such as this. Mr. Sonett said that he would look into starting construction at 8 am instead of 7 am on Saturday.

Commissioner Coder asked about the trash, rats, and homeless encampments at the library site. Mr. Sonett said that Eastbanc had a contractor who came every Monday to pick up as much trash as they could find. With regards to the homeless encampments at the site, the Eastbanc team walked the site regularly and worked with the Department of Behavioral Health to find services for the homeless residents.

No action was taken on the issue at the meeting.

Application for Exterior Signage at Hilton Garden Inn (2201 M Street)

Commissioner Harmon talked about the new signs that Hilton Garden Inn was proposing for the building, and what negotiations with nearby residents had already taken place.

Commissioner Harmon read aloud a resolution she wrote on the matter.

Commissioner Harmon made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Coder seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Administrative Agenda

Consideration of Expense Reimbursements Related to the Commission's Protest of Shadow Room's Petition to Terminate their Settlement Agreement.

Commissioner Harmon talked about the ongoing negotiations with the owners of the Shadow Room, as well as what citywide precedents had been set as a result of the negotiations. She reviewed the expenses she was asking the ANC to cover.

Chair Kennedy made a motion to reimburse Con Hitchcock for \$2,730 for expenses related to the Shadow Room ANC ABRA filing to object to a stay of the favorable ABC Board Order, which imposed an MPD reimbursable detail on Shadow Room every night they were open.. Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0).

Chair Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 10:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted by **Peter Sacco**, ANC 2A Secretary.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Sacco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.