



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

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

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2014; 7:00 p.m.

GW's Elliott School Building, Room 212 – 1957 E Street NW

Call to Order

Chair Florence Harmon called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm. Commissioners Patrick Kennedy (01), Asher Corson (03), Armando Irizarry (04), Graham Galka (05), Jackson Carnes (07), and Peter Sacco (08) were present.

Chair Harmon moved the discussion on the Hyatt Place hotel and the discussion on valet parking at District Commons to the top of the agenda. Commissioner Kennedy requested to add approval of the schedule of meetings for 2014 to the top of the agenda. Commissioner Carnes requested to add a brief discussion on the Square 75 alley closing to the Regulatory Agenda.

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

General Agenda

Election of New ANC Officers

Commissioner Sacco nominated Commissioner Kennedy as the new Chair of ANC 2A. Commissioner Kennedy accepted the nomination. Commissioner Corson seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

Commissioner Kennedy nominated Chair Harmon as the new Vice Chair of ANC 2A. Chair Harmon accepted the nomination. Commissioner Irizarry seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

Chair Harmon nominated Commissioner Sacco as the Secretary of ANC 2A. Commissioner Sacco accepted the nomination. Commissioner Irizarry seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

Commissioner Sacco nominated Commissioner Carnes as the new Treasurer of ANC 2A. Commissioner Carnes accepted the nomination. Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

Safety Report

Sgt. Michael Lawrence from the Metropolitan Police Department's PSA 2A07 was present to give the safety report. Sgt. Lawrence said that crime numbers to date were down by fifty percent and that the most prevalent crime was currently theft.

With regards to the concerns previously raised by Commissioner Corson concerning homeless individuals descending into street vents, Sgt. Lawrence said that the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) would be welding the vent access doors shut.

Sgt. Lawrence talked about a recent shooting and stabbing outside of Café Asia. He said that no one was seriously injured in the incident.

Sgt. Lawrence also introduced Lieutenant Karen, who was also present. Sgt. Lawrence said that she was recently brought to the Second District.

Sara Maddux, a neighborhood resident, was concerned about bicyclists coming through the neighborhood at night with no lights on their bikes. Sgt. Lawrence said he would look into it.

Public Comments

Commissioner Kennedy said that he looked into a community member's assertion that the ANC cannot submit additional testimony for the zoning update hearings being carried out by the D.C. Zoning Commission. He said that the hearing notice that the ANC received which contains a prohibition on submitting additional testimony only applies to the individual ward public meetings, not the one specifically for ANC commissioners. He also suggested that ANC 2A should consider submitting additional testimony for that meeting.

Jack Jacobson, the Ward 2 representative on the D.C. State Board of Education, was present and gave a quick update on what the State Board of Education was up to. Mr. Jacobson said that 2013 was a busy year for the State Board, culminating in the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards at the end of the year. He also said that the board also adopted new truancy regulations at the end of the year, and that the requirement that students be in class for eighty percent of the day to be counted as present will be revisited in 2014.

DDOT- Update on New Hampshire Avenue Project

Ian Swain, DDOT's representative on the New Hampshire Avenue project, was not present at the meeting.

Eastbanc Project- Library and Fire Station

Ben Sonnett from Eastbanc was present to give an update on Eastbanc's development projects for the West End Library and West End Fire Station properties.

Mr. Sonnett said that Eastbanc had not heard any decision from the DC Court of Appeals regarding the DC Library Renaissance Project's request to revisit their last appeal to block Eastbanc's project on the library site.

Mr. Sonnett also said that the West End Library has begun working on their new temporary facility in the Watergate complex and that the library is currently looking at a six to eight week construction schedule right now with an occupancy of the Watergate space in March.

With regards to Eastbanc's West End Fire Station project on Square 50, Mr. Sonnett said that Eastbanc was still working with the District to construct a temporary fire station in the old Stevens School parking lot. He said the fire station was looking at occupancy of the temporary facility in late July or early August.

Ward 2 Education Network Update

Chris Sondreal, ANC 2A's representative on the Ward 2 Education Network, was present to give updates on the network. He said that the network had a meeting the past Saturday, and that they heard a representative speak about the Next Generation Science Standards that were coming to D.C.

Mr. Sondreal also said that during the previous night, the network met with the D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) Chief of Family Education to determine how DCPS would treat the Ward 2 Education Network. Mr. Sondreal said that it sounded like they would treat the network the same way as the other ward education councils.

Mr. Sondreal said that the network's next meeting would be on February 8th and that they would be discussing the boundary changes and feeder patterns.

With regards to School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens, Mr. Sondreal talked about the upcoming lottery process on D.C.'s new universal lottery website, myschooldc.org. He also said that the school's principal, Richard Trogisch, is seeking people to sit on the school improvement team to help work out the upcoming planned improvements to Francis-Stevens.

Regulatory Agenda

Hyatt Place Addition to the Washington Marriott

David Avitable from Goulston & Storrs was present representing the Hyatt Place Hotel. Ilan Scharfstein from Renaissance Centro, the hotel's developer, was also present. Mr. Scharfstein said that Renaissance Centro owns the parking lot next to the Marriott and that they are planning on building a Hyatt Place Hotel on the parking lot site.

Mr. Scharfstein showed the Commission a rendering of the planned hotel. He said that

the hotel would have an open and inviting ground floor that would help activate the street, as well as a small 24-hour restaurant and a business center on the first floor. He also said that the hotel would have a small planned drop-off zone in front of the hotel on M Street.

Commissioner Corson asked if Renaissance Centro was applying for any variances or if it was a by-right project. Mr. Scharfstein said that it was a by-right project.

Commissioner Corson also asked if they had conducted any traffic studies on the site. Mr. Scharfstein said that they had determined that there would be no major changes in traffic as a result of the hotel development.

Howard Biel, a local resident, said that Mr. Scharfstein took a courageous approach to the very challenging site. He also said that the traffic studies could be key to the success of the project since the planned hotel drop-off zone on M Street could be very challenging for drivers.

Chair Harmon said that her constituents told her that they were concerned with the signage and awning that was being planned to go slightly over the sidewalk. She asked what the current plans for the signage and awning were. Mr. Scharfstein showed her the current plans.

Mr. Scharfstein said that Renaissance Centro filed a comprehensive public space application, which addressed the sidewalk overhangs as well as sidewalk elements. He said that the application was filed several months ago, although a hearing with DDOT's public space committee had not been set yet.

Chair Harmon said that she heard that the public space application the ANC had previously objected to had been withdrawn. She asked Mr. Avitable to check and see if the public space application the ANC received from DDOT on the project was still active.

Mr. Scharfstein added that there would be a bike lane on the north side of M Street, and that the bike lane would be between the sidewalk and the hotel's drop-off zone. He said that parking in the drop-off zone would be restricted to ten to fifteen minutes. Chair Harmon said that she envisions someone parking and opening their door and a biker running into it. Mr. Biel added that the hotels are normally on the north-south streets, and thus do not have bike lane problems in the West End neighborhood, as the bike lanes are mostly on the east-west streets.

2100 M Street BZA Extension Request

Cary Kadlecck from Goulston and Storrs was present to talk about the BZA extension request for 2100 M Street NW. He said that the BZA request was first approved in 2007 and was extended in 2009 and 2011. He also said that a new owner acquired the property in 2013 and is currently requesting another extension.

Chair Harmon said that she heard from constituents who said they wanted to see the building look a little better.

Sara Maddux, a neighborhood resident, said the garage entrance on 23rd Street had problems with backing up traffic on the street. Mr. Kadlecek said that the plans for the garage would remain the same. He also said that the owner's plans are to enlarge the building by three stories and reconfigure a large portion of the inside.

Barbara Kahlow, a neighborhood resident, reaffirmed the fact that some neighbors do not want any outdoor noise in the outdoor plaza the owner is planning to build.

Commissioner Kennedy made a motion to send a letter to BZA supporting the requested extension. Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

District Commons Public Space Application

Degol Demasu from District Commons' parking company, Crystal Car Park and Ride, was present to talk about changes to the staging zone for the restaurant. He said that DDOT had previously moved the staging zone from Washington Circle down to 22nd Street. He added that the parking company did not realize that there were requirements for rush hour parking on 22nd Street, which outlaw parking on the street during rush hours.

Mr. Demasu said that Crystal Car Park and Ride plans on using the staging zone on 22nd Street on the weekends from 5 pm to closing, and 6:30 pm to closing on weekdays, due to rush hour restrictions on weekdays. He said that the company has submitted an application with DDOT to remove two parking spaces from the left side of 22nd Street to make way for the staging zone.

Commissioner Kennedy asked how the company would be charged if they are removing meter spaces for the staging area. Mr. Demasu was unaware of how DDOT calculated the cost to charge the company.

Commissioner Carnes made a motion to support District Commons' public space application. Commissioner Kennedy made an amendment to phrase the ANC's support as non-objection for the purposes of the DDOT application. Commissioner Carnes accepted the amendment. Commissioner Kennedy seconded the final motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 7-0)

Chair Harmon left the meeting for a personal matter, and Commissioner Kennedy assumed the role of Chair.

Zoning Rewrite

Chair Kennedy suggested that the ANC weigh in on a specific subsection of the rewrite, as a supplementary addition to its previous testimony on other issues in November.

Barbara Kahlow said the one thing ANC 3D did really well in their resolution on the zoning update was to suggest that the Zoning Commission weigh in on the campus plan sections of the zoning rewrite at a later, separate time.

Commissioner Kennedy read a proposed resolution he wrote, which addressed including university-owned commercial properties under the campus plan in the rewrite.

Commissioner Sacco recused himself from discussion and voting on Commissioner Kennedy's proposed resolution.

Ms. Kahlow suggested adding an additional line to Chair Kennedy's resolution, which asks the Office of Planning to prepare supplemental textual changes to address additional subject areas related to campus plans such as omnibus Planned Unit Developments and the length of campus plans.

Commissioner Corson said that he thinks D.C. has a responsibility to weigh in on university-owned commercial developments under the campus plan.

Commissioner Corson made a motion to approve Commissioner Kennedy's resolution. Commissioner Carnes seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 5-0-0, Commissioner Sacco recused)

Whitehurst Freeway Resolution

Commissioner Corson said that he thought it was important that the ANC strengthen its position against tearing down the Whitehurst Freeway, especially since the topic of tearing it down had come up again in the election season. He also thanked Elizabeth Elliott, Joy Howell, and Ron Cocomo for their work in creating a new ANC resolution weighing in on the Whitehurst Freeway.

Commissioner Corson read the final resolution.

Commissioner Corson made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Carnes seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Square 75 Alley Closure Discussion

Commissioner Sacco recused himself from discussion and voting on this matter.

Commissioner Carnes gave an overview of GW's Square 75 alley closure process, including how the ANC previously voted to support the alley closure since there was no net loss of square feet on the site

Ms. Kahlow said that the West End Citizens Association (WECA) would be opposing the Square 75 alley closing. She said that the resulting Square 75 development project is a commercial development and that it is only hurting the neighbors. She also talked about the net loss of retail space as a result of the project. She then said that WECA is seeking funding from GW for elevators for a second metro entrance in exchange for the Square 75 alley closing.

Commissioner Corson asked how WECA came to an amount suitable for GW to give to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in exchange for the alley closing.

David Avitable from Goulston & Storrs, who is GW's legal counsel on the project, explained what amenities GW has already given to the neighborhood as part of the Square 75 project. He also reiterated the fact that the President Condominium is supporting the alley closing.

Dina Modianot-Fox, a neighborhood resident, said that although she agreed with Ms. Kahlow's position, she questioned why the ANC would try to receive funding for a second Metro entrance through the alley closing process if it has already failed with the D.C. Council in the past. Commissioner Carnes said that Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans had given support for funding in the past.

Commissioner Corson said that he would like to see the ANC change their position from supporting the alley closure to no position on the issue, since the ANC should not undermine the efforts of a neighborhood group who is becoming active on the issue.

Commissioner Corson made a motion to reconsider ANC 2A's previous decision on the alley closure. Commissioner Carnes seconded the motion, and Chair Kennedy deemed the motion adopted without objection.

Commissioner Corson then made a motion to have the ANC take no position on the Square 75 alley closing. Commissioner Carnes seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 5-0-0, Commissioner Sacco recused)

Race For Every Child 5K

George Banker from Race For Every Child 5K was present. He said that the race would have a staging area in Freedom Plaza that will house the starting line and children's activities. He also said that the race would be on September 13, 2014 and would benefit Children's National Medical Center.

Commissioner Corson made a motion to support the race application. Commissioner Galka seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Rock N Roll USA Marathon

Diana Thomas from the Greater Washington Sports Alliance was present to talk about the race. She said that the race will be on March 15, 2014, and the sports alliance is expecting about 25,000 runners. She went over the map of the race's course.

Commissioner Corson was concerned about the fact that the race was a privately organized event. Ms. Thomas said the event was taken over by the Competitor Group a few years ago.

Commissioner Sacco was concerned with the fact that amplified music would be playing at one site in the neighborhood, at the corner of E Street and 21st Street, at approximately 8 am when the runners pass it.

Commissioner Carnes made a motion to conditionally support the race application provided freeway output traffic from the E Street Expressway was rerouted properly and the sound stage at the corner of E Street and 21st was moved. Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Nike Women's Half Marathon

Lee Granados from Pacers Events was present to talk about the Nike Women's Half Marathon. She said that the marathon would be held on April 27, 2014. She also said that there would be a slight change in the route in the SW waterfront area. She added that the route only comes into the Foggy Bottom neighborhood by the Rock Creek Parkway area in the back of Kennedy Center.

Ms. Granados said that approximately 15,000 people run in the marathon every year.

Commissioner Irizarry asked race organizers to keep the noise to a minimum, especially at the turn on Rock Creek Parkway behind the Kennedy Center and the Watergate Complex.

Chair Kennedy asked if there would be any conflicts with the event's expo on the Georgetown waterfront like last year. Ms. Granados said that she is working with the National Park Service to make sure there is no double-event booked at the Thompson Boat House.

Commissioner Irizarry made a motion to support the race application. Commissioner Sacco seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Administrative Agenda

Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner Sacco made a motion to adopt the October 2013 minutes. Commissioner Irizarry seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Commissioner Sacco made a motion to adopt the November 2013 minutes.
Commissioner Irizarry seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Commissioner Sacco made a motion to adopt the December 2013 minutes. Commissioner Galka seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

ANC Security Fund

Commissioner Irizarry made a motion to participate in the annual ANC Security Fund. Commissioner Galka seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Website Discussion

Commissioner Sacco gave an update on the ANC's letter to the Office of the D.C. Attorney General (OAG), asking whether the ANC and its individual commissioners would be defended by OAG in the event of a lawsuit, considering the new website's usage of a non-D.C. government-provided web development platform. He said that the ANC has not yet received a reply from OAG, and that in the meantime, neighbors can still submit comments on the new website to him.

Commissioner Corson suggested continually putting the ANC's passed resolutions on the draft website until it possibly becomes official.

ANC Grant Discussion

Moved to the February meeting agenda.

2014 Schedule of Meetings

Chair Kennedy said that he has scheduled meetings through April 2014. He said that he envisions having the new bylaws being read and approved before April, and thus the location requirements for ANC meetings could change after April.

Commissioner Carnes made a motion to adopt the proposed 2014 meeting schedule. Commissioner Galka seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed. (VOTES: 6-0)

Vice Chair Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 9:59 pm

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

