



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

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

Special Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 3rd, 2016; 7:00 p.m.

School Without Walls High School – 2130 G Street NW

Call to Order

Chair Patrick Kennedy (01) called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Commissioners John Williams (03), Philip Schrefer (05), and Eve Zhurbinskiy (08) were present. Commissioner Florence Harmon (06) arrived at 7:15 pm. Commissioner William Smith (04) arrived at 7:17 pm.

General Agenda

Community Discussion Regarding DC Council Bill B21-0529 – the “Special Police Officer Enhanced Security Amendment Act of 2015”

Chair Kennedy gave an overview of the GW Police Department’s (GWPD) history of operating off-campus.

Marina Streznewski, the President of the Foggy Bottom Association, gave an overview of her conversations with Sally Kram, the Director of Public and Governmental Affairs for the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, regarding the changes that the Consortium proposed as part of the bill.

Chanell Autrey, the Legislative Counsel for Councilmember McDuffie, was present. She gave a brief overview of what the bill would and would not allow for. She said that Councilmember McDuffie’s office had scheduled a hearing on the bill for March 17th at 10:00 am.

Commissioner Williams asked what the Consortium was. Ms. Autrey gave an overview of the Consortium.

Andie Dowd, the President of the GW Student Association, was present. She said that she currently had a neutral opinion on the bill, and that she appreciated Councilmember McDuffie’s ongoing communication with the student government presidents from across the city.

Sara Maddux, a local resident, said that the GW Student Code of Conduct policies needed to be better defined before the community considered a bill such as this one.

Chair Kennedy said his perspective was that he was concerned about the bill’s language that would allow for university police officers to operate on other university campuses during a state of emergency. He said it was problematic because some university police officers in DC were armed and problems could thus arise if the armed officers were responding to a different campus community that they were unfamiliar with. He said that he thought that the ANC should work with Councilmember McDuffie to further clarify that section of the bill.

Chair Kennedy said that he also had concerns with the section of the bill that would allow for university police officers to operate off-campus. He said that he was concerned that the power to approve an off-campus policing plan would lie only with the Chief of Police. He said that he thought that the neighborhood should also have input into the off-campus policing plan. He added that, in a more general sense, he was also concerned with what the bill determined to be the balance between the role of the campus police departments versus the role of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Chair Kennedy gave an overview of the previous discussions that the neighborhood had engaged in over the role of GWPD in off-campus policing, including a previous suggestion to implement Georgetown University's off-campus policing model in Foggy Bottom.

Chair Kennedy said that there were multiple civil liberty concerns with the proposed bill, especially as they relate to young people living in the neighborhood who are not students but look like students. He added that he thought that the university police officers needed to have more training and transparency before the DC government authorized the officers to patrol off-campus.

Commissioner Williams said that the bill did not clearly define what an institution of higher education was. He added that there were many smaller, non-GW university satellite campuses and university properties in the neighborhood, including Strayer University and Dumbarton Oaks, which is owned by Harvard University.

Commissioner Smith said that he always thought of campus police as operating in a clearly defined campus area. He added that many universities in DC do not have clearly defined campuses, which could create confusion.

Ms. Autrey said that the bill's language specified that universities would have to opt-in to the proposal, and that some universities may choose to not opt-in. She gave an overview of how the bill would bring campuses into compliance with the federal Clery Act for reporting purposes. She also gave an overview of the differences between the DC government's definitions of special police officers versus campus police officers.

Commissioner Harmon said that she thought the bill's loose definition of what an institution of higher education was could allow for the creation of more than a hundred new campus police forces in DC.

Commissioner Smith asked Ms. Autrey to go over the problems that this bill was trying to solve. Ms. Autrey said that the problems varied from campus to campus, and for some like Georgetown University, it could be simply responding to off-campus parties.

Commissioner Zhurbinskiy said that the date of the scheduled hearing was during GW's spring break. She said that this was unfortunate because the bill had a particularly large impact on students and that many students would be out of town and thus unable to testify at the hearing. She raised multiple issues that students discussed with her regarding the possible violation of civil liberties.

Commissioner Smith suggested that Councilmember McDuffie could separate the sections of the bill that focused on Clery Act requirements from the sections that would allow for university police departments to respond to off-campus complaints.

Adjournment

Chair Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. J. Schrefer".

Philip Schrefer
Secretary, ANC 2A05