

Community Development Committee

January 26, 2005

7:00 pm

In attendance:

Matt Raymond, Chair
Jim Richardson, 2F01
Jim Cook, 2F01
Sandra Biasillo, 2F05
Mike Benardo, 2F06
Chris Dyer, 2F03
Mike Shaeffer, 2F05
Sam Robfogel, 2F01
Kara McCabe, 2F01

Absent:

Jim Loucks, 2F06
David Rowley, 2F03
Kevin Ivers, 2F04

Chair Matt Raymond began with self introductions. He asked that the agenda be amended to move the Charter School to first on the agenda. Dyer moved acceptance of the agenda. Biasillo seconded. It was unanimously approved.

Raymond moved approval of the meeting dates. There will be no meeting in August. Robfogel seconded. It was unanimously approved.

Charter School, 1234-1238 9th Street

Paul Tummonds, Shaw Pittman, is providing legal counsel to the charter school. He acknowledged that there is an issue with the ABC laws, and also historic approval. Lawrence Riccio gave an overview of the Washington Very Special Arts Academy. WVSA has been in the District at 16th and L for several years. The entire school (both campuses) will be K-12th grade. This campus will be a school, art gallery and coffee shop, with two apartments at the top. The Auto Arts portion will be outsourced somewhere outside the District and will not be at this site. The charter school will emphasize arts as an education. It will open with 6-9. When it expands, the middle school will move elsewhere, and the high school will remain on 9th Street. The coffee shop and gallery will be on the first floor. The elementary students will stay at 16th and L. After 4 years, there will be 150 high school students at the school, fewer to begin. The students are slightly developmentally disadvantaged.

Tummonds addressed the ABC issues. The law states that if there is a school, there can be no liquor license within 400 feet of the building. At one time, there was an exception to this for schools in commercial districts. They agree that this exception should be put back in, and will work with the city officials to get it. They realize that one of the biggest objections that they are facing is that there can be no liquor licenses issued near a school which would impede the redevelopment of 9th Street.

Riccio offered to invite all the committee members to the next gallery opening at the L Street location, and asked to get the email addresses to do so. Robfogel asked about school buses. Buses will come down 9th Street. They will ask for a "no parking zone" in front of the school from 8 to 5 school days so the buses can park. There will be 9 parking spaces for the public or the apartments. Riccio was a bit vague about who would be using the parking spaces, as well as who would be living in the apartments. Riccio said

that the six apartments will be for teachers and artists, although that could change, and that they might sell them, either as low income housing, or at market rates.

Raymond asked about historic preservation issues. The roof on the two story building on Blagden Alley is still under review. Tummonds said that a school is a matter of right for zoning in this area. They do not anticipate having to go to BZA. Riccio started the organization in 1981 and founded the school in 1992. Robfogel asked if the new school would be used for rental for receptions. Riccio said that it could hold about 250 persons. Ed Horvath said that the neighborhood was not in support, mainly because it keeps morphing. He asked if they also have two buildings in the alley. Riccio said that they have purchased those as well. One will be a studio. Riccio did not say what the other building would be used for. Chip Amoe said he was concerned about 150 students coming in to an area that is prime retail development area. It will slow down development even further and a school that would eliminate any restaurants or taverns opening nearby the convention center is not a smart use of the property. Commissioner Mike Nelson asked what the actual size of the project is. Jeff Lewis, the architect, said that the 9th Street parcel is 9000 sq. ft. The total build out is 36,000 square feet. Riccio said that the school is funded through the District, with federal money and with private fundraising. Dyer asked why they bought the property on 9th Street. He said that it was because they wanted to teach their students about life.

Raymond said that the committee would not be taking a vote on this issue.

Suzanne Reatig was not in attendance to discuss 1209 10th Street.

Andy Witherell discussed Square 239, roughly on 13th and R Streets. It has been the site of illegal parking. He wants ANC to send correspondence to National Capital Revitalization Corporation to request that they fence off and landscape the public property that abuts the vacant land to prevent illegal parking. There is a pending sale, and he is worried that the new owner will permit this to continue by not blocking access to it through their property. Helen Kramer suggested that he contact Lt. Smith. Witherell then spoke of the alley abutting this property. Bob Irwin of DDOT told him that it was one of 10 unimproved alleys in Ward 2. There was some question about that number. There is a comprehensive alley survey that ANC2F should request a copy of it. Kimbel said she would request it. Giorgio Furioso asked what Witherell wanted done with the public space, and suggested that if it was landscaped, people couldn't park in it.

McCabe moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC send a letter stating that in connection with any future sale of Square 239, the public space be landscaped in a way to prohibit any illegal parking. Cook seconded.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

Raymond called for a short break.

1209-1219 13th Street – concept review

Marc Weller is the developer. They purchased the building off of 13th Street, and then purchased the building currently housing the 13th Street Quality Market to complete the site. They plan to combine both buildings. The building off the alley was formerly a livery stable. They plan to use the first floor for parking. Ron Schneck and Jeff Lockwood of Hickock Warner Cole architects gave an overview of the proposed concept. The stable

will be restored to its original historic state. Windows will be put back to historic standards. The roof will be replaced as it is in ruins. The west side will have a new fenestration, but it faces the new 9 story condominium going in. The grocery store will be a 9-story building. There will be about 33 units, and they are looking to put in as many parking spaces as they can, possibly using stacked parking, plus some behind the new building. Weller said that the livery building is very difficult to work with, due to its location within the alley. The trash chute, elevator, etc will be shared by both buildings. The trash will be kept inside until removed by trash collection. Shaeffer asked that the developer help with repaving the alley after the construction is complete. Kramer asked about the lessee of the building (Quality Market). Weller said that their lease is up in the summer, and they have options, but they can move them out. Furioso said that he was surprised that they would be able to close windows in a landmark building. He wondered if there were any mitigating circumstances to permit this to happen. Weller said that they could use the buildings separately, but they didn't want to do that. Shaeffer asked them to put in as many parking spaces as possible. The nine story building will look different from the livery stable. It will be a modern looking building. Raymond moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC approve height concept and massing. McCabe seconded.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.