

## **ANC 2F COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

WEDNESDAY MARCH 26, 2003

THE WASHINGTON PLAZA HOTEL

7:00 P.M.

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Helen Kramer, Chair

Mike Petri

Jackie Steward

Jim Richardson

Jim Cook

Tom Funk

Dick Warren

Helen Kramer called the meeting to order, and had the committee members introduce themselves. Commissioner Funk announced that Nathan Bovell of the Housing Authority told him that half of the scaffolding on the front of Claridge Towers, 1221 M Street would be coming down "soon." Funk said that crimes and drug deals take place under the scaffolding, so it will be safer when it is down.

### Rainbow Lofts at Church Street – 1445 Church Street

Craig Baldwin, DDOT (phone 671-1347) talked about the traffic management proposal for this new building at the site of the former Rainbow Auto Body. There is currently fencing closing the sidewalk on both the north and south sides of Church Street for two different projects. Baldwin presented two alternative traffic plans. The first is to close the center portion of Church Street. Vehicles entertaining Church from 14<sup>th</sup> Street would have to turn around in order to leave Church Street via 14<sup>th</sup>. The other alternative is to close Church Street to personal vehicles and pedestrians for one year. He said that since there will be a lot of heavy equipment, deliveries, etc. the area is going to be a construction "war zone." He wants to keep pedestrians out of the area and personal automobiles out of at least the center area. Kramer reminded the principal of the project that the ANC wouldn't be voting on the proposal until the May 7 meeting. Paul Jacobsen of Walnut Street Construction, the company building Rainbow Lofts, said that waiting until the full May 7 meeting for an ANC vote would not be a problem. The street would be closed for approximately one year. Kara McCabe who lives at Saxon Court, said that the street closing probably wouldn't be a problem for those residents. Jacobsen said that they were attempting to lease a vacant lot for storage of vehicles and equipment, and that there would not be any parking of construction workers' cars. Hinterlong said that he thinks the neighbors are particularly fed up with parking issues after the last five years of convention center construction. Paul Hoftzyer of Metropolis Development Corporation pointed out that Church Street is only 30 feet wide and he suggests that the portion that will remain open be just one lane, and one way flow. Baldwin

said that the problem is that ADA standards are being violated since there is no sidewalk open on either side for a portion of Church Street. If the road is closed, there is not a problem with ADA access, because no one can go onto the closed road, so it's unavailable to everyone. This alternative would eliminate the small amount of parking that is there now. Kramer moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC approve DDOT close the street to pedestrian traffic during construction, allowing only construction vehicle traffic. Steward seconded. VOTE: Approved 7-0.

Kramer asked Baldwin about the sidewalk in front of 27 Logan Circle where there is a curb cut for wheelchairs, but the traffic light makes it too narrow for a wheelchair to go by on the sidewalk. Baldwin said that this issue needs to be addressed, and asked Kramer to contact him so that he could give the details to the person at DDOT who handles this problem.

#### Thomas Circle reconstruction design

Heather Brophy, Ward 2 Transportation Planner for DDOT presented plans for the reconstruction of Thomas Circle. Existing conditions have a north/south preference and wedges cut out of the circle for traffic. The proposal will be to reconstruct it as a complete circle. The National Park Service is involved with the process. Brophy unveiled several plans showing bike lanes, pedestrian cross walks, traffic flows, etc. Kramer said that residents of the 1300 block of Vermont Avenue have asked that angled parking be considered for that block. She asked if that was being considered in conjunction with this traffic change. Brophy said no. Brophy asked if residents wanted M Street between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Street east of Thomas Circle to be one way, as it is west of Thomas Circle. There will be bidirectional wheelchair ramps on every crosswalk possible on the circle. Construction is scheduled to begin in fall of 2004. Kramer asked that Brophy check into a sprinkler system for the circle. Kramer asked Brophy to consult with Washington Plaza Hotel management about paving materials on the 1300 block of M Street NW. The committee was unanimous in opposing the use of brick sidewalks from K Street to Thomas Circle as this is a downtown office area and not historic and bricks are less durable than concrete.

This issue will not be brought for a vote at the ANC's next meeting. Brophy will come back to the ANC when she has answers to the questions brought up at this meeting. The convention center parking plan will be discussed at the ANC meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.