

ANC 2F MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2004

7:00 PM

Cary Silverman, Chair
Helen Kramer, Vice Chair
Tom Funk, Secretary
Bob Hinterlong, Treasurer
Miriam Trimble
Jim Brandon (arrived 7:20)

Community Forum

Cary Silverman opened the meeting and introduced the revised format. Comments on items will be heard during the item, not during community forum. He asked commissioners to give reports of anything interesting. Miriam Trimble reported on her testimony in favor of licensing of retirement centers before the D.C. Council on behalf of Thomas House. Helen Kramer spoke about the protest of the liquor license at 1209 13th Street NW. They have not been negotiating, but may do so in the future. Silverman reported on the work of the parking task force. They are making progress, albeit slowly. They are looking at angle parking and the potential for a public parking garage on 13th Street.

Public Safety Report – Lt. Smith gave a report on crime in PSAs 313 and 309. He also spoke about the redistricting of the PSAs. Crime is up in 313 and 309 for the past month. Lt. Smith has been on leave for the last month. The D.C Council's Judiciary Committee is holding a hearing on the performance of MPD on March 4, 2004. If you would like to testify, then email Smith at masmith@mpdc.org. Jean Sexton is the Third District Community Prosecutor.

Holly Porter asked if anyone at the meeting had been tested for lead in their water. Sean Metcalf said that houses built from 1900 – 1940 may have a problem. Prior to that, lead was not used. He suggested that residents call the hotline to find out when their pipes were installed. By calling 787-2609, you can reach Johnny Hemphill, Jr. at WASA. They will know about each specific home. Silverman said that any information the ANC could get would be posted on the ANC website.

Approval of Agenda

Silverman added discussion of post office under old business. Hinterlong added a discussion of lack of notification of liquor license hearings under old business. Brandon moved approval. Kramer seconded.

VOTE: Approved 6-0.

Approval of Minutes

Kramer moved acceptance of the minutes. Trimble seconded.

VOTE: Approved 6-0.

Community Development Committee (CDC) Report

Kramer reported on three items on the January CDC agenda. First was the proposal for a parking gate at Ascension and St. Agnes Church on the 12th Street side to prevent parking in the driveway. It was approved by the committee 8-0.

The second item was a request for variances by Metropolis Development Corporation for its project at 1515 15th Street, the current Duron paint site. They are seeking a variance from the lot occupancy requirements, a variance from the residential recreational space requirements and a variance from the loading requirements. Kramer asked Scott Pannick to clarify the parking spaces that they will actually provide. Mr. Pannick replied that the garage would probably have three levels containing 181 spaces, with about 75 allocated for public use. Silverman asked Pannick how his proposed building would impact the building abutting his at 1460 Church Street. Pannick said that the resident next door to this project, Mr. Berman, is concerned that he will lose a window abutting the building, which will probably happen. Berman's parking garage sits 8" over the property line, which is another issue that will need to be resolved by the parties. Kramer said that the committee voted to support the request for variances 8-0.

The third item concerned Convention Center strategic planning. Chris Shaheen, the Mayor's Ward 2 Planning Coordinator, presented three possible plans for development around the Convention Center. The three plans are Linear, Nodal and Dispersed. The goals of each plan are to maintain a mix of housing and retail. Common features include potential for 650 new housing units and 443,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 740,000 sq. ft. of office space. Funk asked if the ANC would be hearing more about the Convention Center strategic plan, as he feels it is an important issue for the community. Silverman said that another planning meeting would be held later this month. Kramer said that the CDC decided not to take a vote on this issue, as it is something that deserved considerable thought.

Brandon moved approval of the community development report. Funk seconded.

James Filpi, an attorney who represents the Bermans who own the property abutting at 1460 Church Street stated that his client's concern is about the design of that building. They feel that they have not been informed about anything relating to the construction, and reminded people that the same thing could happen to them. Funk informed him that this project has been discussed at a minimum of three publicly advertised meetings. Silverman noted that there would be more discussions before the ANC in regard to construction issues when the plans reached that stage of development.

VOTE: Approved 6-0, Funk to write the letter to the BZA.

New Business

Sparky's Espresso Café – The new owner, Harry Quiett, is requesting slightly longer hours, and to be able to serve alcohol outside. They also want to be able to drop the parking requirement, if necessary, without jeopardizing their license, as the parking may not be available forever, and most of their clientele is local. The license is up for renewal the end of March. Kimbel asked if they would now be a full service bar. Answer: no, they will continue to serve only beer, wine and coffee drinks. Brandon moved approval to the change to the voluntary agreement. Funk seconded.

VOTE: Approved 6-1-0, Trimble abstaining.

PSA Redistricting – Councilmember Kathy Patterson has scheduled a meeting on the redistricting. Silverman said that there may be at least a chance to seek some changes to this. Primarily, the ANC would like to see the PSA remain about the same size, and not increase

further east than 9th Street. Lt. Smith concurs with this, and feels that much of the resources in the area would be siphoned to the problems in the more crime ridden east. Sean Metcalf said that Jack Evans' office has been fighting to move the east boundary, but Police Chief Ramsay won't budge. However, they are willing to move the boundary further south to include Thomas House and other residences north of Massachusetts Avenue, possibly as far south at K Street. Silverman stated that he is seeking permission to testify on behalf of the ANC at the Public Hearing before the D.C. Council's Judiciary Committee on February 24, 2004. Lt. Smith suggested that those who were going to testify coordinate to cover all the issues. Metcalf suggested that they register as organizations, not individuals, as organizations get five minutes rather than just three minutes. Funk moved that the ANC approve Commissioners Trimble and Silverman to testify on the ANC. Brandon seconded. Kramer made a friendly amendment to suggest that Trimble testify on behalf of Thomas House so that each of them got 5 minutes.

VOTE: Approved 6-0.

Studio Theatre - Morey Epstein addressed the Commission on behalf of Studio Theatre's request for support an application for City funding. Epstein stated that the application will be much stronger if the ANC supports it. Kramer asked to which department it should be addressed. Answer: Office of Economic Development. Kramer moved support. Brandon seconded.

VOTE: Approved 6-0, Funk to draft the letter.

Old Business

1600 14th Street – Fred Barami, the developer of this building, hired Emily Eig, a noted historian, to make the building historically compatible. Mr. Eig commented that as a new building, it must not be incompatible with the historic fabric of the neighborhood. 14th Street is a commercial street, 20th century, while Q Street is a residential street from the 19th century. The main entrance for this new building will be on Q Street. There is a stronger retail presence on 14th Street. The two different facades reflect these differences. By mixing the brick with white stone, it's more consistent with what you might see along 14th Street. This building and the Barret school building across the street form a sort of "gateway" to Q Street. Eig noted that Steve Callcott has seen the plans and is excited about them. Bill Bonstra, the architect, said that they had received letters of support from Historic Preservation Office staff and the Logan Circle Community Association.

Silverman asked how these plans differed from previous plans. Bonstra said that the building is lower, but it's also been changed to make it more compatible with its surroundings. The building is 71'. The massing along 14th Street is 60 ft. with a one-to-one setback. Andrea Doughty, Q Street, asked what the setback was along the alley on Q Street. It is 15 feet. She feels that it creates a gap along Q Street, but likes this design much better than previous designs. She still has issues with the height and massing of the building.

Naomi O'Grady, Q Street, expressed support for the project, and said that there was a lot of support for the project in the 1300 block of Q Street. Tony McDonald, Barret School resident, said that the compatibility of the project was in terms of design, but not massing and height. Eig said that the building was shorter, but it had also been designed to look shorter by the way its design works with the other buildings in proximity. Holly Porter, Vermont Avenue, said that there will be a building put on this empty lot, and that this one makes a strong statement, and that Bonstra's projects are always well received.

Rosita Vahhabaghahi, Solo Piazza, pointed out how the design elements work with the other adjacent buildings. Plus, since the building fronts on 14th Street, it needs to be taller.

Frank Mobilio, LCCA President, said that the Logan Circle design and review committee reviewed it three times, that they were very pleased with this version, and had approved it.

Susan Levine asked about parking. Bahrami said that there were currently two levels of parking, but if the building was any shorter, they would lose at least one level of parking. Al Collins asked about the HPRB guidelines to height compatibility. Eig responded that the guidelines do not work in this instance, since the building is on the corner of two very different streets. Lou Cipro, Q Street, said that the HPRB Board did not accept the design last time due to massing and height. Joan Ferraris, Q Street, said that the 10' setback on the top level of the 71' building was not enough to counter the height. Lisa Schreiber, owner of Wagtime, said that the building design compliments the block. Grassino Brago, N Street, said that he lives in a 3 story townhouse surrounded by taller buildings, Solo Piazza, and two others. He felt that this contrast is complimentary.

Kramer moved that the ANC send a letter to the HPRB supporting the massing and height of the design. Brandon seconded.

VOTE: Approved 5-0-1, Silverman abstaining. Funk to write letter.

Box Life Theatre - Kimbel gave an update on the roll call hearing today. The protestants include ANC, LCCA, and a group including Rhode Island West, Abdo Development, Helix Hotel, and several condominium groups. Silverman recommended that the ANC monitor the negotiations between the attorney for the group, Doug Feurberg, and Box Life Theater's attorney, Andrew Klein.

Kimbel reported on problems with using the Post Office at Fourteenth and T Streets, following the closing of the Mid-City Station. She noted that the employees are rude, and mail is not always deposited timely. Furthermore, if a letter needs to be signed for, it usually requires waiting in line for at least thirty minutes. She was authorized to look into finding another venue for the ANC mail.

Hinterlong moved that the ANC authorize him to send a letter to the ABC Board stating that the commission is not being notified in a timely manner about license hearings. Funk seconded. Kramer made a friendly amendment saying that copies of the letter should be sent to Councilmembers Catania, Evans and Ambrose, and Office of ANC Director Gottlieb Simon.

Hinterlong moved acceptance of the following expenditures

\$300.00	National City Christian Church, March rent
692.68	Sherri Kimbel, January wages
32.00	DC Treasurer, January withholding
50.70	Verizon, phone bill
58.60	Prince George's Engraving, plaque for Lt. Grooms
8.00	Sherri Kimbel, reimbursement for parking for ABC hearing

Brandon seconded. VOTE: Approved 6-0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05.