

ANC 2F | Community Development Committee Meeting

MINUTES WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

7:00 P.M.

WASHINGTON PLAZA HOTEL
10 THOMAS CIRCLE, NW

Attendance

PRESENT

Commissioner Cain (2F02)
Louis Cipro
Joyce Cowan
Dave Feinstein
Leah Frelinghuysen
Joel Heisey
Jim Loucks
Commissioner Melcher (2F06)
Ron Rubin

ABSENT

Commissioner Deeley (2F08)
Helen Kramer

GUESTS AND PRESENTERS

Hossein Goal
Bob Knopf
Bob Neal
Brad Job
Carolyn Brown
Cary Kadlecek
Brook Katzen
Martin Ditto
Chuong Cao
VW Fowlkes
Orestes del Castillo

Committee meeting **called to order** by Commissioner Walt Cain at **7:00 p.m.**

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Cain moved to adopt the draft agenda without modification; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously by the Committee.

Vote: 6-0 (unanimous; Cowan, Melcher, Rubin not present)

Approval of August 27, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Cain moved to adopt the August 27, 2014 meeting minutes without modification; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously by the Committee.

Vote: 6-0 (unanimous; Cowan, Melcher, Rubin not present)

Committee Announcements

[none]

Old Business

1608 14th St, NW (Rice restaurant building)

Hossein Goal, building owner

HPRB approval for concept/rear addition

Hossein Goal, owner of the building, and the architect for the project present updated drawings and other clarifications requested by the Committee during the Applicant's initial presentation at the July CDC meeting. Goal and the architect affirmed that no part of the building addition would be visible from 14th Street, and pledged to work with both DDOT and the surrounding neighbors to mitigate alley congestion during construction.

Commissioner Cain moved that the CDC recommend that the full ANC recommend HPRB approval for the concept and massing of the project, noting its consistency with the 14th St, NW historic district. CDC member Joel Heisey offered a friendly amendment that CMU siding be used on the building. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously by the Committee.

Vote: 9-0 (unanimous)

New Business

911 and 913 L St, NW (Square 369)

Carolyn Brown, Bob Knopf, Bob Neal, Brad Job

Endorsement of raze application to Mayor's Agent

Carolyn Brown, legal council for the Applicant, argued that the proposed demolition of two historic buildings on the L St, NW side of Square 369 was necessary in order to “construct a project of special merit.” Brown explained that demolition of the two buildings would make a significant contribution to economic growth and tax revenue, and provide much needed hotel room inventory for the District. Brown added that the raze application was consistent with past approvals granted by the Mayor's Agent. The Committee asked the Applicant to walk through scenarios in which the two historic buildings in question were preserved. Bob Knopf explained that preservation of the two historic buildings would not allow for a financially feasible project.

Architect Bob Neal provided updates on eight (8) project design elements that had been specifically modified given prior CDC feedback. The Committee felt the overall massing of the building was much improved.

CDC member Joel Heisey moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC endorse the raze application to the Mayor's Agent with the caveat that the Applicant do as much as possible to deconstruct the two historic buildings in question and incorporate their façades and/or notable design components in the hotel interior; the motion was seconded and approved by the Committee.

Vote: 6-0-3

90 & 91 Blagden Alley, NW

Cary Kadlecsek, Brook Katzen

BZA variances and special exception relief

Cary Kadlecsek, legal counsel for the Applicant, presented four variance requests and three special exception requests related to the Applicant's proposed residential project (two buildings) at 90 & 91 Blagden Alley, NW.

The requests for 90 Blagden Alley included:

1. An open court width variance for two courts that didn't meet minimum court dimension requirements, in order to set back the west and east sides of the building and enhance the alley experience);
2. A lot occupancy variance for only the 1st floor (from 75% to 89%), due to the existing historic structure);
3. A special exception for multiple penthouses and related setback requirements;
4. A 100% special exception for parking.

The requests for 91 Blagden Alley included:

1. A side yard variance, to widen the adjacent alley and increase public safety;
2. A special exception for multiple penthouses and related setback requirements;
3. A 100% variance for parking.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the request for 100% parking relief. The Committee decided to table a vote on the parking relief requests, and asked the Applicant to return to the October 29 CDC meeting to address requests in greater detail. The Committee specifically requested details about the freight loading/unloading situation for the project, and the Applicant's plans to increase bike-sharing options in the immediate neighborhood.

Commissioner Cain moved that the CDC recommend that the full ANC recommend Board of Zoning Adjustment endorsement of the following: 1) the side yard variance for the 91 Blagden Alley, including a Committee request for an easement to the additional public alley space created by the variance; 2) the open court width variance for 90 Blagden Alley; 3) the lot occupancy variance allowing for only the first floor of 90 Blagden Alley; and, 4 & 5) the special exception for multiple penthouses and related setback requirements for both buildings.

Vote: 9-0 (unanimous)

925 M St, NW

Martin Ditto, Chuong Cao

HPRB approval for concept and massing

The developer and architect for 925 M St, NW—a proposed, new, single residential building with two units—presented an initial concept, massing, and design to the CDC. The Committee largely supported the concept and massing of the project, while providing a great deal of feedback about the design of the project. The Applicant will return to the CDC next month.

No action taken

1327 Q St, NW

VW Fowlkes

HPRB approval for concept/roof structure and deck, and rear alterations

The architect for the project, VW Fowlkes, presented the design for the proposed roof structure/deck and related rear alterations to the property. Fowlkes noted that none of the changes would be visible from the street, and that no changes would be made to the façade of the building.

Commissioner Cain moved that the CDC recommend that the full ANC recommend HPRB approval for the concept, massing, and final design of the project. The motion included a friendly amendment asking that the Applicant ensure no planted materials on the roof would be visible from the street level. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee.

Vote: 8-0-1

1209-1213 10th St, NW (The American)

Orestes del Castillo

HPRB approval for concept and massing

Orestes del Castillo, architect for the project, presented the proposed designs for The American [restaurant]. Del Castillo noted the project would preserve the existing building's massing but for the addition of a small wing for bathrooms. Commissioner Melcher requested specific consideration for acoustic insulation on the roof and the patio area walls.

Commissioner Cain moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC recommend HPRB approval for the concept and massing of the project; the motion was approved unanimously by the Committee.

Vote: 8-0 (unanimous; Cowan not present)

Commissioner Cain moved to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the Committee. Meeting adjourned at **10:12 p.m.**