

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3B
GLOVER PARK AND CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS



ANC3B Minutes
April 9, 2015 Public Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Jackie Blumenthal (3B02). The other four commissioners Ann Mladinov (3B01), Abigail Zenner (3B03), Mary Young (3B04), and Brian Turmail (3B05) were also present.

The Commission voted 5-0 to accept the agenda for the meeting, with the addition of one item: the Second Quarter Financial Report.

Police Report: Lt. Ralph Neal gave the crime report for the previous 30 days, ending April 7, for PSA 204 which includes Cleveland Park/Woodley Park/Massachusetts Avenue Heights. He noted there had been one violent crime, assault with a knife (March 29 on the 2700 block of 29th Street). That incident was closed with an arrest. Property crimes were down 19% from last year. Though motor vehicle thefts were up from 1 to 2, all other categories were down: burglaries went from 5 to 2, thefts from autos from 10 to 7, and other property crimes from 20 to 19. He cautioned neighbors to continue to watch out for package deliveries: Tell delivery companies not to leave a package unless someone is there to receive it, or work out an arrangement with a neighbor to receive the delivery.

Chairman Blumenthal recognized the selection of a new commander for the Second District of the Metropolitan Police Department, Melvin Gresham, who previously served as captain in the Second District. Chairman Blumenthal said Cmdr. Gresham is invited to attend a future ANC meeting. Lt. Neal said Cmdr. Gresham would be participating in the Citizen Advisory Council meeting at the Second District Community Room on April 22 at 7 pm, where MPD Chief Cathy Lanier would speak about the police budget and people would have a chance to meet the new commander at a dessert reception afterward.

Rat Abatement: Gerard Brown, Director of Rodent and Vector Control for the DC Department of Health (DOH), spoke about rat control, as the summer season is approaching. He noted that rats need food, water, and a place to live, and humans provide opportunities for all of those. He has 9 pest control experts and 5 people to write up violations, most for not following rules on trash disposal. The office responds to about 3,000 complaints per year in the city. Last year, the city had three Rat Summits with nationally known rodentologist Dr. Robert Corrigan, who was also going to be developing a strategic plan for dealing with rats, but with the transition between administrations the schedule shifted. Now Dr. Corrigan is working on the plan again. The main point is for humans to change their own behavior; rats are an indicator of something people are doing wrong. Trash has to go into plastic bags and be put into closed trash containers. Mr. Brown's office goes block by block meeting with people to get them to work together on the problem. His office has posted important tips at: <http://doh.dc.gov/service/rodent-control>

Mr. Brown said the Glover Park area generally has very few violations. He was in the area the previous day working with Chipotle, which is employing its own private pest control contractor. DOH does not usually bait in commercial areas but it will make a special effort to help deal with the little hill behind Chipotle where there is shared parking, trees and vegetation.

If people have a problem with a commercial establishment leaving trash containers open, etc., Mr. Brown recommends getting in touch with him at gerard.brown@dc.gov or 202-535-2636. He can send out an inspector to take photos and write a ticket. If neighbors take their own photos and provide those to DOH, they also have to attend a hearing to back up their evidence, so it is more effective for the official inspectors to take the photos.

Chairman Blumenthal said Mr. Brown has worked with her neighborhood because it adjoins a commercial district. She got all the neighbors to sign a petition to allow DOH to come into their yards to inspect for rat burrows and put down poison if necessary, and that approach worked really well. Mr. Brown suggested that if neighbors want to petition DOH to work with a whole block, let him know and he will tell his staff to watch for the petition and do all they can to help with the problem.

Commissioner Zenner asked if DOH has a suggestion for large apartment buildings where the tenants may not know their garbage pick-up day and have an overflow of trash at the end of the weekend that the dumpsters are not large enough to hold. Mr. Brown said his office can send an inspection team out to a building having that problem. He said the best way is to file a complaint through 311.

Resolution on Wilson High Budget: Commissioner Mladinov presented a draft resolution opposing the proposed \$1.8 million cut in funds for Wilson High School in the coming fiscal year and supporting Councilmember Mary Cheh's recommendation to restore half the funds, getting the per pupil spending at Wilson back to nearly the level it received in the current school year. Commissioner Turmail said he was seeing increasing support for Wilson among families in Glover Park and it would be important to maintain its quality. He had signed up to testify at the DC Council Committee on Education hearing on the DC schools budget on April 23. He mentioned that there seemed to be a difference in interpretation between Councilmember Cheh and DCPS about how funding for at-risk students was supposed to be handled, which was a key reason for reducing funds to Wilson. The issue was opened for discussion and one neighbor asked why the ANC was only going for half the funding cut to be restored. Chairman Blumenthal responded that the Commission was backing CM Cheh and other local groups working together to support Wilson High. Motion was made to support the resolution, the motion was seconded, and the Commission voted unanimously, 5-0, to adopt the resolution.

Resolution on Glover Park United Football Club: Chairman Blumenthal congratulated Larissa Hotra and Christopher Cox, representatives of the Glover Park "Invincibles," for their 8-0 season as part of United Social Sports DC coed adult indoor soccer league. She read the resolution adapted by the ANC and presented a color copy for each of the 10 team members. Though spring is not a formal season, they are continuing to play informally at Glover Park Recreation Center on Thursdays and some weekend evenings and welcome others interested in trying the sport to join them. For more information on the team and league, see <http://unitedsocialsports.com/season/indoor-glover-winter-15-thursday/>

Request for Zoning Variance at 2131 Observatory Place: As required by ANC3B practice, property owner Jeremy Robinson gave a brief presentation about the rear deck addition he and his wife are proposing at the back of their home, which will extend into the minimum 20-foot back yard required by DC zoning. He had contacted his two abutting neighbors as required and presented signed letters saying they did not object to the plans. The Commission voted unanimously, 5-0, to support the request for a variance.

Grant to Stoddert PTO for Deer Fence around Garden: Commissioner Young reported that the DC auditor had granted pre-approval for the requested grant to the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) of the Stoddert Elementary School for the deer fence. Chairman Blumenthal explained that the Commission had heard a presentation on the grant at the previous ANC public meeting in March and the Commission had voted to support the grant, pending review by the auditor, which is why the grant could be issued between meetings. After pre-approval was received, the ANC issued a check to the PTO on March 25 for the total amount of \$2,500, and they are required to spend the funds within 60 days. Commissioner Turmail noted that after the PTO received the check, they ordered the gate which is a key part of the fence, and it was expected to be delivered by late April when work on the fence was planned. The PTO also indicated it would be calling for volunteers to assist with completing the project.

Update on Pepco-Exelon Proposal: Commissioner Mladinov gave a brief update on the status of the Exelon proposal to purchase Pepco Holdings, Inc., which is before the Public Service Commission for review. At its February 12 meeting, the ANC3B adopted a resolution recommending that the PSC reject the proposal as not in the public interest. Since that time, the applicants have modified their proposal to try to make it more likely to win PSC approval, but Commissioner Mladinov observed that Exelon is still not committing to meet the legally binding standards for reliability of electric service that Pepco is required and committed to make, while the financial benefits for ratepayers are still small, particularly compared to the significant risks represented by the transaction. Chairman Blumenthal pointed people with questions to the back-up material and links provided on the ANC website.

Announcement about Bike Lane Issue on Agenda for Future Meeting: Commissioner Zenner announced that at either the May or June meetings, the ANC will take up the idea of extending the bike lane on New Mexico Avenue to create a new bike route along Tunlaw and down 37th Street toward Georgetown, which is a major travel route. Chairman Blumenthal offered as background that DDOT did a travel/pedestrian survey in the area during the planning for the Wisconsin Avenue “streetscape” project (going back to about 2006), and the recommendation was for a bike route that did not use Wisconsin Avenue. A bike lane was put in along New Mexico Avenue but it stopped just after New Mexico turns into Tunlaw. Part of the reason the bike lane did not go any further was that extending it down Tunlaw would have meant giving up parking spaces. Commissioner Zenner said that Mr. Goodno described the original plans as so out-of-date that going back to the idea now would be like starting over. He is planning to make a site visit to examine current conditions and will present some new options.

Open Forum: Representatives of the Office of Attorney General (OAG), the Mayor, and the DC Public Schools introduced themselves and provided information.

Michael Aniton, a Prosecutor with the new Office of the Attorney General (OAG) introduced himself and the office. He said in their first year of existence, it was important for OAG to get out and inform people about the office and what they could do. Attorney General Karl Racine, chosen by DC voters to be the city’s first elected Attorney General, has a goal to make it a world-class Attorney General’s office and improve the way they do business. The top issues he committed to take on include: consumer protection, affordable housing, and juvenile justice, branching into criminal justice. AG Racine’s vision is that the OAG would even prosecute the crimes committed in the District, rather than relying on the U.S. Attorney. AG Racine wants the OAG to be independent and he was planning to address that issue at the April 29 Council hearing on OAG’s FY 2016 budget. In order to grow and improve, OAG will need funding and AG Racine doesn’t want to raise taxes or pull money from other causes so he is suggesting that the office could get funds from the money the lawyers bring in through fines and settlements.

Michael Matthews, the Mayor's Ward 3 Community Liaison, gave a few updates. He noted that mayor had delivered the State of the District address the previous week, to a packed house at the Lincoln Theatre. Mr. Matthews had also participated in a community event at the National Zoo on Easter Monday, April 6, where Cmdr. Gresham and Lt. Neal from MPD were also working. There were no big issues at the Zoo for that event and it was a big day for everyone. He also announced the Mayor's Office of Community Relations 7th Annual Rock Creek Clean-Up on April 11, and a clean-up day in Glover Park on May 9.

Eli Hoffman, the member of the 5-person DCPS Community Action Team who is assigned to Wards 2 and 3, also introduced himself. He does not work on school budgets but did encourage people to get involved in the Empowering DC initiative to recruit 500 tutors and mentors, mostly males of color, to work with young students in Washington. www.emocdc.org He suggested that people contact him about any education question they have at Elias.Hoffman@dc.gov

Administrative Items: The Commission voted 5-0 to accept the March minutes as proposed.

Commissioner Young presented the Monthly Financial Report for March (shown below). The Commission wrote one check of \$2,500 to the Stoddert PTO for the deer fence around the garden. The Commission received a partial allotment from the city for the second quarter. It should have been \$2,930 but was only \$430.71, because the city withheld the amount of the grant the Commission gave last summer to Friendship Place -- \$2,500 for its Aim Higher program to help homeless people with job training and placement. That grant is being reviewed because a grant to Friendship Place by another ANC was ruled illegal because it was for clothing such as winter hats and gloves. Chairman Blumenthal noted that ANC3B is one of the few ANCs that gives virtually all of its funds to grants rather than office expenses, and the Commissioners hope to keep doing that. A motion was made and seconded to approve the monthly financial report as prepared, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve.

ANC3B – March 2015 Financial Report (Approved at April 2015 meeting)

Checking Account

Opening Balance: **\$8,055.24**

Deposits: \$430.71 Partial DC Auditor Allotment 2nd Quarter FY 2015

Checks: \$2,500.00, #1242 – Stoddert PTO (Deer Fencing)

Closing Balance: \$5,985.95

Commissioner Young presented the Quarterly Financial Report for the Second Quarter of 2015 covering January through March (posted on www.anc3b.org). The opening balance was \$8,789.94, deposits were \$430.71, and expenses were \$3,234.70 for a balance of \$5,985.95, which coincides with the bank statement. A motion was made and seconded to approve the quarterly financial report as prepared, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve.

Chairman Blumenthal announced that the next public meeting of ANC3B will be on May 7, 2015 (one week earlier than usual, because of a scheduling conflict), at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.