

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3B

GLOVER PARK AND CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS



ANC3B Minutes July 9, 2015 Public Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Jackie Blumenthal (3B02). Abigail Zenner (3B03) and Mary Young (3B04) were also present which constituted a quorum. Ann Mladinov (3B01) arrived at 7:08 pm. Brian Turmail (3B05) was held up by a plane delay and was not able to attend.

Chairman Blumenthal presented the proposed agenda which was approved 3-0, with the addition of one item: a vote on whether to support neighbors' request for removal of a nuisance ginkgo tree on 39th Place NW. The request for comment was received on July 6 and the ANC's support was required by September 6, 2015 (before the next ANC meeting), or the tree could not be removed for another two years.

Police Report

Sgt. Cipolari presented the crime statistics for the preceding 30 days in PS204, which includes Woodley Park, part of Cleveland Park, Observatory Circle, Cathedral Heights and Glover Park. He reported that between 2014 and 2015 in PSA204 the biggest change was that theft from autos was up 900%, from 1 in June last year to 10 between June 9 and July 9 this year. Because Sgt. Cipolari works in PSA202 and was filling in, he was unable to be more specific about other issues.

Commissioner Young asked about a sexual assault on 41st Street and Chairman Blumenthal asked about the stabbing death of Joel Johnson at St. Luke's Mission on Calvert Street. He explained that those cases are dealt with by the specialized Sexual Assault unit and Homicide unit who had not provided him any new information.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion with DDOT Deputy Director Greer Gillis but she was not at the meeting so Chairman Blumenthal deferred that discussion until Ms. Gillis or other DDOT staff are present.

Resolution Regarding Bike Route on Tunlaw and 37th Street

Commissioner Zenner presented the DDOT proposal for extending the existing bike route on New Mexico Avenue through Glover Park. DDOT had issued a formal Notification of Intent on June 12 which started a 30-day public comment period. The plan includes short sections of bike lane east of 39th Street on the hilliest portions of Tunlaw southbound and shared road between bicycles and motor vehicles for the rest of the distance down Tunlaw and 37th to Whitehaven Parkway. The plan is for the bike route to continue to Georgetown.

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3B03
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ABIGAIL ZENNER

3B04
CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS
MARY C. YOUNG

3B05
S. GLOVER PARK
BRIAN TURMAIL

Several neighbors mentioned their concerns about the safety of bicycle riders on the streets in Glover Park, with traffic passing them at higher speeds. One resident suggested a speed camera on Tunlaw, where he sees vehicles going 45 mph. Commissioner Blumenthal said the ANC was aware of the issue. Commissioner Zenner noted when DDOT walked the route with her and Commissioners Turmail and Mladinov, they noted a need for more speed limit signs (25 mph) and better striping of the crosswalks. Neighbors at the meeting expressed support for those improvements.

A resident of 2626 Tunlaw Road spoke on behalf of the residents of the Tunlaw Court apartment buildings at 2626-2634 Tunlaw, which under the DDOT plan would lose all 7 non-RPP parking spaces in front of their entrance. Those are the only parking spaces adjoining the apartments and they do not have any off-street parking. He explained that several residents there are older or have disabilities and need to be able to pull to the curb to be dropped off or get their groceries into their apartments, which would not be possible with a bike lane along that stretch of Tunlaw.

Commissioner Zenner suggested maybe the bike lane could end farther north to allow those parking spaces to be retained. Chairman Blumenthal agreed that the Commission could try to see if there would be a way to keep the parking spaces.

Chairman Blumenthal moved to take a vote on the resolution with an amendment to address the concerns of the residents of Tunlaw Court, and asked Commissioner Mladinov to draft a provision to that effect. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the resolution with the proposed amendment, and submit the resolution to DDOT before the 30-day deadline.

Resolution Regarding Proposed Regulations on Electronic Signs

Commissioner Mladinov led the discussion of ANC3B's Resolution against the proposal to allow electronic signs and billboards in at least four Designated Entertainment Areas (DEAs) including Verizon Center, Gallery Place, Nationals Ballpark and the new Southwest waterfront development and give the Mayor sole authority to create additional DEAs. Commissioner Zenner stated she agrees there should be more public input in the review of electronic signs but she does not support the part of ANC3B's resolution about shifting approval responsibility to the Zoning Commission, because DDOT is the agency that regulates signs and deals with public space. She moved that the references to zoning and the Office of Zoning be removed from the resolution. No second was made so the motion failed.

Chairman Blumenthal opened the floor for discussion. Linda Lawson responded that there are residences in most parts of the city and large electronic signs could have a definite effect on nearby residents. Others noted that large electronic signs on rooftops or sides of buildings downtown could be seen for miles and would affect residents' views from many parts of the city, including apartment buildings in Cathedral Heights. Another neighbor advised against giving this kind of authority to the Mayor.

Chairman Blumenthal moved to take a vote on the resolution as drafted. Mary Young seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-1 to approve so the resolution passed.

Resolution Regarding Intersection of Garfield Street and Wisconsin Avenue

Chairman Blumenthal presented the concerns of neighbors and both ANC3B and ANC3C about the intersection at Garfield Street and Wisconsin Avenue NW, particularly the pavement striping on southbound Wisconsin that forces a lane shift to the left. The markings are leftover from the 2012 lane restructuring on Wisconsin Avenue that reduced the number of lanes from 6 to 4. The plan to restructure the roadway was abandoned in 2014 but the street was not fully restored to its original configuration. The resolution asks DDOT to assess the intersection and determine how best to make it safer for vehicles and pedestrians. Chairman Blumenthal also noted that neighbors at the Garfield House (southwest corner of Wisconsin and Garfield) have asked to have the parking spaces restored just south of Garfield Street that used to be available outside their building in non-rush hours,

Elizabeth Edgeworth who lives near Fulton Street and 38th Street NW said there are also safety issues on Fulton because vehicles use it as a cut-through. Chairman Blumenthal acknowledged the problem and said there had been an agreement to put speed humps in that part of Fulton west of Wisconsin Avenue and the Commission thought that was going to be done. Ms. Edgeworth said that she had gotten the required signatures on a petition to get those speed humps installed but DDOT denied the request. She said she wouldn't insist on speed humps but said the signage is terrible and advised there should be more "Stop for Pedestrian signs" or reduced speed limits on those blocks.

Chairman Blumenthal said that the Commission could take up that matter with DDOT when they can next meet. The Commission has asked DDOT to look at the location of parking spaces on southbound Wisconsin where the bus stop used to be at Fulton Street, creating very difficult sight lines for vehicles or others coming from Fulton into Wisconsin. She added that ANC3B is trying to work with ANC3C, which has been quite concerned that there are no left turns allowed from outbound Massachusetts Avenue at rush hour between the British embassy and Idaho Avenue except 36th Street NW which forces traffic to cut through a residential neighborhood. Ms. Edgeworth noted that there are speed humps on Fulton east of Wisconsin. Chairman Blumenthal said the Commission would see what the options are, working with ANC3C. Commissioner Zenner said that at Friendship Heights there are signs "Neighborhood Slow Zone." She also recommended looking at the Vision Zero website for information on improving pedestrian safety: www.visionzeroinitiative.com

Chairman Blumenthal moved to take a vote on the resolution asking DDOT to review the intersection of Wisconsin and Garfield. The motion was seconded, and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve.

Resolution Regarding ABRA Application by Savoy Suites

Chairman Blumenthal introduced a resolution to protest the expansion of alcohol service to a new rooftop space at the Savoy Suites Hotel at 2505 Wisconsin Avenue and explained that the implementation of the resolution would be halted if an agreement on hours, entertainment and other issues was successfully concluded before the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) deadline for comment of August 10. ANC3B, ANC3C, the Massachusetts Avenue Heights Citizens Association and the neighboring condo association have been working with the hotel to find common ground.

Matt Wexler of the ownership team for the Savoy gave a brief presentation about the plans for renovating the hotel, and reported that the hotel would be renamed the Glover Park Hotel and would be part of the Kimpton hotel chain when the renovation project is completed, potentially in the fall or winter 2015. He said he and his team hope and expect the hotel will be the favorite of neighbors and they want to be a positive part of the neighborhood.

Mr. Wexler said hotel can accommodate 175 cars in its underground garage with valet parking. The roof deck is proposed to have 136 seats in addition to 155 seats in the restaurant on the first floor of the hotel. The hotel will have 153 rooms available to guests. Neighbors asked if the hotel will continue to offer reasonable room rates and offer discounts to residents from the local area. He said yes, that is the intention—a 4.5 star hotel with family-friendly rates and a 20% discount for neighbors.

Chairman Blumenthal moved to take a vote on the resolution noting ANC3B's concerns. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted to approve the resolution as written, with the intention that it would only be sent to ABRA if a settlement agreement is not reached before the August 10 deadline.

Letter Regarding Removal of Gingko Tree at 2329 39th Street

Chairman Blumenthal presented the request for approval to remove a gingko tree that had become a nuisance. Over 60% of the property owners on the 2200 block of 39th Place NW had signed a petition supporting removal. The Urban Forestry Administration in the DC Department of Transportation (UFA/DDOT) had assessed the tree and other trees on the block and had no objections to removal of the tree. Chairman Blumenthal moved to approve a letter supporting the neighbors. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to send a letter to UFA/DDOT to support immediate removal of the tree and planting of a replacement tree in the next planting season.

Open Forum

A Glover Park resident asked if there is anything the ANC can do about a problem landlord in the neighborhood. Chairman Blumenthal reported that the Office of the Tenant Advocate, the Attorney General's office and MPD are all working together to find an appropriate resolution.

Another neighbor expressed concern about the speed of traffic where W Street turns to 42nd Street. Chairman Blumenthal said the Commission can raise this with DDOT when they schedule another meeting.[1]

Commissioner Zenner noted that about a month before, in response to the two pedestrian fatalities on Wisconsin Avenue, AllWalksDC had organized a memorial walk and representatives of DDOT, the police, and Councilmembers Mary Cheh and Elissa Silverman had participated, and they are aware that the neighborhood is watching for their response to pedestrian safety issues.

Administrative Matters

Chairman Blumenthal presented the minutes from the June 12 meeting and moved to accept the minutes as written. The Commission voted 4-0 to approve.

Treasurer Mary Young presented the June Monthly Financial Report. Chairman Blumenthal moved to vote to accept the financial report as submitted, and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve.

ANC3B June 2015 Financial Report

Checking Account

Opening Balance: \$6,255.87

Deposits: \$2,772.30 6/9/2015 DC Government Allotment

\$2,500.00 6/22/2015 Restored DC Government Allotment

**\$34.75 6/23/2015 Additional Unused funds returned from
Stoddert PTO Grant for Deer Fence**

**Checks: #1244 dated 6/11/2015 in the amount of \$2,449.90 for a grant
to Hardy PTO to replace ten aging computers**

#1245 dated 6/11/2015 in the amount of \$158.00 for P.O. Box Rental

**#1246 dated 6/11/2015 in the amount of \$59.98 to reimburse Mary Young
for purchase of a tape recorder for use by ANC3B.**

**#1247 dated 6/21/2015 in the amount of \$29.00 to reimburse
Jackie Blumenthal for late charges on ANC3B P.O. Box.**

Closing Balance: \$8,866.04

Treasurer Young also presented the Third Quarter Financial Report (April-June 2015). The opening balance was \$5,985.95 and the closing balance was \$8,866.04, which matches the checkbook records.

Chairman Blumenthal moved to accept the quarterly financial report as submitted. The Commission voted 4-0 to approve.

Chairman Blumenthal announced that the next meeting of ANC3B will be on Thursday, September 10, when the Commission expects to have a presentation by DC Water about the new green infrastructure plan affecting Northwest DC. Commissioner Mladinov added that at that same meeting, the Commission would request an update on DC Water's reassessment of options for Sewer Pipe Rehabilitation in Glover-Archbold Park.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.