

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



ANC3B Minutes
June 11, 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 meeting was held at Guy Mason Recreation Center's community room rather than the community room at Stoddert Elementary School and Glover Park Recreation Center because power had gone out at Stoddert and much of the neighborhood west of Wisconsin Avenue at about 4:45 pm. Pepco had posted that power would be restored around 8 pm, so the Commissioners quickly checked with Guy Mason to find an alternate meeting location. The change in location was posted on the door at Stoddert as well as on the Glover Park listserv and on Twitter, and the members, presenters, and expected guests were phoned and emailed.

Gottlieb Simon, Executive Director of the Office of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, was in attendance, as well as a representative of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association.

Chairman Jackie Blumenthal called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

The Commission voted 5-0 to accept the agenda for the meeting, noting the change in location.

Chairman Jackie Blumenthal noted that the Metropolitan Police Department was occupied at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Calvert Street, dealing with a fatal crash involving a Peapod delivery truck and a pedestrian, so the police report was deferred until after the discussion of the new grant request the Commission has received.

Grant Request

Dean Hill of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) of Hardy Middle School presented the request of the PTO for a grant of \$2,949.90 for about 10 computers to be used by science and potentially also math teachers in class and outside the classroom for after school activities such as the Robotics Club, Garden Club, and Rock Club. He thanked ANC3B for giving the Hardy PTO a seed grant of \$2,500 in early 2014, to support the purchase of new books to replace those damaged when the library was renovated and the books were in storage. The grant helped them get a further \$5,000 grant from the Palisades Community Association to support the Hardy library project, and helped the Hardy librarian, Donna Eisen, to update and improve the library service. In the prior school year, the Hardy library circulated 1,800 books but as of the end of April, the library had checked out 3,200 books – a 78% increase -- and the year hadn't even ended yet. The PTO hopes that the new grant for replacing obsolete computers will again work as seed money to help the Hardy PTO get additional funds from the Palisades Community

Association and the school system for improving the school's computers. Hill said Hardy has about 200 computers and their average age is about 8 years; the new computers will comply with DCPS current standards, and will support teaching and also testing such as PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) which is all done online.

Chairman Blumenthal noted that the Commission had gotten permission from the DC Auditor to make this grant and she moved that the Commission take a vote to approve it. The motion was seconded by Brian Turmail and the Commission voted 5-0 to make the grant.

Police Report

Lt. Ralph Neal of the Second District arrived and gave the crime report for PS204 during the 30 days from May 4-June 4, 2015, in comparison to the same time period in 2014. This year there were 15 violent crimes compared to 14 last year. There were no sexual assaults compared to 2 a year ago and no robberies with a gun compared to 2 last year. For property crimes, the numbers went up from 36 last year to 51 this year in the same month, about a 42% increase for the weeks between May 4 and June 4. That included 4 burglaries this year compared to 1 last year, and 2 stolen autos compared to 2 last year. There were also 30 thefts from autos this year compared to 10 last year, but only 15 other thefts compared to 23 last year. Lt. Neal noted that we obviously have to concentrate on theft from motor vehicles and educate residents to keep their doors locked, park in well lighted areas, leave nothing of value in the vehicle, have an alarm system in the vehicle, call 911 if you see or hear anything suspicious, and know your neighbors so they can help watch for anything out of the ordinary and report it. He said that about 10 of the thefts from vehicles took place on or near New Mexico Avenue.

Commissioner Turmail asked about steps the Metropolitan Police (MPD) was taking to reduce crime in the area. Lt. Neal reported that the Chief of Police announced a new crime fighting unit for the city that would be doing a high tech form of community policing, using data to identify patterns and solutions. The officers will not wear traditional uniforms and hats but will wear khakis and polo shirts, work with the communities, interview people in the neighborhood about crimes being committed, and use data to develop solutions.

Proposed Bike Route on Tunlaw and 37th Street

Mike Goodno, bike planner for DC's Department of Transportation (DDOT) presented the revised plans for extending through Glover Park on Tunlaw Road and 37th Street the bike route that currently runs from American University down New Mexico Avenue to 4000 Tunlaw Road. Goodno noted that Tunlaw is not as wide as New Mexico Avenue (38 feet v. 43-44 feet) and there is parking on both sides of the street that DDOT does not want to destroy so the proposal is to provide a bike lane on the south side of Tunlaw starting at 39th Street NW, as a "climbing lane" in the steepest parts of the hill, and for the rest of the route down Tunlaw past Calvert Street and down 37th to have shared lanes with signs "Bikes may use full lanes." He said in the sections with stretches of bike lane, the plan calls for some changes in the non-RPP parking spaces, for a net addition of 6 to 8 total spaces, including: 13 additional non-RPP spaces on the south side of Tunlaw east of 39th Street; 3 spaces removed on the north side of the street at 3901 Tunlaw; 3 more non-RPP spaces added in front of 3900 Tunlaw; and 7 non-RPP spaces removed next to 2622-2634 Tunlaw. DDOT will also explore adding 2 more non-RPP spaces next to the Russian embassy offices on the east side of Tunlaw, though Chairman Blumenthal noted that may have to be approved by other agencies including the U.S. State Department.

The plan also includes several new 25 mph speed limit signs along the route, wider crosswalks at Tunlaw and Davis, larger "Watch for Pedestrian" signs, and "way-finding" signs pointing to

important destinations such as schools, recreation centers, local library and hospital. Goodno asked the ANC and citizens to suggest what those destination points should be.

Chairman Blumenthal said the Commission would put the bike plan out for comment and take up a resolution on the plan at its July meeting. Goodno also said he would be in touch with the ANC in Burleith to discuss the further extension of the bike route down 37th Street to Georgetown. He also committed to sending the Commission a formal notification of intent that would open a 30-day comment period. He projected that once comments are received and a plan is approved, the work on the bike route and the signs should only take 2 to 6 weeks.

Updates

- a. Wilson High School budget: Commissioner Turmail reported that in May the City Council added another \$900,000 to the Wilson budget to maintain per pupil funding, faculty, class size, and programs for the coming year, as Councilmember Mary Cheh, School Board Member Ruth Wattenberg, the PTO, ANC3B and others had urged. Former ANC3B Chair Brian Cohen, who had also testified for the Wilson funding, thanked ANC3B for its support.
- b. Proposed Acquisition of Pepco by Exelon: Commissioner Mladinov reported that on May 27, 2015, the DC Public Service Commission (DCPSC) closed its comment period on the proposed Exelon purchase of Pepco and expects to issue its decision in late summer. The transaction cannot go forward with the approval of DCPSC. After a series of citizen forums on the option of creating a public power company, the City Council is considering a bill to fund a study of the feasibility of creating a municipally-owned utility. Armistead Rood asked if the study could affect the outcome of the Pepco-Exelon proceeding. Commissioner Mladinov noted that the PSC decision is due before the study could be funded, contracted, and completed, though the city could pursue a public power option in the future.
- c. DDOT Issues: Chairman Blumenthal announced that DDOT issues will be taken up at the July meeting, and summarized the pending issues the Commission has raised with DDOT, including removal of an unneeded curb cut on W Place, removal of the “No Left Turn” sign at Massachusetts and Observatory Place, and restoring the remaining elements of the intersection at Calvert and Wisconsin after the failed restructuring that was reversed two years ago. She also noted that several residents have expressed concerns about visibility at the intersection of Fulton and Wisconsin since the bus stop was moved from Fulton to Garfield Street. And she also raised a concern forwarded by ANC3C about the unusual striping at the intersection of Garfield and Wisconsin and said that the Commission has asked DDOT to look at that. The Commissioners also noted that two speed cameras have been installed, one on the east side and one on the west side of Wisconsin at Edmunds Street, and fines are being levied for violators of the speed limit

Reappointment of People’s Counsel

Commissioner Mary Young reported that the term of People’s Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye is up on June 15. In recognition of her excellent service to the people of the city on utility issues including OPC’s recent Horizons 2015 educational summit OPC’s participation in rate cases and the proposed Pepco-Exelon acquisition, Commissioner Young recommended that the Commission send a letter to the mayor supporting Ms. Mattavous-Frye’s reappointment. Chairman Blumenthal moved to vote on sending the letter, Commissioner Young seconded, and the Commissions voted to approve by a vote of 5-0.

Open Forum

A constituent asked what had happened at the intersection of Calvert and Wisconsin, just before the meeting. Chairman Blumenthal said that a Peapod delivery truck had struck a woman. Another constituent noted that someone else had been hit by a vehicle on Wisconsin between Nando's and Sullivan's Toys. Commissioner Turmail suggested that the ANC raise pedestrian safety with Second District Commander Gresham.

Chairman Blumenthal reported that ANC3C has asked for ANC3B's support on several issues, including DDOT issues and also the proposed change in the city's sign regulations to allow the mayor to establish Designated Entertainment Areas where electronic signs would be allowed on the sides and top of buildings, without having the decision go through a formal zoning process or any notice and comment period for ANCs and the public to participate. Commissioner Young suggested it would be preferable for the ANCs to be given "great weight" in decisions on where electronic signs and billboards would be allowed. Chairman Blumenthal said ANC3B might want to participate with other ANCs in taking a position on the proposal, though the commercial district in Glover Park may not be directly affected because it is part of the Naval Observatory Overlay which prevents light pollution.

Administrative Business

Treasurer Mary Young presented the May Financial Report, which included a \$22.50 check for website updates and receipt of \$292.42 returned from the Stoddert PTO for funds not used from the grant for the deer fence. A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial report as prepared, and the Commission voted to approve by a vote of 5-0.

ANC3B May 2015 Financial Report Checking Account

Opening Balance: \$5,985.95

Deposits: \$292.42 5/27/2015 Unused funds for Stoddert PTO Grant for Deer Fence

Checks: #1243 dated 5/7/2015 in the amount of \$22.50 payable to DLM Web Development for updating website

Closing Balance: \$6,255.87

Chairman Blumenthal announced that the Commission had learned that each ANC has to keep a verbatim record of its public meetings. She moved to approve expenditure for a portable audio recorder, estimated to be \$80 to \$100. Commissioner Young seconded the motion, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the purchase. Commissioner Young noted that in the coming month the Commission would also be paying the cost of renting the ANC3B P.O. Box (\$158.00). Commissioner Young also reported that the city was restoring to the Commission the funds that had been withheld for a 2014 grant to Friendship Place which the auditor had interpreted as "subsistence" but was used for a program to help formerly homeless people get jobs, and an expenditure for plaques to the outgoing commissioners, all of which were found to be allowable.

Chairman Blumenthal announced that the next public meeting of ANC3B will be on July 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.