

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

March 2012 Minutes

A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. at Stoddert Elementary School and Recreation Center. In attendance were: Commissioners Cohen (05), Blumenthal (02), Thielen (01), and Fulwood (03).

Commissioner Cohen made a motion to change the schedule of the agenda for the meeting and this was approved unanimously. Discussion of the proposed resolution to remove Class B (off-site beer and wine retailer) liquor licenses from the Glover Park Liquor License Moratorium was moved to the start of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution to Remove Class B Licenses from the Glover Park Liquor License Moratorium:

Commissioner Blumenthal introduced a resolution to remove the liquor license moratorium for Class B licenses. According to Commissioner Blumenthal, this would increase the possibility of more diverse food options in Glover Park and that there is a demand for more diverse food and liquor vending options in Glover Park. The only responses received on the Glover Park list-serve have been favorable to the removal.

One Glover Park resident inquired why ANC 3B is taking a different position on the Class B licenses. Commissioner Blumenthal replied that Class B licenses don't create a significant adverse effect and that the Glover Park community could benefit from more diverse food options. Commissioner Cohen suggested there is a possible race to the bottom with CR licenses but this isn't as likely with Class B licenses. Commissioner Thielen said he supported repealing both the Class B and CR license moratorium.

SECOND DISTRICT POLICE REPORT

Lieutenant Neal gave the police report for March 2012, citing year-to-year crime data for January 1, 2011- March 1, 2011 versus the same period for 2012. Lieutenant Neal noted that the Police Service Area extends east to Connecticut Avenue and north to Tenley. Lieutenant Neal also noted there has been more theft from automobiles this year (39) compared to 19 during the same period last year. According to Lieutenant Neal, thefts from autos increase during the summer months. There has also been 81 property crimes this year, a 19% increase from the same period last year.

Commissioner Fulwood inquired about what happened to the group committing the armed robberies in Ward 3. Lieutenant Neal noted that there are different groups involved but that the Metropolitan Police Department has apprehended some of the suspects.

Commissioner Thielen inquired about thefts of bicycles. Lieutenant Neal responded that the monthly crime data includes theft of bicycles and that the Metropolitan Police Department has recommended that apartment managers install video cameras in their garages.

Commissioner Fulwood inquired about how expensive it would be to install traffic cameras in Glover Park. Lieutenant Neal answered that the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) traffic division is responsible for this. Only signaled intersections can get traffic cameras, not stop signs, due to the volume of vehicles required.

Commissioner Cohen noted the issue of idling WMATA buses in front of Stoddert in the mornings. Commissioner Cohen also inquired whether there is anything the Metropolitan Police Department can do to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of 37th Street and Tunlaw. Tom Smith from Mayor Gray's office said that the Mayor has made it clear that this intersection is a high priority.

NEW BUSINESS

Grant Request by Jarrett Ferrier: Mr. Ferrier appeared before the ANC to seek approval from the ANC for a grant request for a mural on the space on W Place underneath the stairs. The art would honor Charles Glover and also include decorative ironwork at the top of the stairs.

One resident asked whether there is enough light at night at this location. Commissioner Cohen noted that he has been working with the Mayor's office and obtained new streetlights for this location. Another resident inquired about the dumping of garbage in this location. Tom Smith from the Mayor's office said that the Department of Public Works has put letters at the homes next to the stairs addressed to people who leave their trash cans in this public space.

A resident asked Mr. Ferrier whether there is any coating he can apply to the mural to repel graffiti. Mr. Ferrier responded that he would look into this.

Commissioner Cohen made a motion that the ANC approve sending a letter in support of the project to the DC Commission on Humanities and the Arts. The motion was approved 4-0.

Discussion of the Office of Planning's Proposed Changes to Zoning Regulations: Dan Emerine (dan.emerine@dc.gov) from the DC Office of Planning appeared before the ANC to discuss the ongoing zoning revisions and answer questions from residents. The Office of Planning has been working on a re-write of the zoning codes for approximately four years, with an estimated year remaining to complete the revisions. One of the Office of Planning's goals is to make the zoning code clearer and easier to use. The last time the code was written was in 1958. The Office of Planning also noted that the code needs to be updated to be compatible with the District's Comprehensive Plan. The Office of Planning noted that it is updating parking requirements to be more consistent with walkable urban neighborhoods.

Jeff Davis is the Ward 3 liaison for the Zoning Task Force. The official public comment phase is expected to begin later this fall. Hearings before the Zoning Commissioner are expected to be held in early 2013.

Most of Glover Park is zoned as “R3” and “R5” and “R5A.” The Office of Planning noted that under the zoning revisions, accessory dwellings would be allowed as matter-of-right. The property owner would have to occupy either the main unit or the accessory dwelling unit.

The Office of Planning is also proposing to allow a very limited number of non-residential uses in residential zones. Commissioner Cohen asked if the Office of Planning could provide more information about the proposal for corner store. According to the Office of Planning, the zoning codes would prohibit on-site alcohol sales. The hours would be limited and garbage must be kept inside.

A Glover Park resident said she believes any reduction of parking is an absurdity. She also said that she is not prepared for someone on her block to open a corner store and asked whether neighbors will have a way to object to commercial uses in residential areas.

Another resident inquired about the proposed zoning changes for side yards. According to Office of Planning, the absolute minimum width is three feet on either side of the property. Another resident noted that Glover Park doesn’t get much new building in the neighborhood but there is a 9-unit building being constructed without any off-street parking. The Office of Planning responded that any building with fewer than ten units would not be required to provide off-street parking.

Commissioner Thielen inquired about the proposed green-area ratio. According to the Office of Planning, residential zones and commercial zones would have to meet a certain score for greening properties. The Office of Planning noted that DC is a dense city and that it does not want to inhibit walkability at the expense of the green-area ratio. Rooftop solar panels can also be counted toward the green-area ratio requirement.

One resident inquired about what happens with the accessory dwellings if the owner sells the property or moves. The Office of Planning noted that the District allows accessory units now but these are by exception and not by right.

Commissioner Cohen noted that he has very mixed opinions about the proposal to allow a limited amount of commercial uses in non-residential areas. He stated that he likes the convenience that it will provided but that he is concerned about the impacts and that it could change the character of already-established neighborhoods.

Commissioner Fulwood asked whether there will be any kind of systematic review of parking requirements. The Office of Planning noted that the parking task force established by former mayor Anthony Williams is now over ten years old and that eliminating parking requirements may be the biggest change in the zoning revisions.

OLD BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Wisconsin Avenue Streetscape: Commissioner Cohen noted that several commissioners met with the District Department of Transportation and the Mayor’s Office. Commissioner Cohen expects

to be moving forward on the streetscape improvements by mid-to-late spring 2012. Commissioner Cohen noted that there is concern about the project increasing cut-through traffic on 37th Street and Tunlaw Road. The Mayor's office assured ANC 3B that safety improvements at this intersection would be a priority.

One resident inquired about the cost of the streetscape improvements. Commissioner Cohen noted that a significant part of the project costs will be for new streetlights and widening sidewalks and that the streetscape improvements extend north on Wisconsin Avenue to Fulton Street.

Another resident noted the construction process for Columbia Heights highlighted the need for a single point of contact at the District Department of Transportation to handle construction-related problems when they arise. He also noted that DDOT needs traffic control officers during the construction and the ANC should widely publicize when construction will occur on specific sections of Wisconsin Avenue.

Another resident said that he knows specifically that pedestrians have been struck on Wisconsin Avenue and that the sidewalk by the 30s bus stop next to the Georgetown Valet dry cleaners is dangerously narrow.

One resident inquired whether there was any consideration of not having a striped median between Calvert and Whitehaven. Another resident suggested that DDOT synchronize the streetlights.

OPEN FORUM

One resident noted that the District Department of Transportation failed to reverse lanes on Reservoir Road during the 2011 Emancipation Day observance.

There was a request from a resident that Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3B consider a motion to require that the Glover Park Citizens Association publish its bylaws in order to increase transparency.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Approval of February Minutes: The February 2012 minutes were approved by a vote of 3-0. Commissioner Blumenthal was absent.

Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Fulwood noted that the District Office of the Financial Auditor owes the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3B \$1600.00. Commissioner Fulwood reported that the February 2012 financial report won't be available to be approved until the April 2012 meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded and passed 3-0 at 9:30 PM.