

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



ANC3B Public Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2020

Chairman Turmail called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. All five Commissioners were in attendance -- Ann Mladinov (3B01), Jackie Blumenthal (3B02), Melissa Lane (3B03), Mary Young (3B04) and Brian Turmail (3B05) -- meaning a quorum was present.

Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the agenda.

Police Report

Lt. Ralph Neal presented the monthly report about crime in the ANC3B area. He reported that in the preceding 30 days there was 1 reported assault with a dangerous weapon and 1 robbery, compared to no violent crimes in the same time period in 2019. For property crimes, there were 8 thefts from auto, 10 other thefts, 2 burglaries, and no stolen autos. Crimes in the 30 days totaled 22, down from 23 last year. Captain Brian Bray also participated in the meeting and spoke briefly about two arrests for assault that occurred on Wisconsin Avenue on February 4. He explained that the individuals involved were acquainted and these appeared to be isolated incidents.

There were questions about the robbery on Fulton, which was a phone snatch. A resident asked if streetlights help deter crime. Captain Bray agreed and urged residents to use the DC 311 system to report streetlights that are out. (MPD formerly had its own system but 311 has replaced that.)

Grant Request from Friends of Glover Park for Sports Equipment and Supplies

Commissioner Turmail asked to hear the request for a grant from the Friends for Glover Park, while Commissioner Mladinov organized the sound system for the discussion of the WMATA's proposed changes in Metrobus services. Dean Hill, Treasurer of the Friends of Glover Park, presented their request for a grant of \$982.01 for sports equipment to use at the Glover Park Community Center, including basketballs, basketball nets and a double ball rack. Chairman Turmail made a motion to vote on the grant. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the grant. Commissioner Mladinov was out of the room and did not vote.

Discussion of Proposed Changes to Metrobus Services Affecting Riders in ANC3B

Chairman Turmail explained that WMATA had agreed to participate in ANC3B's January and February meetings to discuss its proposed changes in Metrobus services but at the last minute had canceled presentations to ANC3B as well as all other ANCs because the staff could not accommodate all the requests. Instead, WMATA held a forum for ANC members on February 11, to provide additional information and answer questions. Commissioner Mladinov attended the ANC forum and reported on details WMATA staff provided about Metrobus routes serving ANC3B.

WMATA's proposed budget for FY2021 (beginning July 1, 2020) posted in December 2019 included changes to several Metrobus routes affecting ANC3B: D1, D2, 30S, 30N, and 37. The proposal would combine the D2 with the G2 between Georgetown and LeDroit Park/Howard University, and would eliminate the other four routes. Eliminating the rush hour services on the D1 and 37 routes that are used heavily by commuters and students, would force riders from those routes onto already crowded buses on the D2 and 30-series lines. Any riders using the D1 to get to and from Farragut Square, McPherson Square, or Franklin Square would have to make a transfer to reach their destinations. Like the D2 buses, the G2 buses are already crowded at peak times, and merging the route would mean that riders from 3 routes would have to crowd onto only one route. In addition, the merger of the D2 and G2 routes would mean that buses would no longer serve the bus stop at the front gate of Georgetown University, which is the biggest bus stop on the route, leaving riders to walk up close to half a mile to the nearest bus stop. Extending the D2 to Howard University across P Street and up 4th Street NW where there is often congestion would add to the unreliability and likely problems with on-time performance for riders to and from Glover Park.

WMATA's most current information showed that the 30S and 30N buses would be replaced one-for-one by additional trips on the 31 or 33 routes, but those routes run from Friendship Heights to points north of the National Mall, so all the cross-city service from Friendship Heights to points south of the Mall in the SW and SE quadrants of the District would no longer be available unless riders made one or more transfers to other buses or Metrorail. Commissioner Mladinov noted that since the 1970s, District and WMATA officials committed to keep operating bus service linking upper Wisconsin Avenue and far Southeast, to provide economical transit service for riders and also maintain social, economic and cultural connections between the communities. WMATA's proposals would cut that cross-city transit connection for the first time in nearly a century.

Chairman Turmail opened the floor for questions. One resident noted that the 30S and 30N routes are the only routes that offer late-night buses on Wisconsin Avenue, and urged that WMATA maintain service at those hours. (WMATA's proposal would replace those late-night 30S and 30N runs with service on the 33 route between Archives and Friendship Heights.) Other residents noted concerns about adequate bus transportation for employees at Safeway and other local businesses; need for Metrobus to get students to Hardy Middle and Duke Ellington High School, since the District does not provide school bus service; delays involved in making transfers, especially to get to destinations south of the Mall; projected increases in the number of residents along Wisconsin Avenue at Fannie Mae, the short-term shelter on Idaho Avenue, and other developments. Several residents said they had moved to their current homes because of the availability of bus service. Several questions involved whether Councilmember Cheh, other Councilmembers, and Mayor Bowser were supporting Ward 3 residents in preserving bus service. Cole Wogoman, CM Cheh's liaison, reported she had written several letters in support of preserving the Metrobus services.

The Commissioners strongly urged everyone to submit comments to WMATA about the proposed changes in Metrobus services during the public comment period through March 2 at 5 pm. Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to adopt the proposed letter to WMATA opposing the Metrobus changes. The motion was seconded, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter.

Resolution to Amend ANC 3B's Settlement Agreement with Wingos at 2218 Wisconsin Avenue

Commissioner Blumenthal explained that Wingos had filed an application to add an entertainment endorsement to its liquor license, after the Alcoholic Beverage Regulatory Administration (ABRA) said that Wingos should have an entertainment endorsement to conduct Trivia Nights and Comedy Nights. Commissioner Blumenthal presented a resolution supporting an amendment to ANC3B's settlement agreement with Wingos to limit the entertainment endorsement to Trivia Nights and Comedy Nights and

not allow DJs or live music. Chairman Turmail made a motion to vote on the resolution. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the resolution.

Letter on Proposed Amendments to the DC Comprehensive Plan

Commissioner Mladinov presented a letter to the Office of Planning (OP) regarding the draft amendments to the Comp Plan, before the final date for comments on February 14. The letter emphasized the importance of providing sound guidance for planning and zoning decisions in key areas including housing, transportation, schools, and economic development. The letter highlighted some broad policy interests of the Commission, such as preserving existing affordable housing and creating new affordable units, developing and preserving strong and successful neighborhoods, protecting and expanding the tree canopy, carrying out the District's environmental goals and commitments, coordinating development plans with infrastructure plans, providing adequate capacity in District public schools and ensuring that infrastructure is adequate before building new schools or expanding existing schools in the area.

Chairman Turmail asked if there were comments or questions from residents. Brian Cohen asked if the Commission could highlight which areas of the draft Comp Plan the Commission supports or opposes. Commissioner Mladinov responded that the proposed ANC3B submission included specific recommendations for word or line edits in provisions affecting the ANC3B area, but generally the Commission supported the goals and themes of the draft. Meg Maguire commented that the draft Comp Plan is an entire rewrite when OP is just supposed to be in an amendment cycle, there had been no public participation such as formal public comment in the development of the draft, and the whole process has violated the requirements in District law.

Commissioner Mladinov agreed that there had been numerous problems with the process and the Commission had sent resolutions and letters to OP on several occasions about the absence of required public comment period and need for more opportunities for public review and comment. She noted that the ANC3B's concerns about what it had seen in the Comp Plan process were mostly about the process itself. The ANC had offered several suggestions for changing the timetable, providing for more time for comment, and ensuring more public participation when it is time to rewrite the Comp Plan. But OP had rejected the calls for a significant extension of the time for reviewing the draft and granted only 3 additional weeks for public comment, through January 10, and 2 additional weeks for ANC comments, through February 14. She also noted that after the Council adopted a revised version of the Framework Element of the Comp Plan in October, it would be very difficult for planners to implement with the new 60+ page Framework Element in place while the rest of the 800+ pages had not been revised to comport with the Framework Element. Chairman Turmail made a motion to vote on the letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the letter and submit it to OP by the end of the comment period.

Open Forum

Kate Gillespie who lives at 2213 38th Street spoke about a rear deck addition at the property next door to hers that was built without the required zoning approval and without building permits. She said that DCRA had inspected the deck in 2019, had done two land surveys, and found that the addition crossed onto her property and compromised her dryer and furnace vent as well as the other property owner's air conditioner. DCRA had ordered the deck to be removed but had not enforced the order. The new owner of that property has applied to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) for retroactive approval to build a rear deck. Chairman Turmail explained that ANC 3B only supports zoning requests if they are supported by adjacent neighbors, so the ANC would not take a vote to participate in the zoning case. Chairman Turmail asked Rich Harrington, the Mayor's Ward 3 representative and Cole Wogoman from CM Cheh's office to help Ms. Gillespie resolve the issue.

A resident on Cathedral Avenue near Idaho Avenue said that she does not want to hit pedestrians but the sight distance and general conditions on that section of Cathedral Avenue make it very difficult for pedestrians or motorists to avoid crashes and close calls. Chairman Turmail responded that the ANC had been speaking with DDOT for at least 3 years about getting safety improvements in the 4100 block of Cathedral Avenue, which was among the Livability Study recommendations DDOT released early in October. Commissioner Young said she would contact DDOT on this issue.

RoseMarie LaPeter from Good Guys spoke of the chronic rat problem in the alley behind the establishment and the whole area outside that building. She said the situation has become untenable because the rat infestation in the former Whole Foods building was not being addressed. Rich Harrington, ANC3B's contact person from the Mayor's office, agreed to work with Commissioner Blumenthal to find a way to get action on the rat problem in that area.

Rich Harrington announced the Mayor had scheduled 3 Budget Engagement Forums to hear from residents about their spending priorities in the Mayor's proposed Budget for the coming fiscal year, which will be released by April. Chairman Turmail reported that the Commission had invited a speaker from the District to provide a briefing on the budget at the March or April meeting.

Oye Owolewa spoke briefly about the DC Statehood legislation that had been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in the fall, and said the mark-up was held earlier in the week and the bill had been passed by the committee so it can go on to the full House, which marked a historic milestone. The U.S. Senate, however, is not expected to approve the bill.

Administrative Matters

Commissioner Mladinov presented the minutes for the January meeting. Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to vote on the minutes, the motion was seconded, and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as written.

Treasurer Mary Young presented the ANC3B financial report for January:

January 2020 Financial Report

OPENING BALANCE: \$ 7,627.22

Income: \$ 75.00 Unused grant monies returned from Community Foodworks DC

Total Incoming: \$ 75.00

Outgoing: \$ 1,055.00. Check #1312 Grant to Iona Senior Services for reusable Shopping bags imprinted with Iona logo

Total Outgoing \$ 1,055.00

CLOSING BALANCE: \$6,647.22

Chairman Turmail announced that the next meeting of ANC3B would be Thursday, March 12.

Chairman Turmail made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.