

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3B

GLOVER PARK AND CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS



ANC3B Public Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 14, 2019

Chairman Brian Turmail (3B05) opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. Other Commissioners in attendance were Ann Mladinov (3B01), Jackie Blumenthal (3B02), Melissa Lane (3B03), and Mary Young (3B04), which constituted a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners make a quorum.)

Chairman Turmail made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commissioners voted 5-0 to adopt the agenda as presented.

Introduction of New MPD Second District Commander Duncan Bedlion

Duncan Bedlion introduced himself and said he had started as Commander in 2D for about a month, after serving in MPD's Youth and Families Division following experience in patrol and investigation in almost every MPD district including 2D. He also lived in 2D when he was in university. He said that MPD Captain Cusick would be overseeing crime reduction efforts in PSA 204 including Glover Park-Cathedral Heights, with a particular focus on theft from autos which rose to 22 in PSA 204 since January 1, 2019, compared to only 7 in the same period in 2018. He said MPD would be going to "hot spot" areas, holding community meetings, participating in events and monitoring to see how many vehicles were left unlocked or have valuables visible—the two factors contributing most to thefts. He also described the techniques being used to steal from cars, usually with a vehicle that pulls alongside the target car to conceal the person trying the door or breaking a window, quickly snatching what they can and moving on.

Commander Bedlion explained the new MPD system for getting non-emergency requests via 311, rather than 911. He recommended that if people see someone suspicious, they call 911 and provide specific description and location information. He also suggested that residents sign up on www.mpd.dc.gov to join the MPD email group for the Second District (2D Yahoo group) so they can get updates and crime statistics regularly and submit questions and concerns.

Lt. Ralph Neal of the Second District and Public Service Area 204 (including ANC3B) reported on crime in the area for the previous 30 days. The report showed no violent crime in the ANC between January 15 and February 14. A total of 23 property crimes were reported during that time, an increase from 7 in the same period the preceding year. The property crimes included one burglary (up from zero last year), 12 thefts (up from 6), 9 thefts from autos and one stolen auto (both up from zero last year). He noted that ANC3B accounted for almost half of the 19 thefts from autos in PSA 204 in the 30-day time period so MPD would give particular attention to the area in its crime reduction efforts.

A resident asked Commander Bedlion what MPD is doing about the homeless situation in Ward 3 and what the police do to help people who are homeless. Commander Bedlion explained that other agencies have the responsibility for serving homeless people; MPD coordinates with those agencies. He also said that many MPD officers volunteer on their own time with non-profit organizations that help

homeless people. Chairman Turmail also noted that in cold emergencies, MPD officers have carried blankets in their vehicles to distribute to people who have not gotten to shelter.

Chairman Turmail also noted two areas of concern in ANC3B: a) the stretch of Cathedral Avenue between 39th Street and Glover-Archbold Park where residents have been concerned for years about pedestrian safety, partly because of the high rate of speed of many drivers on the street and also inadequate traffic signs and lack of enforcement of traffic laws. Commander Bedlion said he is putting that on his priority list for enforcement; and b) coordination between MPD and other executive agencies including the Department of Human Services when a homeless individual is involved in a crime. Chairman Turmail said that the ANC's interest is in seeing the same standards of conduct applied to everyone in the community, whether an individual is homeless or not, and ensuring that an issue doesn't get kicked back and forth between Human Services and MPD with nobody taking responsibility to pursue it.

Discussion with Alice Thompson, Community Outreach Specialist, DC Office on Aging

Ms. Thompson reported that her office has been officially renamed the Department on Aging and Community Living (DAACL). She mentions that the office provides free legal help to people 60 and over and people over 18 who have disabilities. She also shared information on the Stay at Home program, which provides safety improvements for seniors and people with disabilities including ramps, grab rails, chair lifts on stairs, brighter lighting in a basement or on a porch. If an individual lives in an apartment, condo or co-op in the District and the household meets the income criteria (a maximum of \$65,560/year for a one-person household, \$72,000/year for a two-person household), the improvements are free. People with higher incomes can also get improvements through the program but they have to pay, such as via a lien on their property.

A resident asked Ms. Thompson if the District would be willing to continue the "Silver Sneakers" program to help seniors with their strength and balance, since United Health Care was no longer going to be providing that program. Ms. Thompson recommended the free exercise classes at Chevy Chase Community Center. She also noted that the Mayor has budgeted for a very large new senior wellness center in Ward 8, and wondered if there was a space in Ward 3 for that kind of facility. Commissioner Young mentioned that Wards 2 and 3 don't have a fixed location designated as a senior wellness center but are supporting a pilot for "satellite" senior wellness centers where health and fitness activities can be provided at scattered sites around the area.

Theo Brown, Public Engagement Associates, consultant on local "livability study"

Mr. Brown is working with DDOT on its "Rock Creek Far West Livability Study" which has just been launched. The study is designed to gather community input and put together a set of recommendations and implementation plans for making specific improvements to transportation safety in the area to ensure safe movement for residents and visitors. The study will cover all of ANC3B. The boundaries are Massachusetts Avenue, Whitehaven Parkway, Archbold Parkway, Foundry Branch Valley Park, the Potomac River, and the DC/Maryland line. DDOT scheduled the first community meeting on February 26 at the Palisades Neighborhood Library. Mr. Good explained that the session is designed as an open house where residents can hear a brief presentation about the study, view maps and photos and samples of previous livability studies, and talk one-on-one with professionals from DDOT and his consulting company. Public comments will be compiled and the DDOT team will review all the suggestions, look into specific sites, and put together official recommendations for resolving safety issues throughout the area.

Commissioner Mladinov added that the team working together on the livability study at DDOT will include safety engineers, traffic engineers, experts on signs and signals, and other disciplines so the public requests can be investigated more quickly than a normal 311 case or a request for a Traffic Safety Investigation. DDOT will prepare a draft set of recommendations to be presented at a second community meeting in the spring where additional comments will be welcome. DDOT plans a third community meeting in September to present the final draft recommendations and get final comments. DDOT is specifically asking the ANC to share its priorities so those projects can be put at the top of the list for implementation. And all the recommendations in the implementation plan livability study will be forwarded to the appropriate officials in DDOT to be carried out in the next one to three years.

Proposed letter to Mayor about FY2020 budget priorities

Commissioner Mladinov presented a letter to Mayor Bowser recommending that the proposed District budget for Fiscal Year 2020 should include adding spending on psychiatric beds for care and treatment of individuals with mental illness, daytime centers for homeless men in the community, Rapid Rehousing, transitional and longer-term housing for homeless residents; increasing attention and funding for constructing and preserving affordable housing; supporting food and nutrition programs for residents in need, including children, families and seniors; improving District recreation and community centers including health and wellness activities for seniors through the pilot satellite wellness program in Wards 2 and 3; maintaining per-pupil spending for DC Public Schools as well as the Fillmore Arts Center that serves students at Stoddert and other elementary schools; increasing funding and priority for DDOT to improve street conditions, including expedited repair and replacement of streets and sidewalks; supporting additional Main Streets programs in the District, including in the Glover Park commercial area; and improving local transit to underserved communities, including more frequent bus service in areas such as ANC3B. All these areas have been matters supported by the ANC. Several residents made comments in support of the letter.

Chairman Turmail made a motion to vote on approving the letter. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve sending the letter to the Mayor.

Vote to Designate a Commissioner at March 11 roundtable on homelessness in Ward 3

Chairman Turmail announced that Councilmembers Cheh and Nadeau had agreed to have a forum on homelessness in Ward 3 on March 11, tentatively 6:30-8:30 pm at UDC) and the Commission was proposing to designate Vice Chairman Blumenthal as the official representative to speak for ANC3B at the forum. Commissioner Blumenthal explained that the forum will be an official Council roundtable and the committee would be asking for people to sign up as witnesses (with more time to speak if they are representing an organization rather than speaking as individuals). All members of the community are invited to participate, and other members of the Commission will be able to testify in addition to the official representative. She asked Chairman Turmail if he would testify as well, and he agreed.

Chairman Turmail made a motion to vote on designating Vice Chairman Blumenthal as the official representative of ANC3B at the roundtable. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to designate Commissioner Blumenthal as their representative at that forum on homelessness.

Updates and Information

The Commission had hoped to hear from DDOT liaison Donise Jackson on the status of 311 service requests involving DDOT in ANC3B but she was not able to participate. Commissioner Young said she had spoken with Ms. Jackson who said that several of the service requests in her SMD were listed as closed but no work had yet been done. Ms. Jackson also reported that the traffic count on Cathedral Avenue between 39th Street and Glover-Archbold Park had been completed but it did not indicate speeding. Commissioner Young said she had asked for a copy of the report and was requesting

additional testing to document the traffic speeds on Cathedral. She said that Ms. Jackson is planning to attend the ANC3B meeting in March. Chairman Turmail had also invited another DDOT official to that meeting, George Branyan, who works on pedestrian issues.

A resident asked if the ANC members could check with DDOT on how they coordinate with DC Water on the water that has come up from the DC Water fixtures below the metal plates on the south side of Cathedral Avenue at 4100 Cathedral, and on the large volume of accumulated water on the north side of Cathedral Avenue at the base of the embankment there.

Emily Curley, new Ward 3 representative to the DC Bicycle Advisory Council, was hoping to introduce herself at the meeting but was not able to attend.

Commissioner Mladinov shared several updates on utilities including 1) the scam calls about Pepco bills that many residents have been receiving since the fall. Pepco, the Office of People's Counsel (OPC), and the Office of the Attorney General have all posted consumer alerts warning people not to be fooled; 2) the DC Council adopted legislation in December that for the first time authorizes OPC to investigate complaints and assist customers with concerns about DC Water rates and services, though DC Water remains part of the District Government and is not regulated by the DC Public Service Commission (PSC) the way electric, gas, and landline and cable television services are; and 3) the PSC has opened an investigation into Washington Gas practices for notifying residents of gas leaks and providing information on the location of leaks, any risks to the public, and expected timetable for repairs; the PSC held a community hearing on the issues on February 6, gathered complaints and recommendations, and suggested that Washington Gas continue to explore ways to improve its systems. The PSC will monitor the progress and take up the issue again at a follow-up hearing in the fall.

Chairman Turmail reported that he was compiling information on holiday trees that had not yet been picked up. He said his plan was to be in touch with the Department of Public Works to get those trees removed. He said in some areas of Glover Park, holiday trees were picked up from tree boxes before trees left in the alley, but more recently he had seen several piles of trees at the curb, apparently pulled together waiting for collection.

Open Forum

Heather Foote from Ward 1 introduced herself as the former manager of senior transportation programs and she distributed survey forms asking for feedback by March 1 on a pilot program to provide bikeshare vehicles that are adapted for use by people with disabilities or caregivers. She showed several designs that could be offered including a cargo bike with 3 wheels and a bike for someone to sit and pedal, pushing a wheelchair. The survey can also be completed online at <https://ddot.dc.gov/page/adaptive-bikeshare-program> Ms. Foote suggested that Guy Mason might be a good place to try the pilot, as it already has a Capital Bike Share station. She also introduced Clarence "Buddy" Moore, representative for Ward 1 on DDOT's Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council, who is also working on improving access to transportation for seniors.

Rich Harrington, liaison to ANC3B from the Mayor's Office of Community Relations, reiterated Commander Bedlion's announcement that the city Office of Unified Communications has a new number for people to call with non-emergency police matters 202-737-4404, which can also be reached by calling 311 and pressing "1." The intention is to free up the 911 system for life-threatening emergencies.

Administrative Matters

Commissioner Mladinov presented the minutes of the Commission’s January meeting and made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

Treasurer Mary Young presented the monthly financial report for January: `

January 2019 Financial Report

OPENING BALANCE: \$11,417.91

**Income: \$36.49 Reimbursement of unused grant money from Hardy
Middle School PTO**

Total Income: \$36.49

Outgoing: \$ 0.00

CLOSING BALANCE: \$11,454.40

Commissioner Mladinov made a motion to approve the monthly financial report. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the January financial report as presented.

Chairman Turmail announced that the next ANC3B meeting will be Thursday, March 14.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.