

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



ANC3B Public Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2020

Chairman Brian Turmail called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, rather than meeting in-person, the Commission held the meeting using “Zoom” technology, as allowed under the District’s Emergency Legislation of March 17, 2020, and the Commission’s vote at its March 12, 2020, public meeting to amend the ANC3B by-laws to allow Commissioners to meet, hold official votes, and be counted for a quorum remotely.

Four Commissioners were participating: Ann Mladinov (3B01), Jackie Blumenthal (3B02), Melissa Lane (3B03), and Brian Turmail (3B05), which constituted a quorum. (Three of the five Commissioners make a quorum.) Commissioner Mary Young (3B04) was absent.

Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the agenda.

Police Report

Chairman Turmail introduced MPD Second District Commander Duncan Bedlion, and he reported briefly on crime in the Police Service Area 204 that includes most of ANC3B. For the year to date, violent crime is down 38% in PSA 204 and property crime is down 12 percent. He noted the incident at Laliguras restaurant on November 14 when the front door was smashed. No video has been found and there were no other details to report. He also reported that for 2020 the traffic fatalities across the District had already surpassed the 2019 total, and there were still 6 weeks left in the year. Commissioner Turmail observed that some traffic is moving at faster speeds while there are fewer vehicles on the roads during the pandemic. Commander Bedlion said that MPD is enforcing traffic laws, and in the Second District officers have made an average of about one traffic arrest per day this year.

Discussion of MPD Budget and Police Staffing

Chairman Turmail opened the discussion of the proposed MPD budget and its effect on the number of officers on the police force, and introduced three speaker to address the topic: MPD Second District Commander Duncan Bedlion, Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh, and Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen, who is also Chairman of the DC Council Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety. The operating budget for MPD in FY2020 as about \$560 million, and the Mayor’s proposed budget for FY 2021 included a \$40 million reduction in the police budget. After hearings and deliberations, the DC Council made a further reduction of \$6 million in MPD funding for FY2021. Commander Bedlion reported that the resulting funding would mean that the police force would be reduced from the current 3,863 officers to 3,500 by the end of September 2021, as a result of retirements and other attrition and the inability to hire replacements. He described the proposed staffing level as about the same size force as MPD had in the year 2000, when the District population was about half a million compared to more than 700,000 in the most recent estimates. He also noted that the number of calls MPD assistance have increased by about 30 percent since that time, and expressed concern that the cuts in budget and staffing would reduce the ability of the police force to meet its responsibilities.

The Council intended for some of the cuts in MPD funding to be accompanied by shifting some responsibilities from MPD to other organizations in District government. CM Allen said the Council's intention was to keep the budget in balance with the responsibilities MPD would be asked to perform, and the budget cuts would go along with shifting some of its current responsibilities to other organizations in DC government that are better equipped to handle them, such as mental health issues. He mentioned that though not all those programs are yet in place, violence interruption programs are already operated by in several District agencies and will be expanded.

CM Cheh said that MPD is a good department and fully supported by the DC Council. She observed that the Council does not support "defunding" the police, though she believes that the process of reimagining public safety around the country is offering an opportunity to look at what MPD is asked to do and whether there are better ways to address the needs of the District.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions about MPD budget and mission. One point that was raised was if new organizations or programs are assigned to take on what have been MPD responsibilities, the District will have to ensure that new programs have effective design, staffing, training, support, and funding. Both MPD and the new agencies will need adequate funding and even some redundancies during the transition, so they can each do their jobs and back each other up.

Chairman Turmail raised one other question about the brief protest outside the Glover Park CVS on September 15, when a few individuals gathered on the street and MPD blocked Wisconsin Avenue to avoid traffic conflicts. Commissioner Blumenthal noted that the local businesses could not serve customers for more than 7 hours. Commander Bedlion noted that MPD is responsible for providing security during First Amendment protests. Chairman Turmail reported that Tony Donaldson, the Mayor's community liaison for Ward 3, had been working with the ANC and Glover Park Main Street to ensure that the city and the community would be in close communications if there were any similar events.

Grant Application from Open Collective Foundation for \$2,500 for Ward 3 Mutual Aid to Purchase Groceries and Supplies to Assist Residents in Need

Leah Anne Brown, representative of Ward 3 Mutual Aid, presented an application for a \$2,500 grant on behalf of Open Collective Foundation for Ward 3 Mutual Aid to purchase and deliver groceries and hygiene supplies to those in need who contact the Mutual Aid hot-line. Ward 3 Mutual Aid, part of the District-Wide Mutual Aid network, is an all volunteer group that organizes residents to provide assistance to those in need around the community and has been particularly active during the COVID-19 emergency delivering food and other supplies to individuals and families in Ward 3. Open Collective Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization that is acting as the "fiscal sponsor" of Ward 3 Mutual Aid, and in that capacity can collect checks to support the Ward 3 Mutual Aid project, administer the funds, and provide the accounting and reporting and other administrative functions to support the grant. Through most of the COVID-19 emergency, Ward 3 Mutual Aid has relied on individual donations to support its community work but donations have not been keeping up with the need, which Ms. Brown estimated is close to \$2,500 per week. She provided the contact information for Ward 3 Mutual Aid if people need assistance or want to contribute: 202-556-1315 or <ward3.mutualaid@gmail.com>.

The Commissioners expressed their appreciation to Ms. Brown for joining with Open Collective which can accept checks to support the project and make the ANC grant possible. The Commissioners also asked additional questions for clarification, to confirm that the grant meets ANC guidelines:

- The funds will be entirely used for groceries and supplies. None of the grant will go to overhead or administrative expenses. (Although the ANC law prohibits use of ANC grant funds for food during normal times, under the current emergency legislation in the District, ANC grants can be used for food

for humanitarian aid, and the assistance can go to people around the District, not just those who live and work in the Commission area.)

- The groceries and other supplies covered by the grant will go to residents of Ward 3, including residents of ANC3B, although that is not required under District law during the time of the COVID-19 emergency.
- The ANC grant funds are expected to be expended within a few weeks of receipt of the grant, so the work supported by the grant can be completed in time to submit the final report within 60 days as required by ANC3B grant guidelines.

Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to vote on the grant, the motion was seconded, and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the grant.

Updates and Information

Chairman Turmail reported that the four Commissioners present at the meeting had been re-elected during the 2020 General Elections, and Elizabeth Elson had been elected as Commissioner in ANC3B04, after Commissioner Mary Young had announced her retirement. All five candidates were unopposed. The Commissioners will be sworn in for their new 2-year terms on January 2, 2021.

The Commissioners explained that DC DPW had changed the plan for requiring all leaves to be placed in large paper leaf bags for the 2020-2021 Fall Leaf Collection and would instead be sending vacuum trucks around the neighborhood to collect leaves at the curbside, as usual. Earlier in the fall, DPW had announced that it would be distributing 20 free paper leaf bags to every residence and would require all leaves put out for collection to be placed in paper leaf bags as part of the effort to ensure safety for crews and residents during the COVID-19 emergency, but new precautions would allow the vacuum operations to be conducted again this year. The first leaf pick-up in the area was still scheduled the week of November 30-December 5 in Glover Park and Cathedral Heights.

Commissioner Mladinov reported on two District Department of Transportation (DDOT) initiatives:

- DDOT is launching its project to develop a 2021 update to its long-range transportation plan called “Move DC.” An initial online survey was posted in November and DDOT will be sharing preliminary recommendations and seeking public input over the coming months.
- CM Cheh held a roundtable in the DC Council on November 16 about DDOT’s “Slow Streets” Initiative to discuss potential improvements to the programs. Commissioner Mladinov and several representatives from other ANCs provided testimony, as well as several representatives from local bicycle associations supporting the “Slow Streets” program. The public witnesses shared interests in improving signage and clarifying the intended purposes and policies for “Slow Streets,” noting that many people do not understand what “Slow Streets” are supposed to be and many motorists are continuing to go around the barricades and use the streets as they have before. The ANC members noted some of the same concerns as ANC3B has been hearing about the selection of the 2800-3000 blocks of 39th Street NW, including confusing signs, poor placement of barricades, unclear policies on how local residents are supposed to use the “Slow Streets,” and ill-advised selection of some blocks to be part of the program. DDOT Director Jeff Marootian also provided testimony at the roundtable, saying that DDOT wants to be nimble and is continuing to seek community input on the initiative. He also encouraged ANCs and residents to send comments to DDOT’s Ward 3 Community Engagement Specialist Donise Jackson <donise.jackson@dc.gov>. Commissioner Mladinov said that ANC3B would continue to work with CM Cheh’s office and Tony Donaldson, Ward 3 liaison from the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations, to address concerns about implementation of the “Slow Streets” program in the Commission area.

Commissioner Mladinov reported that the DC Public Service Commission had extended by one week the final due date for public comments on Pepco's current rate case (FC 1156), from December 18 to December 23.

Open Forum

Residents asked questions about two DDOT issues: installation of a right-turn lane for Whitehaven Street onto Wisconsin Avenue, which was part of the Holiday Inn redevelopment plan, and progress on concerns over implementation of DDOT's "Slow Streets" initiative. The Mayor's Ward 3 liaison, Tony Donaldson, said he would check on both of those matters.

Administrative Matters

Commissioner Mladinov had prepared minutes for the October meeting. Commissioner Blumenthal made a motion to vote on the minutes. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Mladinov read the ANC3B monthly financial report for October, prepared with Treasurer Mary Young::

September 2020 Financial Report

OPENING BALANCE:	\$3,922.21
Income:	\$0.00
Total Income:	\$0.00
Outgoing:	\$ 0.00
Total Outgoing	\$ 0.00
CLOSING BALANCE:	\$3,922.21

Chairman Turmail announced that the next meeting would be held Thursday, December 10, 2020, and would again be a "virtual" meeting.

Chairman Turmail made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 4-0 to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.