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Minutes of the August 2, 2005 monthly meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1-D

These minutes approved at the October 4, 2005 meeting.

Call to order

Chair Jack McKay called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm and, noting the presence of all five seated Commissioners, declared a quorum.

Approval of minutes

Rich moved that the minutes of the July 22 meeting be accepted. Motion passed by unanimous vote, with Gregg reserving the possibility of future revision.

Treasurer's Report

Rich said that the quarterly report for the third quarter of FY05 would be due soon, and would have to be approved at the next meeting. Wayne moved acceptance of the treasurer's report; acceptance passed by voice vote.

Public discussion

Cory Reiss spoke on the matter of the request for speed humps sign on the 1600 block of Monroe Street, observing that the nearby residents had agreed on a single speed hump, and a stop sign at the Brown Street intersection, to calm traffic on that block.

Karen Abrams noted that DDOT had done only traffic counts as their traffic study, and said that no one had told them about any guidelines. She said that Mohammed Ullah had told the residents that they could not restrict the flow of commercial traffic on their street. She also said that they would favor a stop sign at the Brown Street intersection. Tim Abrams supported her statement.

Commissioner Reports

Wayne reported on the selection of electronic equipment to support simultaneous interpretation at ANC meetings. Chris Covelli, a professional interpreter, advised against the use of volunteers as interpreters, and suggested that we seek funding from the DC Office of Human Rights in order to be able to hire a well-qualified interpreter. Mr Covelli charges \$75 for the first hour, then \$50 for each succeeding half-

hour, with ten-minute breaks between half-hour periods. His fee for a three-hour ANC meeting would be \$275.

Dora Johnson reported that the Office of Human Rights had a single, one-time grant of \$350,000, with few guidelines for its use, and that other groups seeking support were getting very little money out of this fund. She suggested that we look for help from Councilmember Graham's office.

Commissioners reported on activities concerning the ANC Web site, Long Range Planning, Open and Focus Forums, the commercial corridor, and projection equipment. The Commissioners agreed to have an informal meeting on August 11 to deal with the specific problem of resolving discrepancies between the current Comprehensive Plan and zoning, or between "built-as" and zoning. There was no objection to Gregg's proposal to publish transcripts of Forums on the ANC Web site. Wayne is working with Robert Frazier to check out what equipment is needed for satisfactory projection in the La Casa meeting room.

Unfinished business: Liquor license transfers

By general consent, this was left on the table until the September meeting.

New business: Monroe Street Traffic Calming

Gregg offered the following resolution, after amendment:

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the District Department of Transportation to take the following steps, following the process specified in the District of Columbia Traffic Calming Policies and Guidelines, in implementing traffic calming measures in the 1600 block of Monroe and Lamont Streets NW:

- (1) Immediately provide relief to these two blocks by
 - (1a) posting signs prohibiting through commercial and truck traffic on both blocks;
 - (1b) providing a stop sign on Monroe Street where Brown Street enters Monroe.
- (2) Rescind DDOT's decision of July 15 to proceed with the installation of a speed hump in the 1600 block of Monroe St NW, a decision made in disregard of the Traffic Calming Policies and Guidelines process.
- (3) Take the first step of the prescribed procedure, the approval of 35% of the affected households, as a given, and proceed to the second step, the pertinent traffic calming study, including measurements of traffic volume and speeds, and develop traffic calming recommendations for the 1600 block of Monroe Street.
- (4) Present the results to a community meeting, with recommended measures for traffic calming, if warranted by traffic speeds.
- (5) If physical traffic calming measures are recommended and are well received at the community meeting, conduct a poll of the affected area, including all residents whose residences face on or adjoin the 1600 block of Monroe, to confirm approval by 65% of affected households.

Rationale

On both the 1600 blocks of Monroe and Lamont Streets there is a strong and perhaps dangerous overage of traffic. This appears to derive from east-bound crosstown traffic needing to detour around the cessation of east-west traffic on the 1600 block of Park Road and the start of one-way westbound coming from Columbia Heights and beyond. This traffic

seems to detour in large numbers, and perhaps dangerously speeding, onto Lamont and Monroe.

The DDOT Traffic Calming Policies and Guidelines offer a well-designed process for obtaining traffic calming measures, including provisions for valid traffic engineering, and for confirmation of popular support. These Policies and Guidelines were designed to avoid implementing traffic calming devices by simply yielding to vocal pressure groups, as was common practice prior to their development. The current DDOT decision to implement speed humps on Monroe Street has been taken in evident disregard of the process specified by the Policies and Guidelines.

DDOT has made no measurements of traffic speeds on the 1600 block of Monroe Street, so there is no proof that traffic calming is warranted. Furthermore, without these data, it will be impossible to determine the effectiveness of speed humps after installation.

DDOT has itself done no traffic engineering evaluation of the site, and has developed no recommendations for the community. As the Policies and Guidelines state, "These recommendations could include other possible solution(s) which were not requested but may be warranted based on the factors surrounding each case." There may be other methods of traffic calming than speed humps, and other safety measures might be proposed. Because there has been no traffic study, it is impossible to say that speed humps are the best solution to a speeding or safety problem.

The Traffic Calming Policies and Guidelines call for 65% approval of the households within the study area. The residents petitioning for speed humps polled residents of that block, and of 17th Street adjacent to the block, but polled no one on Brown Street, nor any residents of the Park Monroe apartment house, though all of these residents will be affected by the traffic calming devices. The degree of community approval specified by the Policies and Guidelines has not been demonstrated.

Resolution passed by three votes to two, Jack, Gregg, and Stormy voting "yes", Rich and Wayne voting "no".

New business: Music in Lamont Park

Gregg offered this resolution, after amendment:

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the District Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to take the following steps, following the process specified in the DPR guidelines on using parks:

- 1) Issue permits to Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Alliance for three more uses of Lamont Park for its Music Series during the months of August, September and October, to take place sometime between 5:30 and 9:00 pm.
- 2) Allow the use of amplification provided that the amplified music adheres to all noise level regulations established by DPR for such live outdoor music events.
- 3) Authorize, within DPR's normal guidelines and practices for safety and oversight, the use of electricity provided by DPR's circuit on site.
- 4) DPR should physically secure the electrical circuit so that it is accessible only by permit holders.

Why

This is an exploration by a neighborhood civic association of long standing to showcase talent of local performers.

Normally, the series uses the outdoor stage configured within Lamont Park where musicians perform live shows on weekend nights during the warm months of the year.

ANC1D hopes to consider the lessons learned in an open meeting later this year.

Passed by roll-call vote, all five Commissioners voting “yes”.

New Business: Majestic, HPRB review

Gregg said that this matter is moot, the HPRB having proceeded with its review, ignoring the ANC resolution requesting delay.

New Business: 1636 Kenyon development and permits

Gregg offered this resolution, after amendment:

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the District Department of Transportation to take the following steps.

Deny the application for use of public space in connection with work on the St. Dennis apartment house, at 1636 Kenyon Street NW.

Why

The large amount of public space taken up in a heavily traveled area could likely cause great hardship.

The proposers have not provided this ANC with adequate documentation to understand the proposal in time for this regularly scheduled monthly meeting. This is despite an admonition to the principal to do so at an earlier meeting.

The background of the development of the building has raised many questions, particularly on issues dealing with the possibility that this project might cause far greater trouble to our neighborhood than most others. We have been so far unable to resolve these questions due to the absence of full good faith cooperation by the proposer.

Without further assurances, and without signs of a cooperative attitude by the proposer, we worry that this project may impose unusual hardship and constitute a nuisance for Mount Pleasant and its commercial corridor.

Passed by roll-call vote, all five Commissioners voting “yes”.

Unfinished business: ANC budget

The Commissioners made a number of changes to Rich’s proposed budget for FY2005, principally to get the quarterly operational expenditures below the ANC quarterly allotment.

Budget accepted by voice vote.

Adjournment

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned, at 10:18 pm.