

**Minutes for the Meeting of
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E**

September 2, 2014

Georgetown Visitation School, 35th and Volta Place, NW Heritage Room

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner Lewis, Chair. Commissioners Solomon, Jones, Cassey, Starrels, Birch, and Steury were present, constituting a quorum. Commissioner Quinn arrived at 7:25 p.m. Commissioner Cassey left the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Administrative

Approval of June 30, 2014, ANC 2E Public Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Lewis moved to approve the agenda of the September 2, 2014, ANC 2E public meeting. Commissioner Starrels seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

Approval of June 2, 2014, and the June 30, 2014, Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Lewis moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2014, and the June 30, 2014, ANC 2E public meetings. Commissioner Starrels seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

Public Safety Report

Financial Report

Commissioner Jones reported ANC finances are secure.

Transportation Report

Commissioner Starrels urged the public to continue to call 311 to report potholes.

Department of Public Works Report

Commissioner Jones reported the Georgetown Community Partnership is noticing success when students were leaving at the end of the semester. After students left, violations have gone up. It's a clear sign that the Georgetown Community Partnership is working well with students dealing with property violations. There were 4 separate landlord actions.

DPW reports that regular trash is going into blue recycling bins. DPW crews will not pick up the trash in blue recycling bins.

Introduction of ANC 2E Commissioner Dennis Quinn for SMD 08

Commissioner Starrels introduced Dennis Quinn, newly elected and sworn-in Commissioner for SMD 08. Commissioner Quinn is a native of Bethesda and a current Georgetown student. Commissioner Quinn's information is on online on ANC 2E's website.

Designation of ANC 2E Secretary

Commissioner Starrels moved that Commissioner Quinn be designated new ANC 2E Secretary. Commissioner Solomon seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

Community Comment

Commissioner Solomon advised that the service station at Wisconsin and Q Streets might be sold. ANC2E would like to hear any comments from the community regarding loss of station. The service station at M Street and Pennsylvania Avenue has also been sold, as well as the Key Bridge Exxon. The Wisconsin and Q station has a garage and the community takes their cars there. Comments from the community included that they would not mind having a nice development there. Also the traffic pattern is tight there, if there is a development, it might ease the traffic congestion.

Commissioner Birch is in favor of gas stations and now there are far fewer. The community needs gas stations and he hopes we can find ways to keep gas stations.

Commissioner Solomon said there is a trend throughout the city to sell off gas stations. If you would like to comment further on the sale of gas stations please email ANC 2E. Once stations are gone they are gone.

Attendee Will Cutler was pleased with the brick sidewalk restoration and now is concerned because of all the Pepco paint all over the sidewalks. Commissioner Jones reported that anytime anything is dug in the city they have to paint to warn of the gas, utility, and water lines.

Commissioner Birch reported that Ruth Werner could not be at this meeting.

Commissioner Birch also reported that Mayor Gray is sponsoring a jumbo tron at Freedom Plaza tomorrow afternoon at 4 for the USA World Cup match. 13th and 14th Streets, and Constitution Avenue will be closed.

Commissioner Steury announced that Tudor Place will hold a forum for declared candidates for SMD 07 on October 8 at 6 pm. Candidates Ellie Budic and Monica Roache were introduced.

Michael Fabricant from The Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Engagement and John Fanning of City Service Delivery, 202-510-1983, were present to discuss 1314 Potomac Street, NW, No. 1 under the OGB Agenda

Mayor Gray asked Mr. Fabricant to come to let neighbors know that Mayor's office will work with neighbors and the property owner. The Attorney General is doing some fact finding. Mr. Fabricant will answer general questions.

According to the owner, Kebreab Zere, the property was not an alley historically. The tax sale was advertised publicly and the property foreclosed and settled in court. Mr. Zere received a clean and clear deed and as property owner is paying taxes.

Neighbors use this as a public alley to access their garages. City paved the alley 12 years ago. City has been maintaining the alley. Titled as a public alley, neighbors have deeds stating that it was an alley since 1903. If it was sold by DC in error, then DC needs to resolve this situation. DC made the mistake of selling the alley.

New Business

Commissioner Birch made the following motion regarding the request from Mt. Zion United Methodist Church for a block party/street closing Sunday, October 5 on 29th Street between Dumbarton and O Streets, NW, which was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

ANC 2E has no objection to the application for a block party/street closing between Dumbarton and O Streets, NW, on October 5, 2014. We support and welcome the event to our community.

_____ Commissioner Starrels made the following motion regarding the Best Buddies Challenge Bike Ride on Saturday, October 18, 2014, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

Commissioner Steury made the following motion regarding the scope of the environmental impact statement for the proposed Potomac River Tunnel Project, which was seconded by Commissioner Starrels. The motion carried with a vote of 8-0

The Citizens Association of Georgetown and the Friends of the Georgetown Waterfront Park sent a letter dated August 26, 2014 to the Acting Regional Director of the National Capital Region of the National Park Service ("NPS") raising certain concerns and making certain requests regarding the planned NPS Environmental Impact Statement. . The ANC 2E notes that the Washington Harbour Condominium Owners Association, through its president, Marc Fleischaker, supports this letter. Whereas the ANC 2E concurs with the concerns and requests made in the letter, therefore it is RESOLVED that ANC 2E expresses its concurrence with this letter and notes its appreciation of the groups that drafted it.

ABC

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion regarding MYIA, LLC, 1419 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, application for a new license, which was seconded by Commissioner Birch. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

ANC 2E protests the above application for a new liquor license based on issues of peace, order and quiet with a view toward reaching a settlement agreement.

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion regarding J.Paul's, 3218 M Street, NW, ABRA-072358, 14-PRO-00056, substantial change request to add an Entertainment Endorsement to license, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

ANC 2E protests the above application for a new liquor license based on issues of peace, order and quiet with a view toward reaching a settlement agreement.

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion regarding Yummi Crawfish & Seafood Restaurant, LLC, ABRA License No. 096169, application for a new license, which was seconded by Commissioner Birch. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

ANC 2E protests the above application for a new liquor license based on issues of peace, order and quiet with a view toward reaching a settlement agreement.

Zoning

Commissioner Birch made the following motion regarding the Alexander Memorial Baptist Church, 2709 N Street, NW, BZA Application No. 18780, application for variances from a lot area, lot occupancy, rear yard, and side yard requirements to convert a church into two one-family dwellings, which was seconded by Commissioner Solomon. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0

Whereas, the Applicant 2709 N Street LLC, the contract purchaser of Lots 803, 804 and 805 in Square 1236, seeks a use variance to allow the conversion of the Alexander Memorial Baptist Church, a historic church, into a three-unit dwelling; and

Whereas, under the terms of a Settlement Agreement entered into with the Citizens Association of Georgetown, the Applicant has agreed to record among the Land Records of the District of Columbia a historic preservation easement made with the Foundation for the Preservation of Historic Georgetown to preserve the historically unimproved open yard at Lot 805 as an open private garden, and to preserve the Hall House at Lot 804 with improvements as approved by the Commission on Fine Arts and the Old Georgetown Board, and

Whereas, the Citizens Association of Georgetown has agreed to support and not oppose this application based upon the applicant's agreement to file the historic preservation easement within 90 days and no more than 120 days of the issuance of BZA and Commission of Fine Arts orders, and

Whereas, the Foundation for the Preservation of Historic Georgetown has stated that its concerns with the proposed project have been addressed so long as the applicant adheres to the plan to leave Lot 805 perpetually vacant and combined into one lot with the Hall House lot, to restore the Hall House to single family use, and to adapt the use of the historic church structure into two or three residences; and

Whereas, a group comprised of the owners and residents of 25 homes in the area surrounding the Alexander Memorial Baptist Church support the approval of this application before the BZA based on the preservation of the open space on Lot 805, the proposed plan for the entire project and the Applicant's agreement with the Citizens Association of Georgetown;

Whereas, the Applicant has represented to the BZA in its Prehearing Statement that it will leave Lot 805 in its historically unimproved state, rather than construct a townhome on that lot, and preserve it as an open, private garden, and that it has agreed to record a historic preservation easement on Lot 805 and Lot 804;

Therefore, ANC 2E has no objection to the request for a use variance to allow the conversion of the

Alexander Memorial Baptist Church, a historic church, to no more than three residences, with the understanding that the considerable support from the community for this project and this application depends significantly upon the terms of the Settlement Agreement with the Citizens Association of Georgetown and the recordation of a historic preservation easement as agreed to by the Applicant.

Old Georgetown Board

Commissioner Birch chaired the meeting for the discussion of Old Georgetown Board items.

With regard to 2709 N Street NW, OG 14-227 (HPA 14-432) Alexander Memorial Baptist Church, Alterations:

Commissioner Birch made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Solomon. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E supports the adaptive reuse of the church building at 2709 N Street NW as residences, with the minimum amount of increased density on site. Our concerns with the proposed design focus on the treatment of the church façade to the east of the property. Large window openings, currently stained glass, if replaced with clear glass would severely compromise the zone of privacy enjoyed by the neighbors in close proximity to the east and to the north. We are supportive of directions proposed by the OGB to address these concerns which appear to have been included by the architect in the current plans. In addition, we continue to be concerned about the fragile nature of the eastern edge of the church property, including matters of drainage and stability of the existing brick walls to the east and north. The design plans should demonstrate how the renovation and development of the church property will affect these areas.

With regard to 2715 N Street NW, OG 14-143 (HPA 14-283) Alexander Memorial Baptist Church – Rectory:

Commissioner Birch made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Starrels. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E is pleased with the development of the property at 2715 N Street, NW. We urge the OGB to give special attention to directing a landscape design appropriate to the visibility and significance of this site. Of concern, we draw attention to the plans for a rear permeable brick patio which, in the event it is used for parking cars, should require screening at least from the N Street side. We object to the proposed roof deck and urge its use as a green roof.

With regard to 2920 R Street, NW, OG 14-246 (HPA 14-487):

Commissioner Steury made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E has reviewed the applicants' revised concept with the preferred option of the subterranean garage, which has taken into account all three of the concerns we identified at our prior meeting on June 30, 2014, which were (1) the placement of the garage(s), (2) the protection of significant and specimen trees, and (3) the size of the east addition. ANC 2E notes the following with respect to each of its prior concerns:

- (1) Garages. In the revised concept, the garage is buried under the existing terrace on the south side of the house, is accessible without any new curb cut, and is situated in a manner that neither obstructs nor detracts from any facade of the historic building.
- (2) Trees. The applicants engaged an arborist who examined the site and concluded that the proposed construction does not pose a threat to existing trees on the neighboring property at 1642 29th Street, a conclusion in which an arborist engaged by the neighbors concurred. In addition, the proposed construction will not threaten any significant trees on the applicants' property.
- (3) Size of addition. The revised concept for the new addition to the east side of the house proposes a version that is scaled back — both actually and in its appearance — by
 - (a) reducing the width of the new construction so that it sits 9 feet back from the property line (formerly it was 8 feet from the property line), thus leaving a full 30 feet between the applicants' residence and the nearest neighboring residence;
 - (b) tucking the second story of the new construction into a mansard roof (it had formerly been proposed as a flat roof with a parapet, similar to the existing addition that it will replace); the mansard roof is more compatible with the style of the historic structure, minimizes the mass of the new construction, and moves the second story windows slightly even further away from the property line;

- and (c) reducing the size of two of the four windows on the second floor that face east, to further minimize mass and privacy concerns.

Further, the east side addition is scaled and sited so that it has minimal impact on the south, west, and north facades, of which the west and north facades are the most visible from public space.

We have also taken note of community feedback offered at a meeting attended by approximately 25 neighbors that was held by the applicants on August 19, 2014 for that purpose, the many thoughtful and reasoned letters of support submitted by neighbors, the researched opposition of the neighbors at 1642 29th Street, NW, and the thorough and balanced report of the CAG Historic Preservation and Zoning Committee which was approved by the CAG Board and supports the proposed concept design. The community feedback on the concept of the subterranean garage has been overwhelmingly positive: no one has expressed any opposition. The concern about the significant and specimen trees has been satisfactorily resolved. The sole community opposition to the revised concept is expressed by the neighbors at 1642 29th Street, the abutting property to the east side, who have stated a preference for no construction on the east side and would prefer any new construction to occur on the south side of the house, a preference that the architects, owners, and the CAG HP&Z committee all view as unworkable.

ANC 2E appreciates, and once again commends, the extensive outreach the applicants have undertaken to engage their future neighbors in a dialogue about their plans.

ANC 2E also wants to commend the applicants for their expressed intention to place an easement on the property to prevent further subdivision into smaller residential lots. As Georgetown becomes ever more congested and densely populated, such privately held green spaces become ever more rare and ever more valuable to both the immediate and the larger neighborhood. ANC 2E, on behalf of its constituents, expresses gratitude for this planned gift to the community.

Having reviewed and considered the applicants' revised concept, the CAG Report, and the views expressed by the many neighbors who spoke at the community meeting and the public meeting and/or wrote letters, ANC 2E expresses its support for the applicants' revised concept with the subterranean garage, and urges the OGB to approve the concept design.

With regard to 1216 30th Street, NW, OG 14-289 (HPA 14-568):

Commissioner Birch made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E objects to the proposed installation of a roof deck at 1216 30th Street, NW, in support of the objection by the neighbor on the adjoining property and consistent with ANC guidelines. Such an addition to the rooftop of the house would create a significant intrusion on the privacy and rights of quiet enjoyment of their own properties by the owners of the adjacent residences

With regard to 3023 P Street, NW, OG 14-266 (HPA 14-507):

Commissioner Birch made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E objects to the size of the proposed extension in width and length, and to the expanse of windows on the east facade, in order to impose a minimum impact on available light and privacy concerns of the neighbor to the east.

With regard to 1633 31st Street, NW, OG 14-301 (HPA 14-582):

Commissioner Steury made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Quinn. The motion carried with a vote of 6-0, Commissioner Lewis abstained.

ANC 2E express no objection to the concept design for 1633 31st Street, NW. Although ANC 2E normally opposes roof decks, ANC 2E does not object to the proposed roof deck because it is not visible from public space and because of the unusually large property on which this house sits, it is not likely to have a negative impact on the neighbors' private enjoyment of their property.

With regard to 1645 31st Street, NW, OG 14-314 (HPA 14-595):

Commissioner Steury made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Birch. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E expresses no objection to the application for a landscaping permit for 1645 31st Street, NW.

With regard to 1660 34th Street, NW, OG 14-319 (HPA 14-600):

Commissioner Lewis made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Starrels. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

We ask the Board to take a hard, new look at the proposed project. The addition above the “el.” in particular, seems visually jarring and out of proportion for its location. By adding at least 7 feet of vertical wall to the east facade of the el, the proposal overwhelms the current house and destroys the intimate scale of the current el, which reads as a modest outbuilding or garden shed. In addition, the project creates a claustrophobic courtyard for the neighbor and interferes with the inviting public view over a short, sloped roof to the trees in the center of the block.

If the additional square footage is really necessary – which we question, especially given the other new construction and the extensive excavation proposed – then a one-story addition at the rear of the main house would be considerably preferable to a second story on the el.

Also, we do not support the “Option 2” proposal for a roof deck, as we discourage roof decks in Georgetown houses for both design and functional reasons.

With regard to 1826 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, OG 14-320 (HPA 14-601):

Commissioner Lewis made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The motion carried with a vote of 4-0, Commissioners Starrels, Steury and Quinn abstained.

We urge the Board not to approve the rooftop deck. This deck destroys the integrity of the roofline of the existing building and will appear as an over-scaled addition to this modest and charming commercial structure. In addition, the visible furnishings, lighting and equipment that this open restaurant will entail are a constant visual disruption in a setting only one building away from a quiet residential area.

We do not object to the small two-story proposed addition at the rear as long as the applicant demonstrates that there is adequate secure storage space inside the building for trash, without leaving trash outside by the sidewalk or parking lot.

With regard to 3137 O Street, NW, OG 14-287 (HPA 14-564):

Commissioner Jones made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E opposes the proposed rear addition in that it does not meet the Board policies in maintaining “historic fabric” for this property and in relation to adjacent properties. We find the reduction of green space is not appropriate and that the addition projects substantially beyond adjacent properties. We would encourage the applicant to consider a more vertical approach (as was approved and built at a nearby property). It should be noted that the adjacent neighbor voiced strong concerns about the addition for similar reasons. Concerns were also expressed by the Citizens Association of Georgetown.

With regard to 1314 Potomac Street, NW, OG 14-231 (HPA 14-481);

Commissioner Jones made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Starrels. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E has not received any appropriate plans or a sufficient presentation by the applicant to-date. We continue to recommend that no approval is given until sufficient plans are provided to the community for discussion. In any event, ANC 2E continues to oppose any fence be placed at this location which has been recorded as an open alley at least since 1903, in that it would severely disrupt the historic character of Georgetown and the historic open alley.

With regard to 1513 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, OG 14-321 (HPA 14-602):

Commissioner Jeff made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Starrels. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E opposes any addition to this building because of the unique tight physical constraints that would severely damage the historic character of this property and also the damage it would create in context with the surrounding properties. ANC 2E believes that many of the Board policies would be circumvented by the proposal's current plan. Such as, "that new additions serve as subordinate elements to historic buildings in the Old Georgetown historic district. The additions should not approach doubling the size of an existing building, nor become the dominant element, regardless of what the zoning regulations may allow." This proposed addition nearly doubles the size of the existing building. However, ANC 2E believe that any addition would have a significant impact to this particularly fragile block of properties, due to no alleyways, institutional buffers, sufficient green space or other type buffers that exist between this property and the adjacent residential properties. We believe that any addition on the rooftop would substantially alter the historic character of this building and should be strongly discouraged. No backyard addition should be permitted in that it would alter the historical context between this building and adjacent properties as well as reduce green space. We urge that no rooftop deck is permitted. It should be noted that many adjacent neighbors and the Citizens Association of Georgetown are both strongly concerned about an addition at this location.

With regard to 3107 N Street, NW, OG 14-304 (HPA 14-585):

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Birch. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E has no objection to the concept as presented at 3107 O Street, NW.

With regard to 3207 Grace Street, NW, OG 14-315 (HPA 14-596):

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Birch. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E appreciates the suggested improvement to the property as presented. We are open to options for proper signage for the building. ANC 2E has concerns about the roof top deck because of the surrounding residences, proximity to the historic C & O Canal and ANC 2E generally does not support roof top decks near such historic areas. ANC 2E does not object to proposals for improving the appearance of the rooftop.

With regard to 3246 Prospect Street, NW, OG 14-293 (HPA 14-572):

Commissioner Birch made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0.

ANC 2E appreciates the design and the attention paid to increasing green space at 3246 Prospect Street, NW. We recognize that the addition proposed is within the OGB guidelines for additions, but we have concerns about the direction this proposal for this building might have in diminishing the presence of residences that also enjoy a place in this block. We believe it is important that the design is compatible with the overall historic context for the block.

At 11:15 p.m., with no further matters on the agenda, Commissioner Birch moved to adjourn the public meeting session of ANC 2E. Commissioner Solomon seconded the motion. With a vote of 7-0, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Gisler
Executive Director
for
Ron Lewis, SMD 02

