

ANC 2E Meeting Minutes June 29, 2015

Minutes for the Meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

June 29, 2015

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Commissioner Lewis, Chair. Commissioners Solomon, Jones, Howard, Starrels, Birch, Clausen and Roaché were present, constituting a quorum.

Administrative

Approval of June 29, 2015 ANC 2E Public Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Starrels moved to approve the agenda of the June 29, 2015 ANC 2E public meeting. The motion was seconded and carried 7-0.

Commissioner Starrels moved to approve the June 1, 2015 Meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and carried 7-0.

Public Safety Report

MPD Lt. Hoyle reported on crime activity in 2D: crime is down 29 % over last year. Robberies went from 3 to 1, assaults (ADW) went from 1 to 0 and theft from auto 23 to 12. Auto theft is up slightly due to scooters being stolen. the community can reach Lt. Hoyle at roland.hoyle@dc.gov.

Financial Report - Commissioner Jones reported that finances are secure.

Community Comment

DCRA Director Melinda Bolling and staff reported on and answered questions regarding short-term and long-term rentals and property inspections. they discussed how to contact the proper authorities on problem properties. The property information verification system (PIVS) can be used to determine if properties are properly licensed (as in the case of "Airbnb" properties and similar): PIVS.DCRA@dc.gov

Mia Carey and the DC Historic preservation office gave an update on the archeological survey under way at 3324 Dent Pl., NW (Yarrow Mamout site) and invited the public to follow updates on Facebook and their website.

New Business

Commissioner Birch made the following motion:

ANC 2E RESOLUTION OF COMMENTS ON SECOND PROPOSED RULEMAKING/SIGN REGULATIONS

ANC 2E appreciates the development of the District of Columbia's proposed regulations issued with the intent to adopt a new title 13 (Sign Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations. The proposed regulations will contribute significantly to providing clarity and certainty governing outdoor signs. We are pleased to be given the opportunity to comment on these second proposed rules prior to final rulemaking action to adopt the proposed new title.

In a historic district such as Georgetown, outdoor signs add to the character, vitality and identity of a neighborhood. At the same time, it is important to avoid the visual clutter that distracts and hides the architectural features and historic interest of that district. ANC 2E recognizes and appreciates the singular treatment afforded the Georgetown Historic District under these under these proposed rules. In view of our interest in preserving the unique character of this historic neighborhood, ANC 2E is pleased to respond to provisions in the proposed regulations.

1. Sec. 303.3, PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS: ANC 2E proposed in earlier comments and is pleased to note in the final proposed regulations that the Commission on Fine Arts/Old Georgetown Board upon receipt of an application "shall respond according to the timelines set forth in its rules."
2. Sec. 304.1, PROHIBITED SIGNS: ANC 2E supports the listing of prohibited signs in the proposed final regulations, with the addition of the following: "electronic signs, including LED, blinking lights, and neon signs."
3. Sec. 305.1(b), PERMITTED SIGNS/BLADE SIGNS: ANC 2E proposed and supports the final proposed regulations incorporating standards applied by this ANC regarding blade signs on the principal commercial streets and on side streets in Georgetown.
4. Sec. 306.1, EXCEPTIONS/NON-FLASHING NEON SIGNS: ANC 2E supports a prohibition on non-flashing neon signs except as follows: we support an exception in the regulations regarding "non-flashing" neon signs to be permitted under the same rules for all other signage and must comport with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office guidelines followed and the Old Georgetown Board (OGB) guidelines and practices, i.e. identify the business and serve as the single sign for the business, and meet the requirements and review process of placement, size, design, and color applied to any other type of sign. Such a requirement would then prohibit the proliferation of multiple neon signs at a single business and eliminate all but those neon signs serving the single purpose of identifying the business.
5. Sec. 305.1(d) PERMITTED SIGNS/SIGNS ON SHOW WINDOWS: While ANC 2E would have preferred a lesser aggregate area of window space (15%) taken up by signage at a business, we are comfortable with the area included in the proposed final rule at 20%. However, ANC 2E urges DDOT in the final regulations to recognize the need to manage the proliferation of visual clutter in the Georgetown Historic District related to signage affixed to show windows as well as set back from windows. Accordingly, we urge amending Sec. 305.1(d) to read as follows: "Signs on show windows or set back from show windows [emphasis added], or any other windows that abut or overlook a street or public way..."

Support of this provision recognizes concern over the proliferation of large signs (including enlarged photographs and colored light panels) covering all or nearly all of a window area – or set back from a show window -- of commercial establishments in the Georgetown Historic District, again creating undesirable visual clutter on the commercial streets. For that reason, ANC 2E urges amending this provision to apply to all signs visible from the street, including those signs set back from the window face, providing transparency between the street and the commercial establishment and promoting greater interaction between the interior and exterior spaces.

6. Sec.608.2 SIDEWALK SIGNS ON PUBLIC SPACE: ANC 2 supports the provision in the proposed final regulations permitting sidewalk signs for 1) valet parking, 2) location of parking facilities [Sec. 608.6], and 3) location of a public market [Sec. 608.7].

Notwithstanding the three limited exceptions described above, ANC 2E urges that freestanding sidewalk signs be prohibited in the Georgetown Historic District with one additional exception, as follows: “4) signs pertaining to a business located on a side street within one block of any of the principal commercial streets, or located on a corner away from the principal commercial streets, with a daily changing message related to the commercial nature of the business and determined to contribute to the individual character and spirit of Georgetown. Signs meeting these exceptions must also comply with all other provisions of these regulations, including available sidewalk width.”

Our opposition to freestanding sidewalk signs is based on our interest in ensuring pedestrian safety and access (particularly on our narrow sidewalks) and encouraging the free flow of foot traffic and commerce on the principal commercial streets in the historic district. Georgetown’s narrow, brick sidewalks are challenging enough for pedestrians to navigate without the addition of freestanding signs. A freestanding sign on the sidewalk on the commercial streets in Georgetown, whether three feet from the building wall, or two feet from the face of the roadway curb, represents a significant obstacle to pedestrian traffic and accessibility.

With some 10 million visitors a year, the sidewalks in Georgetown, especially on the principal commercial streets, are often filled to capacity for all pedestrians and even more challenging for people with strollers, in wheelchairs, or walking bicycles. The extensive streetscape design implemented by the District of Columbia on M Street and Wisconsin Avenue several years ago included the goal of reducing street furniture and visual clutter on those streets. The imposition of freestanding signs on the sidewalks of those streets is oppositional to that approach and defeats one of the principal goals of the streetscape project.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Roaché made the following motion:

ANC E supports the petition from the residents of 1650 Avon Pl., NW to remove the female ginkgo tree.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Starrels proposed that a letter to DDOT regarding improved signage on the 1000 block of Thomas Jefferson St., NW be approved and sent.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion:

The Georgetown BID has partnered with Baked and Wired to design a parklet that would provide a new public space for people to enjoy. The parklet will be located in a parking space adjacent to 1052 Thomas Jefferson Street NW, and would be installed in late summer or fall 2015, and would be authorized to remain in that space for one year, with renewal of its permit subject to DDOT and ANC review. The parklet would use 26 feet of curbside space, and the Georgetown BID has requested that DDOT look at using multi-space meters and adjustments to nearby commercial loading zones to ensure the supply of parking on the street is maintained.

Be it resolved that ANC 2E supports the Georgetown BID's request to the District Department of Transportation to install a temporary parklet in front of 1052 Thomas Jefferson Street NW, and requests that the DC Department of Transportation facilitate and approve such request.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion:

ANC 2E endorses the Tour for the Cure on September 6, 2015.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

ABC

Commissioner Starrels made the following motion:

ANC 2E supports the request of Chaia Tacos for a stipulated license at 3207 Grace St., NW.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioners Starrels and Birch made the following motion:

ANC 2E supports the application by Mr. Smith's for an endorsement to read "for live piano performances only".

ANC 2E protests the license ABRA #000927 3205 K St., NW in lieu of getting a voluntary agreement because of potential impact on peace, order and quiet.

Zoning

Commissioner Jones entered a document into the record regarding the ANC 2E resolution for 3324 Dent Pl., NW zoning variance application. (Attached)

The resolution was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Jones made the following resolution regarding 1614 Wisconsin Ave NW, BZA Application No. 19060, Baco Juice & Taco (hearing date July 28):
authorization to operate a fast food establishment:

"ANC 2E has no objection to the application of Baco Juice & Taco for a special exception to operate as a fast food enterprise at 1614 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, provided that such establishment at that location operates with a customized order and service format using fresh, varied ingredients and all food is prepared according to each individual order. Such establishment will not operate a deep fryer, which would otherwise result in undesirable cooking oil waste. In providing fresh ingredients, the establishment will provide adequate refrigeration for food, but no freezer on the premises other than a non-walk-in freezer for fruit, vegetables and baked goods that do not include meat, poultry or seafood. To the maximum extent possible, Baco Juice & Taco will operate on the principal of providing foods for consumption on the premises, with take-out orders subordinate. Furthermore, such establishment will facilitate a monthly pest-control service, treating specifically for rodents, in order to assure that such establishment's operations do not contribute to the rat population in Georgetown. Lastly, such establishment will not store trash anywhere on the sidewalk of Wisconsin Avenue, nor in public view. ANC 2E is confident that if Baco Juice & Taco complies with these restrictions in its operation, it will not create any objectionable conditions to neighboring properties and will bring desirable improvements to the property. The establishment will only deliver products via scooter or bicycle"

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Commissioner Birch made the following motion:

RESOLUTION: 1351 Wisconsin Ave, NW/BZA Appeal No. 190-49

Whereas an appeal has been filed, BZA Appeal No. 190-49, by individuals residing in ANC 2E, regarding construction on the premises at 1351 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, and

Whereas ANC 2E recognizes the technical aspect of the appeal alleging an error in the determination of the application of FAR and conforming measurements of the construction, including whether the approved permit plans are being followed,

ANC 2E supports the right of the individuals to file the appeal and supports the process offering that appeal with the objective of arriving at a final deliberation on this case.

The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Old Georgetown Board

Commissioner Birch chaired the OGB portion of the agenda.

Commissioner Birch made the following motion:

With regard to 2715 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (OG 15-239):

ANC 2E has no objection to the proposed demolition of the gas station structure on the property at 2715 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, and the construction of a mixed-use residential building with ground floor commercial and residential above. We appreciate the productive and welcoming use of this property at the principal entrance to Georgetown, including a restaurant with outdoor seating and apartments bringing activity to an area largely lacking in residential accommodations. We have no objection to the proposed height of the structure serving as a transition and link between the commercial building to the north and the Four Seasons Hotel to the south. As for the design, we look to the Old Georgetown Board to work with the property owner to develop a scheme that is appropriate in massing and recognizes the high visibility and importance of this project at the convergence of the two main streets entering Georgetown at the eastern gateway.

The motion was seconded and carries 5-1 and with one abstention.

Commissioner Howard departs the meeting for the evening at 9:05 p.m.

Commissioner Solomon made the following motion:

With regard to 3417 R St., NW (OG 15-190):

ANC 2E does not support the side porch fill in on the west side. The design proposed would have a negative impact on the historic character of this property. ANC2E has no objection to filling in the east side of the building. ANC 2E has concerns on the amount of glazing on the rear addition, north side.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Birch made the following motion with regard to 2905 N St., NW (OG 15-260):

ANC 2E supports the proposal for a parking space at the rear of 2905 N Street, NW. Visibility of the area affected is minimal from the street. The parking proposed is similar to the existing parking available to the each of the residences to the west for the length of the 2900 block of N Street.

Neighbors in the abutting property to the east of 2905 N Street have raised concerns and objections regarding proposed removal of a tree on the property at 2905, as well as attention to the amount of hardscape proposed. No objection to the proposed parking pad has been expressed.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Jones made the following motion regarding 3107 Dumbarton St, NW (OG 15-259):

ANC2e opposes the proposal as presented. We are disappointed the applicant continues to ignore the strong and substantial directions provided by both this ANC and Old Georgetown

Board to restore ALL work completed without permit in its ENTIRETY. To be clear, ANC2e requests nothing less than all of the general recommendations as provided in the May 4th 2015 ANC2e Public Hearing as well as the specific recommendations made by the Old Georgetown Board dated May 21st 2015. These recommendations should be completed without any further unnecessary delays. Attached are both the ANC2e May 4th and the May 21st OGB documents regarding 3107 Dumbarton St. NW. Please note, ANC2e continues to receive strong community opposition to this latest proposal.

ANC2e May 4, 2015 Resolution
With Regard to 3107 Dumbarton St., NW:

ANC2E strongly opposes this proposal and is extremely disappointed that the applicant's attempt to circumvent the process which protects the Georgetown Historic District by completing work without proper permits. ANC 2E believes the extent of the unpermitted work severely damages the historic character of this important colonial revival property, dating back to 1898 and in which former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles resided.

Unfortunately, we find:

- that the synthetic stucco is inappropriate and is completely out of character for this brick home and should not be placed on any exterior portion of this property whatsoever. The current stucco should be removed without delay.
- the exterior structure demolition for new windows was highly inappropriate and dramatically changes the historic character of this property. All new openings should be repaired and closed with the appropriate historic bricks that match existing bricks in color and style
- the modern single pane windows are historically out of character and inappropriate
- the increased roof height changes the massing and appearance of this property in a manner which is clearly a negative impact on this property's historic character. The roof and demolished chimney should be restored completely to their original height and type of materials.
- The shutters should not have been removed and the original shutters should be reinstalled or, if necessary, rebuilt and replaced in kind.
- The removal of the front door, elliptical light fan window, and transom railings was not historically in keeping with this property and these elements as well as any related unpermitted changes should be restored to their original condition.

In summary, these egregious and severely damaging proposed changes to the historic character of 3107 Dumbarton, NW are completely void of any respect toward the Georgetown Historic District. We ask the Old Georgetown Board, the Historic Preservation Office, and the District's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs to use all legal means possible to deny any of the proposed changes by this applicant and to ensure the applicant takes all necessary steps to return the house to its pre-existing design. It should be noted that ANC 2E has received a large number of complaints regarding the proposed changes and the unpermitted work. We strongly support restoring this property to its prior condition as soon as possible.

OGB RECOMMENDATION DATED MAY 21st 2015
OG 15-154 Dated
HPA NUMBER:
HPA 15-276
LOCATION:

3107 Dumbarton Street, NW
Washington, DC

PROPERTY:

Residence

DESCRIPTION:

Raise roof, rear addition, new/replacement windows, new front entrance, remove balustrade, elastomeric coating, new garden wall, site paving - Existing alterations without review

REVIEW TYPE:

Concept

Recommendation

The Commission regrets the numerous exterior alterations done without permit to this free-standing residence built in 1898, a contributing historic structure in the Old Georgetown historic district. The Commission supports the concept design as documented in OG 14-058 but requires permit review for approval. The following proposed/existing alterations are NOT APPROVED as they were not found to be appropriate to the character of the original property and the historic district:

- Construction of new two-story rear addition to replace existing rear porch; proposed design is taller than and inconsistent in fenestration and detailing with concept recommendation under OG 14-058;
- Removal of three windows at the north elevation and their replacement with four doors contrary to concept recommendation under OG 14-058;
- Roof addition with raised roof and raised parapet walls contrary to concept review under OG 14-058;
- Removal of four brick chimneys contrary to concept recommendation under OG 14-058;
- Removal of historic metal balustrade along the ridge;
- Installation of new roofing material with exposed spray foam insulation at dormers;
- Removing the original front entrance door within a segmental-arch opening with fanlight and sidelights and replaced with a round-arch opening and a pair of stylistically incompatible doors, and altering a pilaster;
- Replacement of all historic wood multi-light single-glazed double-hung and casement windows with new multi-light double-glazed insert windows with applied muntins;
- Insertion of new window openings on the east and west elevations cut into existing masonry walls including windows out of scale, type, spacing, and character with the historic architecture;
- Removal of wood shutters on front elevation;
- Installation of insulation-board trim around window openings;
- Application of thick elastomeric coating on all exterior brick walls of house;
- Installation of electrical wiring, fixtures and/or conduit drilled through original exterior brick walls on at least four sides of house;
- Installation of a metal gate at the front stair that is stylistically incompatible with the historic metal fence;
- Construction of new concrete-block wall at east end of rear yard with application of thick elastomeric coating on the new wall and on two existing brick garden walls; and
- Installation of impervious pavement across entire rear yard.

The Commission recommends that all new exterior alterations be removed and the conditions and elements of the historic exterior restored to the extent possible following documentation to be provided in professional quality drawings. The existing deteriorated front yard garage is not compatible with the character of the contributing residence or the historic district. The Commission recommends brick infill at the garage doors, removing one foot from the parapet,

reinstalling the historic metal railing, removing the curb cut, and establishing a new quarter-round curb and planting bed in the adjacent public space.
The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Roaché made the following motion with regard to 3254 S St., NW (OG 15-254 and OG 15-251):

ANC 2E has no objection to the proposed additions and alterations along with creating a new gateway for one car parking along the alley.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Jones made the following motion with regard to 1316 34th St., NW (OG 15-224):

ANC2e opposes the project as presented. We have a strong objection to the proposed roof deck. ANC2e opposes any building height that would exceed 15 feet above the ground measured from the east or west façade. We have concerns with the proposal regarding its impact on the historic context with the surrounding buildings. ANC2e did receive strong objections from the community regarding any proposed roof deck.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Jones made the following motion with regard to 3331 N Street, NW (OG 15-238):

This is a historically significant property in that it is one of the five “Cox Row” homes which were built by former Georgetown Mayor John Cox in 1817. They are also unique in that they are among the small percentage of authentic Federal style homes in the Georgetown Historic District.

ANC2e greatly appreciates the applicant’s effort to preserve the historic character of this property with minimal changes that would not alter this character.

Although the first floor west façade is likely not viewable from public space, we still encourage the applicant to minimize any increase in glazing if possible, but we do find the current proposed increase to be satisfactory. The proposed small porch alteration is primarily a historical restoration with small changes. Finally, the very small roof addition has minimal impact on the historic character of this property, if any. ANC2e has no preference of glass versus other material for the rooftop addition. Therefore, ANC2e does not oppose the project as presented.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

Commissioner Birch made the following motion with regard to 3021 P St., NW (OG 15-263):

ANC 2E has no objection to demolition and new addition to 3021 P St., NW with the caution that the neighbors have concerns that excavation may affect their property.

The motion was seconded and carries 6-0.

At 10:10 with no further business on the agenda Commissioner Starrels moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and carries 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Maysak
ANC 2E