

Minutes for the Meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

February 2, 2009
Georgetown Visitation School, 35th and Volta Place, Dance Studio

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Commissioner Lewis, Chair, with Commissioners Solomon, Lewis, Golds, Starrels, Birch, and Eason present, constituting a quorum.

Administrative

Public Safety and Police Report

Commissioner Solomon reported on recent public safety matters and recent crimes within PSA 206 and responded to questions from Commissioners and the community. He mentioned that crime has gone down in most categories overall and that 20% of calls were for unwarranted burglar alarms. Residents and businesses should be aware, test and monitor their alarms in order to limit false alarms. Lieutenant Milam will be in special training and Sergeant Hackley will be in her place. Commissioner Lewis mentioned possible legislation creating fines for false burglar alarms in the future.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the meeting of ANC 2E held on January 6, 2009 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Lewis (Birch second) by a vote of 6-0.

Financial Report

Commissioner Solomon reported on the Quarter 1 finances for FY2009. He made a motion to approve the 1st Quarter report (Eason seconded), which passed by a vote of 6-0.

He also mentioned that ANC 2E's 3rd and 4th Quarter reports are filed and being reviewed by the auditor as part of the ANC allotment release process.

He made the following motion to approve Adams Bank as the bank for ANC 2E (Lewis seconded), which passed by a vote of 6-0:

I move that ANC 2E adopt the resolution supplied by Adams National Bank with regard to the bank accounts maintained at the bank by ANC 2E.

Transportation Report

Commissioner Starrels asked for community input on special items, such as the attempts to get traffic control officers on M St. during rush hours. Commissioner Lewis followed up on the Safeway driveway issue, stating that Safeway will most likely get 2 driveways and he spoke about the light pole rehabilitation project, stating that the consensus is to start with the posts in the worst shape first.

Commissioner Solomon spoke about the “no left turn sign” on Wisconsin Ave. near the Safeway. A meeting has been requested with DDOT, residents and businesses to get the issue resolved.

ANC Commendation for Former Commissioner Jenna Lowenstein

Commissioner Golds made the following resolution (Commissioner Eason seconded), commending former Commissioner Jenna Lowenstein, which passed by a vote of 6-0:

In recognition of her service to the community as ANC Commissioner, ANC 2E commends Jenna Lowenstein. An insightful and smart Commissioner, Jenna always displayed good judgment, keen intelligence, integrity, a lively interest in the political process, and a spirit of collegiality. Jenna worked hard, had a willingness to take on difficult assignments, and provided an exemplary service to her constituents, Georgetown University, and the entire community. For her many contributions to the communities of Georgetown, Burleith, and Hillandale, Jenna deserves our full commendation.

Community Comment

Councilmember Jack Evans addressed the community

Councilmember Evans spoke about the economic troubles, but mentioned that the DC economy has remained strong overall, including the recent audit release, which contained an \$87 million surplus. FY2010 will be a challenge because of a shortfall in collections. He mentioned that the stimulus package will include funds for DC, but he is unsure how much and for what the money will be appropriated. He stated that the Inauguration went very well, as there were no arrests or incidents. He mentioned that the Georgetown economy is doing very well, as most restaurants are operating strongly. He answered questions from the Commission and the community regarding the Chesapeake Bay and the storm sewer system in DC, fire hydrant operations in Georgetown, neon signs at the Domino’s Pizza in a residential neighborhood, business property taxes, budget shortfalls, the Zoning Commission proposal about sales of guns in Georgetown, trolley tracks on O St., stimulus money and national mall renovations.

Community members made comments regarding

Members of the community and commissioners spoke about matters of concern in the community, including the beginning of a farmer’s market in the parking lot of the Hardy School, security light issues at Addison school, and other safety, security, and height issues at Addison School, with Commissioner Lewis stating that the ANC will continue to monitor the Addison School issues.

New Business

Safeway request for zoning waiver during first month of construction

Representatives from Safeway presented plans seeking approval to keep the store open during the first month of construction in order to shorten the time that the store is closed. During this thirty days, they will conduct utility work at south end of parking lot near the southern entrance. This requires that they close the south entrance, leaving the north entrance as the only entrance to the store. They stated that they had a plan with DDOT for safety and traffic control. Safeway committed to maintaining safety during these thirty days. The representatives also committed to releasing an in-depth timetable at a later date, but in advance of their early spring closing.

After comments from commissioners and community members weighing the safety issues of this proposal and possible environmental impacts of construction, Commissioner Eason made the following resolution (Commissioner Solomon seconded) which passed by a vote of 6-0:

Safeway has notified our community that it intends to build a new, larger store on the site of the existing Safeway store in Georgetown and has requested the support of ANC 2E for leaving the existing store open during the first 30 days of construction.

We understand that during those 30 days:

Construction will consist of infrastructure installation within a part of the existing store's parking lot;

This will reduce available customer parking on-site to approximately 60 percent of current availability, which would be less than is required under normally applicable zoning rules;

This also will necessitate closing the southern access driveway to the store, which is one of two currently available driveways, leaving the northern driveway as the single point of access;

Safeway has discussed this proposal with the Zoning Administrator, who has raised the possibility of a 30-day waiver of the parking requirements in these circumstances if there is community support for doing so; and

Safeway has discussed with the District Department of Transportation the pedestrian and vehicle safety issues involved in reducing access to a single driveway and is working with DDOT to assure that this can be done safely, including such safety enhancements as, e.g., hiring reimbursable MPD officers to direct traffic as needed.

ANC 2E appreciates that the Safeway store is the only full-service grocery store located within Georgetown and Burleith and that the community would like the store to remain open for the initial 30 days of construction if that can be done safely.

After considering this proposal at a public meeting on February 2, 2009, and in discussions with Safeway and District of Columbia officials, ANC 2E supports a zoning ruling that would leave the store open during the initial 30 days of construction, as requested, provided that the District Department of Transportation has first notified the Zoning Administrator that this can be done safely and has identified, and Safeway has agreed to, any necessary measures to assure and enhance transportation-related safety during this period. We appreciate that Safeway has committed to having reimbursable MPD officers direct traffic at peak hours independent of any additional DDOT requirements.

Run for Rigby

A representative from *Run for Rigby* presented plans for their 2009 event.

After discussion by commissioners and community members, Commissioner Golds made the following motion (Commissioner Birch seconded) which passed by a vote of 6-0:

ANC2E supports the plan for the 5th annual *Run for Rigby* for April 4th, 2009. We commend the *Run for Rigby* group for their work to improve the safety of housing in Georgetown and Burleith through education and community awareness, and believe this event is an important element of their ongoing efforts to promote fire safety in our community. Further, we congratulate *Run for Rigby* on its previous successes, and hope that this event will continue for years to come

DC Water and Sewer Authority discussion of fire hydrants

A representative (Louis Jarvis, Director of Water Services) from DC WASA spoke about the status of fire hydrants in Georgetown, with particular attention to those currently in disrepair or non-functioning. He answered questions from the community and spoke about the fire hydrant repair program run by WASA and the DCFEMS. He mentioned that 59 of 200 hydrants in Georgetown are currently marked “need maintenance”, though those 59 should still function if needed. All “need maintenance” hydrants should be repaired within 60 days.

Commissioners and community members spoke about the poor history of fire hydrant repairs in Georgetown and mentioned that the status quo is unacceptable. Commissioners asked Mr. Jarvis to present a more in-depth report detailing fire hydrant locations and issues at ANC 2E’s March meeting.

ABC Issues

Dixie Liquor Request for Exception

Commissioner Starrels spoke about the Dixie Liquor request to have limited single sales, noting the limited types of beverages granted under this exception and Dixie Liquor’s record. He also stated his concerns about the proximity of the store to Francis Scott Key Park. A representative from Dixie Liquor (Jody Kurash, owner) presented their case for the exception, mentioning that these liquors account for about \$38,000 in profits. She

presented a petition from neighboring businesses supporting the exemption. ANC 2E will hold further meetings on this matter.

Zoning and Planning

Zoning Regulations on Gun Store Locations

Zoning Commission regulations allowing for gun shops outside of 300 feet of residentially zoned area have been adopted on an interim basis, subject to public comment and possible revisions. Commissioner Birch spoke about the Zoning Commission's action to amend an earlier proposal that would have provided a 600 foot exclusion zone and noted that Philadelphia and San Francisco have successfully adopted exclusion zones greater than 300 feet.

After discussion by commissioners and community members about the new gun store zoning regulations, Commissioner Birch made the following motion (Commissioner Solomon seconded) which passed by a vote of 6-0:

ANC 2E opposes the proposal by the zoning commission to allow for the establishment of retail gun sales within 300 feet of a church, school, playground, or residence and urges the return to the originally proposed limitation of 600 feet. The greater distance is consistent with what other cities have implemented and we see no reason why our city should be any different. We expect that the zoning commission will give great weight to our recommendation, recognizing the successful experience in other cities.

Old Georgetown Board

Commissioner Lewis recused himself from the consideration and vote of all of the following items relating to the Old Georgetown Board on the ANC 2E agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Birch chaired the meeting for consideration of the following OGB-related matters.

Regular Calendar

Public Projects

3260 R Street, NW (Square 1280, Lot 800), DCPL, Georgetown Branch Library:

No presenter was present. Commissioners noted a few minor changes. The project was moved to no review without objection.

Private Projects

1068 31st Street, NW, Piccolo Restaurant O.G. 09-075 (H.P.A. 09-120):

Presenters from the restaurant presented designs for a permit review and spoke about the restaurant's history and background. The proposed changes include mostly

interior changes. The exterior changes include balcony service (with umbrellas). They stated their desire to reopen the restaurant as soon as possible.

After discussion by Commissioner and community members, Commissioner Starrels moved (Commissioner Birch seconded) to adopt the following resolution, which passed by a vote of 5-0:

ANC 2E appreciates the plans as presented and the work the owners have done with the Board and Mr. Martinez. We have no objection to the balcony, as long as the umbrellas do not reappear. We suggest that the speakers are not reinstalled. Further, ANC2E requests that the owners work with the Board and BID on the trash area and we request that the satellite dish does not make a reappearance. As long as the parties continue to work together, ANC 2E has no objections other than those listed and we hope the city will expedite the permit schedule so that the restaurant can reopen as soon as possible.

3001 M Street, NW, Ice Berry, O.G. 09-023 (H.P.A. 08-028):

Peter Yost (President of the Historic Preservation Foundation) spoke about their concerns and the lack of plans that they have received. The Old Georgetown Board will continue to look at their signs and windows in order to maintain the historic nature. A community member asked about the paint job on the windows, which are supposed to be painted white. Project moved to no review, as the ANC will rely on the OGB's and Historic Preservation Foundation's expertise.

1229 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Apple, O.G. 08-225 (H.P.A. 08-343):

Revised concept designs were submitted for review. After discussion by Commissioner and community members, Commissioner Birch moved (Commissioner Solomon seconded) to adopt the following resolution, which passed by a vote of 5-0:

ANC 2E appreciates the efforts that Apple has made to be responsive to the concerns of the community and to present a design that keeps with and is harmonious with the historic character of commercial Georgetown, recognizing the value of the architectural detailing and the recessing of the door and show windows that will create an attractive effect. We suggest that the OGB consider some detailing of the show windows, including the addition of a base. ANC 2E is pleased with the concept that is presented and looks forward to future work with Apple.

At 8:40 p.m., with no further matters on the agenda, Commissioner Lewis moved (Commissioner Starrels seconded) to adjourn this public session of ANC 2E. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted for the approval of ANC 2E,

Aaron Golds
Secretary, ANC 2E