

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1B

Government of the District of Columbia

Columbia Heights / LeDroit Park / Shaw / University Heights

MINUTES

6 March 2003, True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street, NW

Attending: Commissioners Guyot, Spalding, Thomas, Butler, Glover, Skinner, Esters

Absent: Commissioners Hammonds, Houston, Wilson, Littlepage

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Thomas at approximately 7:15PM

Minutes of the October 2002 meeting have still not been presented for approval

Minutes of the February 2003 meeting were adopted (6-0-0)

In the Treasurer's Report Commissioner Glover reported that our current balance is \$80,541.92, and that there was no activity in the past month, and also that the current quarterly report (10/1/2002 to 12/31/02) was done. Monthly and quarterly Treasurer's report was adopted (6-0-0). Motion to reimburse the Secretary for stationery expenses of \$46.66 was adopted (6-0-0).

Presentation by Thomas W. Branham, Director, Real Estate Assessments, Dept. Tax & Revenue in regard to the release of new property tax appraisals. Explanation was given of the new yearly appraisal process, the 25% cap on increases, methods of appeal, and useful forms and contacts in the Office of Tax and Revenue. Average increase (yearly) in 1B was estimated at 30%. In response to a constituent question, the 25% cap only applies to Homestead Exemption properties, and may be influenced by improvement permitting.

Class 3 properties (vacant & abandoned, commercial or residential) identifying and inventory ongoing, and currently has about 5,000 properties. Hardship situations should approach Lesa Lee of the OTR, and cases are reviewed on a property by property basis.

Presentation of National Minority Aids bid for WMATA parcel Florida Ave. between 8th and 9th Streets. NMAC showed designs of a four story office building with retail on the street level, and a small park on the eastern parcel. NMAC would occupy most of the office space on the top three floors & would sell their current property at 13th & U. A request was made that we invite the others bidders for this WMATA parcel dispersal.

Commissioner Skinner presented a design for a Ward 1 Town Hall Meeting. There was discussion amongst the Commissioners on whether the meeting should be ward wide or concentrate on 1B's territory, and also on the expense involved in putting the meeting together. It was decided to table the request (5-0-1), and for Commissioners to work towards an appropriate design for an upcoming meeting.

In Community announcements: March 11th Business Public Safety Summit at Cada Vez, 3rd annual Techno Rodeo March 15th at Cada Vez, March 29th 10th annual CleanUp coordinated with 14th & U Main Streets Initiative. Discussion of the Main Streets program led to a call for the 14th & U Main Street Initiative to address Commissioner concerns at an upcoming meeting.

DC Taekwondo announced that their citywide championship has been moved to April 26th. Cardozo Shaw Neighborhood Association meets on second Thursdays at the True Reformer Building at 7PM.

DDOT request for approval of public space permit for Camino Real (1833 14th Street NW). Proposed are two outdoor tables for café seating just outside the front door of the restaurant.

Question was raised about the fact that it has taken nearly a year for this process, and applicant stated that it just got bogged down in the Public Space Dept. Support for the application was given unanimously.

DDOT request for approval of the traffic control plan (TCP) for 1290 U Street. Marvin Jawer of Jenco Group presented the finalized TCP. Suggestions were made for retail

leases (video store, Dunkin Doughnuts, ice cream parlor). Question on conflict with the Manna project, and DDOT responded that the permit issued to Jenco would preclude any site activities in the center of Square 0274 until Jenco no longer needed the access and alley closings. Closing of alley lane on 13th Street and limitations of those closings were discussed. Sidewalk on 13th Street is site of major electrical & utilities work, but as soon as possible they will reopen the sidewalk. Not permitted to obstruct the subway opening at any time during regular operating hours. Question was raised about searching out minority business ownership possibilities for the retail space being created. Question was raised by community member about the narrow sidewalk space currently existent on U Street. Moving the bus shelter was forwarded as a partial solution. Commissioner Guyot added that this TCP has been enacted without ANC input, and that changes requested by the ANC should be instituted. DDOT added that the requirement on sidewalk space is a four foot clearance. Commissioner Skinner asked for cooperation on alleviating conditions that are having an impact on the community. The developer agreed to review the plans and to give back as much sidewalk as possible. DDOT spokesman said that they are concerned with public safety, and that there is an ongoing process to remediate problems with the TCP as they are discovered. Commissioner Skinner reinforced his comments that public safety is being jeopardized, and that more than the required minimum allowances might be necessitated by the unusual nature of the site. Commissioner Spalding offered a motion that ANC1B support the TCP as presented. Commissioner Guyot asked if the resolution contained the changes reflected in the previous discussion. Commissioner Skinner requested to amend the resolution to include a contingency that the bottleneck near the bus shelter be addressed. Amended motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for Temporary Stipulated license towards a new CR license at 944 Florida Ave. Coffee, deli and a small bar. Applicant stated that their bartenders have been trained, and that they have conducted an outreach to the surrounding residential community.

Applicant stated that they hope to be a networking node for the entire community. Commissioner Spalding moved support and it was adopted unanimously (7-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for renewal of a CT license for Bohemian Caverns. There were no questions of the applicant and no adverse comments from the community members present. Commissioner Spalding moved support and it was adopted unanimously (7-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for permission to change license class from CR to CN for Republic Gardens. No representative from the applicant was present, so the Commission did not take any action on the request.

ABC liquor license request for a Temporary Stipulated license towards a new CN license for Between Friends located at 1115A U Street. Applicant said that her intention is to run a straight friendly gay & lesbian nightclub. Other intended uses are as a fund raising facility for community organizations. They have reached out to numerous community organizations and also to the adjacent Lincoln Condominium association. Commissioner Spalding asked for the capacity of the club and the applicants expected use capacity. The applicant stated that the original capacity for the space was 897, but that in order to accommodate that capacity they would have needed to add additional bathroom facilities. Their current configuration allows a capacity of 650. Applicant was asked about policing issues, and responded that the police had been stopping by regularly, but that there had been no serious problems. Applicant was asked about parking arrangements, and responded that they are currently using the U Street parking lot on 12th Street and were exploring using the Industrial Bank lot on 11th Street. They are also exploring subleasing space to a barbecue restaurant. They are developing daytime activities including yoga and aerobics classes. Applicant was asked about employees and their management and liquor training, and responded that there are currently 16 employees and that the manager had applied for a managers license. Applicant was asked about hours of operation, and responded that the nightclub would operate between 9PM and 3AM. Commissioner Guyot asked if they would consider reducing the capacity from 650 to 550, but withdrew the suggestion. Commissioner Esters asked if the addition of the barbecue restaurant would affect the capacity, and applicant responded that it would probably not change the capacity. Commissioner Spalding moved support and it was adopted unanimously (7-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for a Temporary Stipulated license towards a new CR license for U Turn located at 1101 U Street. Mr. Pappas as agent for the applicant explained that the applicant currently has a CR license for operations on the second floor, and that this was a request to extend the license to newly acquired space on the first floor. Applicant was asked if they were planning a club on one level and a restaurant on the other, and responded that they would be operating an Ethiopian restaurant on both levels. A question was raised about access between the floors of the restaurant, and applicant said that they were in the process of removing walls and adapting the space to accommodate the change. Applicant stated that the actual request is for expansion of the existing CR license. Motion was made to support the expansion of the existing CR license and it was adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for a Temporary Stipulated license towards a new CR license for Enkutatash Ethiopian Restaurant located at 1909 9th Street. Applicant was asked if they had requested a change in the zoning and use from residential, and responded that the change had already been made. Question was directed to applicant about the historic façade, and responded that they would not disturb the façade in changing use to a restaurant. Commissioner Guyot moved support and it was adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

ABC liquor license request for a Temporary Stipulated license towards a new CT license for College Café located at 1346 T Street. Applicant was asked about turning a row house in the historic district into a tavern, and applicant responded that it was allowed in the current zoning and that he was preparing to start the renovations necessary for the conversion to commercial use. Lengthy debate ensued over the zoning and use of the building. Question was raised in regard to back property taxes owed on the building, and response from applicant was that they were not aware of the situation & that it should not impede their plans. Commissioner Esters asked whether the applicant had solicited support from the nearby residents, and applicant responded that there was ongoing negative sentiment from the previous owners of what is now the St. Ex property, but that applicant was not aligned with these previous owners. Commissioners Thomas and Spalding asked about applicant's interaction with the surrounding residential community members. Commissioner Guyot asked about applicant's knowledge of the surrounding community, and applicant responded that he had lived in the neighborhood but had recently moved to Arlington. Commissioner Guyot asked whether applicant had joined any local groups while living in the neighborhood, and applicant responded that he hadn't. It was moved by Commissioner Spalding that the request be tabled, and that applicant return with designs for the project and evidence of community input. Commissioner Guyot expressed a vigorous dissent from the standards applied by the Commissioners in reviewing the application. The motion to table was adopted (5-1-0).

Grant application submitted by Cardozo Shaw Neighborhood Association to support costs involved in securing historic landmark status for the church at 10th & V Streets. Bryan Martin Firvida presented the case for applying for the historic status. The property is currently vacant and abandoned and lies just outside the footprint of the Greater U Street Historic District. The property is both architecturally and culturally significant. It is one of the few African American owned and operated churches in the District. The grant is for costs involved in filing the application. The designation as an historic landmark would prevent demolition or inappropriate changes to the façade. The designation would not prevent development use, but would restrict exterior changes to those approved for historic landmarks. Commissioner Guyot expressed concern over prejudging the intentions of the current owner, and the involvement of the researcher involved. Applicant responded that their intention is to save the structure no matter who the current or future owner might be. Commissioner Spalding moved to support the grant application in the amount of \$1800.00 and it was adopted unanimously (6-0-0). A

separate motion was presented by Commissioner Spalding asking DCRA to issue no permits that would not be allowed to an historic landmark property until a decision on the application was resolved, and the resolution was adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Grant application from CHIME. Dorothy Marschak presented on behalf of Community Help in Music Education. Applicant was asked 'You're not headquartered in ANC1B, and none of your programs appear to happen in ANC1B, so are you asking other ANC's for support?' Applicant responded that they are a citywide program, and that there are no venues to present inside the boundaries of ANC1B, but that teacher training & use of tapes would be happening in schools located inside ANC1B's boundaries. There was ongoing discussion of the appropriateness of funding from ANC1B to a citywide program with only loose connection to the territory of ANC1B. Motion to oppose the grant application was adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Grant application from DC Taekwondo Association was heard (tabled at our February meeting). Questions were raised about the size of the grant, and Commissioner Glover asked to reduce the grant from \$6,600 to \$5,000 but failed to receive a second. There was discussion about the size of the grant and effective use of ANC1B's available funds. Applicant explained that the request of ANC1B was for the portion of activities resident in ANC1B, and that it would be raising funds from other city agencies. Applicant asked for a letter of support from ANC1B to DC Sport. Commissioner Guyot moved support of the grant application, and it was adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Commissioner Thomas offered a motion to support requesting that the office space previously allotted to ANC1B in the Reeves Center be pursued. Motion was adopted by a vote of (5-1-0).

Commissioner Spalding offered a resolution to support the letter from the Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities. Since the organization was not present to discuss the resolution, Commissioner Spalding offered a motion to table. Commissioner Guyot said that they did not need to be present for ANC1B to vote on the issue. The motion to table was withdrawn, and Commissioner Guyot offered a motion to support endorsing the letter conditional on the membership allowing an alternative motion at the April meeting. The motion to support was adopted unanimously (7-0-0).

Commissioner Skinner asked for a working group on the issues forum & a budget guideline. The commissioners agreed that keeping the focus to ANC1B in place of Ward 1 was desirable.

After discussion of the budget needed Commissioner Skinner asked that the working group not delay funding and drag out the process, and that ANC1B vote on a budget for the meeting at the April ANC1B meeting. Commissioner Thomas asked that the budget specifics be presented to the Commissioners in a timely fashion.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 PM.

Philip C. Spalding, Secretary