

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1B

Government of the District of Columbia

Columbia Heights / LeDroit Park / Shaw / University Heights

3 July 2003, True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street NW

Attending: Commissioners Guyot, Spalding, Hammonds, Thomas, Esters, Wright

Absent: Commissioners Houston, Butler, Wilson, Glover, Skinner

Quorum was achieved and meeting began at approximately 7:20 PM. In the Secretary's report Commissioner Spalding indicated that extended versions of reports from Councilmember Evans and the DC Charter Schools were available, and that new maps from Office of Zoning and Board of Elections were also available to the Commissioners. Adoption of minutes of the June 5th meeting were moved, seconded and passed (6-0-0). Treasurer Glover was not in attendance, and Commissioner Spalding indicated that the only activity for the past month was the check for U Street Blue.

In Community Announcements Commissioner Guyot detailed a hearing on the HAVA election plans to be held at Judiciary Square on July 8th. Bryan Martin Firvida announced that the Cardozo Shaw Neighborhood Association would hold their regular monthly meeting at the True Reformer Building on the evening of July 10th. Commissioner Guyot highlighted the celebrations of the centenary of the True Reformer Building to take place on July 17th.

Board of Education member Julie Mikuta addressed the Commission on a new push towards addressing K-12 literacy. The initial focus will be on addressing K-3 literacy, but hopefully will expand quickly to the full K-12. Establishing one core literacy curriculum that can be used across the city will help in addressing transfer consistency, and also allow administrators and community organizations in knowing how to match to the core curriculum. The rule that every student will read ninety minutes a day will serve as a foundation for building the curriculum. Literacy centered professional development will be offered to both teachers and administrators. A change in testing patterns (from end of year to an ongoing process) will be incorporated in hopes that frequent diagnostic review can help guide remediation and development more effectively. The program will officially roll out in September, however, there will be summer programs initiated to begin marketing the literacy push. The summer programs will also be directed at community organizations working with the schools and literacy, and should give the Board of Education time to coordinate the literacy push with these organizations. The summer program will feature a 'read or be read to twenty minutes a day' theme, and will be concluded with certificates and awards. Commissioner Spalding asked whether the city's charter schools had bought into the program, and Ms. Mikuta responded that they had just begun the outreach to the charters. Commissioner Guyot spoke to the extended literacy problem in DC, and added that the program could reach out to adult illiteracy as the momentum of the literacy campaign gained force. Commissioner Wright added to Commissioner Guyot's comments that adult illiteracy was an ongoing problem and should be addressed as part of the literacy campaign. Constituent Clyde Howard questioned Ms. Mikuta on the Board of Education's ability to influence the DC charter

schools, and Ms. Mikuta responded that the independence of the charter's curriculum prevented direct influence; however, a well developed literacy curriculum with solid professional development opportunities would be attractive to charter school teachers and administrators. Commissioner Guyot returned to the importance of involving everyone in the city in addressing literacy, and hoped that the program would generate the momentum that would attract charters, the elderly and all of the schools to want to participate.

Traffic Control Plan (TCP) for Bush Construction's project "2020 Lofts" in the 2000 block of 12th Street was detailed by Jason Jacobson from Bush Construction. This matter of right development of 146 loft style condominium unit will feature 155 underground parking spots. The traffic control plan has been designed in consultation with DDOT and neighborhood groups. The sales trailer currently located on the northern V Street edge of the project will be replaced with a restored 1214 U Street storefront, which will be returned to the owner for retail leasing at the end of the sales process. The V Street sidewalk will remain open during the building process using barriers and covered walkways when appropriate. The western side of 12th Street will be the main truck service area, and two-way traffic can continue to be accommodated through the construction. A second request of the ANC is needed in terms of removing and replacing the street trees on 12th Street. Bush is planning on removing the current maples and replacing with four inch caliper zelkovas at the end of the construction process. Commissioner Esters inquired about the use of the excess parking spaces, and applicant responded that they have not decided what can legally be done with the excess parking. Commissioner Spalding asked if they had explored contracts with Zip or Flex Car systems, and applicant said that they had not to date had discussions with either company. A question was raised about any set aside for affordable housing, and Mr. Jacobson responded that in a matter of right building they had not made any set asides for affordable housing. The unit pricing will be between \$275,000 and \$700,000. Constituent Clyde Howard asked about their preparations for the water that they'll encounter, and Andy Viola (Bush principal) said that their test borings and engineering indicated only minor difficulties that could be remediated with typical dewatering techniques. Scott Pomeroy of the 14th and U Main Streets Initiative requested that Bush pay attention to the location, size and design of traffic signs placed in the pedestrian business ways on U Street. Mr. Pomeroy also asked about DDOT input into the increase in traffic through the traditionally dangerous intersection of 12th and U, and Mr. Jacobson indicated that DDOT had not made any specific recommendations to date on the ramifications to the intersection. Commissioner Guyot asked that Bush go on record with their specifics of the TCP dealing with the 12th and U intersection. Mr. Viola responded that they have already specified flag people, and would add other measures as needed to control traffic through the intersection. Mr. Bilal asked for specifics on the washout procedures to be used during the construction, and Mr. Viola responded that the wash out areas were specified in the civil design plans, and that further Bush was both the developer and the builder and would be responsive on site. Commissioner Spalding moved that the TCP be supported as presented, with annotations on the specific comments raised at the meeting attached. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0). Commissioner Spalding moved that the landscape design involving the removal of the current street trees on the west side of 12th Street and replacement with zelkovas be supported. It was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

The TCP for the Langston Loft project (Metropolis) returned for review. Clifton Longobardi explained that this request for support was for a modification to the previously approved TCP. The original plan routed pedestrian traffic through the tree pits on the east side of 14th Street, and in the modified plan the pedestrian way is extended beyond the curb into 14th Street. Commissioner Spalding moved approval of the amendment to the TCP, and it was seconded and approved unanimously (6-0-0). Bryan Martin Firvida requested that developer carefully monitor parking in the vicinity of the pedestrian way.

Commissioner Spalding spoke to the Insanitary Buildings hearings that took place in the previous week regarding the commercial buildings at 901, 903, 905 and 907 U Street. These are inside the Greater U Street Historic District. Scott Pomeroy attended the hearings and reported that the owner of 901 has applied to combine with 2004 and 2006 9th Street into one lot and had applied for building permits. He was not aware that the existing buildings were located inside the historic district and would have to be reviewed by the DC Office of Historic Preservation. The owner of 903 could not attend and the hearing has been set forward to July 16th, but the owner did state that their intention was to sell the property. The owners of 905 and 907 were questioned about security on the backs of their buildings, and they were also set forward for ongoing hearings. Commissioner Spalding requested that the Commission write a letter to the Office of Historic Preservation reflecting the concerns voiced in his letter as SMD Commissioner to the Board of Insanitary Buildings. Mr. Pomeroy added that this is one of the last remaining intact sets of commercial buildings along U Street, and that it's location at the 9th Street gateway to the commercial corridor was also important. Tim Arnold (Chair, Historic Preservation Committee of CSNA) added that developers were looking to combine lots to make development projects more economically viable; however, it is also economically viable to restore the original buildings for adaptive reuse. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Commissioner Spalding introduced a request of the Board of Insanitary Buildings to condemn and raze the 'Thomas Lunch' building at the corner of 11th and V Streets. The developer (Robertson Development Company) is proposing removing a two storey commercial building and replacing with eight or ten residential condominiums. Commissioner Spalding stated that he had spoken to local historian Paul Williams and to Steve Callcott of the DC Office of Historic Preservation about the value of the existing building, and that neither thought there was any specific reason to preserve. Paul Robertson indicated that they have already worked inside the historic district and would be doing similar work on the 11th and V site. Tim Arnold voiced concern that the current spate of building in the area not covered by the protections of the historic district did not allow the same design review accorded buildings being renovated in the historic district. Commissioner Spalding responded that Robertson would probably be returning for BZA variance, and that community input could be heard at that time. Commissioner Spalding moved support of condemnation and razing of the Thomas Lunch building, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Public Space permits for locating pay telephones at 2920 Georgia Avenue and at 2330 Georgia Avenue were taken up. Commissioner Esters indicated that the phone at 2920 Georgia Avenue was opposed by local businesses that are afraid of the attention and congregating that have occurred with similar pay phone installations. Both Commissioners Esters and Guyot expressed opposition to the set of pay phones requested at 2330 Georgia Avenue. Commissioner Guyot moved opposition to the Public Space requests, and it was seconded and unanimously adopted (6-0-0).

Liquor license renewal (Class B) for Baruca S Inc. T/A El Paraiso at 1805 14th Street was considered. The owner of the grocery indicated that they had no troubles or community opposition. Commissioner Spalding moved support of the renewal, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Liquor license renewal (Class A) for Beletesh Ltd. T/A Serv-U-Liquor at 1935 9th Street was considered. Commissioner Guyot indicated that there was a medical reason for the owner's not attending the June meeting, and this is a long tenanted business with no community complaints. Commissioner Guyot moved support of the renewal, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

ABC Case No. 2696 was considered. This license was opposed by ANC1B, and is now asking for support of the 14(e) petition of the neighborhood. Commissioner Guyot stated that a negotiating session between the applicant (Yard Liquors) and the neighbors had taken place on July 2nd. The representatives of the community are Commissioner Guyot, the President of the LeDroit Park Civic Association, and Mr. Michael Patron (who has been designated the spokesman). All local residents were invited to attend the negotiating session. The vote at the session was 21-1 to oppose the application to open at 501 Florida Avenue. Commissioner Guyot moved support of the 14(e) petition, and Commissioner Spalding offered a friendly amendment that Commissioner Guyot be designated as ANC1B's spokesperson before the ABC hearing, and the amendment was accepted by Commissioner Guyot, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

ABC Case No. 50237 of F&Z Enterprises for a new CR license (tabled at ANC1B's May meeting) was considered. Commissioner Thomas stated that the reason for the delay in considering the application was directly tied to the applicant's difficulties in securing and displaying correct permit notifications. Commissioner Thomas indicated that she has not heard any specific concerns or complaints in regard to the application. Commissioner Spalding requested that the applicant's representative (Mr. Pappas) pay attention to providing Commissioners information on the establishments that he is representing. Commissioner

Spalding specifically requested advance information on design, menu and any other indications of the nature of the businesses that can aide the Commissioners in supporting the licenses. Commissioner Thomas moved support of the new CR license, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Current status of negotiations towards a Voluntary Agreement regarding Harvard Liquors renewal license (opposed at ANC1B's May meeting) was considered. Commissioner Spalding indicated that the opposition to this renewal was offered by the single member district Commissioner Skinner. Commissioner Spalding said that he represented ANC1B at the ABC hearing, and that the case was rescheduled for July 30th, and that during the interim the applicant and ANC1B were to negotiate towards a Voluntary Agreement. Commissioner Spalding indicated that he could not get a response from Commissioner Skinner in regard to this duty, and that his knowledge of the applicant and the surrounding community was insufficient to negotiate. Commissioner Guyot offered the following as a possible solution; that ANC1B vote to support the Voluntary Agreement contingent on acceptance of the Voluntary Agreement by Commissioner Skinner or Commissioner Spalding. Commissioner Spalding added that Commissioners Skinner and Spalding be designated as spokespeople for ANC1B at the ABC hearings regarding Harvard Liquors. Commissioner Esters asked for further information on the opposition to the renewal, and indicated that he was aware of the concerns of local citizens and businesspeople. Commissioner Esters said that one of his neighbors was attacked in the vicinity of the applicant's location within the last month. Commissioner Spalding indicated that the specific intent of ANC1B's opposition and the Voluntary Agreement would be to attack the issue of loitering, but that the negotiating would have to be led and monitored by people near the applicant's business. Commissioner Esters offered to work with Commissioner Skinner and the Pleasant Plains Neighborhood Association on the Voluntary Agreement. Commissioner Guyot's motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0). Scott Pomeroy asked whether the opposition would carry forward in absence of negotiations towards a voluntary agreement, and Commissioner Spalding indicated that the opposition would carry forward, however, the ABC Board would probably give less weight to the opposition if we failed to participate in negotiations. Commissioner Guyot stated that this was further proof that ANC1B should reconsider our bylaw requiring owners to be present, and agreed that the ABC Board would look unfavorably on our opposition if we failed to participate in negotiations.

DC Action for Children presented a resolution calling for support and participation in their advocacy for increased investment in the city's children. DC Action for Children's representatives explained the causes for which they are advocating, and requested that ANC1B partner with them in their campaign to increase the city's investment in services for children, youth and their families. A post card campaign is currently underway, and copies of the promotional materials and post cards were distributed to the Commissioners and community members in attendance. This campaign is a part of a larger campaign "The Children's Budget", and DC Action is working to develop both campaigns. Commissioner Guyot asked about specifics on how their campaigns attempted to affect the DC budget, and representatives explained that the signature piece is a publication entitled "What's in it for Kid's?" The budget analysis contained in the publication is used by other agencies in lobbying for increased funding. Commissioner Guyot move support of the resolution presented by DC Action for Children, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Commissioner Spalding requested that the Commission send a letter of support towards adoption of landmark status for the First African New Church to the DC Historic Preservation Review Board. Commissioner Spalding indicated that the grant extended to CSNA to apply for landmark status had been researched and submitted, and that copies were included in the Commissioner's packages. A letter has already been sent to DCRA requesting no action on raze permitting for the property before action on landmark status. The new owners have applied for permission to raze the church, and BLRA has been contacted to flag the application as pending historic designation. Commissioner Spalding requested that ANC1B support the designation of the First African New Church before the DCHPRB, and Commissioner Guyot requested that Commissioner Spalding be designated as ANC1B's spokesperson at the hearing. Bryan Martin Firvida and Tim Arnold of CSNA spoke in support of the motion, and Mr. Arnold requested that community members keep an eye on the building to assure that no illegal activities occur prior to the hearing on the 24th. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Bryan Martin Firvida (President of CSNA) reported that HPRB gave conceptual approval of the Hoffman PUD on 14th Street. Mr. Martin Firvida also explained that the gap in the northeast corner of the Greater U Street Historic District is currently being addressed by the DC Office of Historic Preservation and CSNA. Constituent Howard asked that the boundaries of the historic district be better publicized, and Commissioner Spalding indicated that (finally) the Office of Historic Preservation's brochure on the Greater U Street Historic District had been published, but that they're having a hard time printing enough copies to go around. Scott Pomeroy added that DCHP also has pdf (computer files) of the information available for distribution.

Commissioner Guyot offered a resolution supporting the adoption by the DC Council of Bill 15-186 the DC Street Furniture Act of 2003. John Ray explained that this bill is designed to replace the expiring agreement that the city has in outsourcing/franchising the construction and maintenance of bus shelters and information kiosks. The current twenty year contract for the 1,500 bus shelters in the city will expire in October, and this bill refines the new agreement. The new agreement will have a duration of ten years with an option to extend for an additional ten years. Examples of possible shelters and signage were demonstrated, and their design improvements and flexibility were illustrated. The request of support is designed to promote the Council's adoption of replacement legislation and a new RFP in order to guard against lack of action and having to renew the current unsatisfactory contract. Commissioner Guyot questioned the lack of specific language guaranteeing that the replacement street furniture would be consistent throughout the city. Commissioner Guyot urged support contingent on a guarantee that language guaranteeing consistency be included. Commissioner Spalding asked Mr. Ray to speak to the length of the contracts, and Mr. Ray explained that in order to recoup the investment required to build and maintain the shelters that the longer contract was required. Commissioner Spalding asked whether there would be design flexibility beyond color and bench siting. Mr. Ray indicated that once the bill had passed and the RFP extended, the community would be

allowed voice in influencing the design elements. Commissioner Esters asked for details on the financial arrangement, and Mr. Ray stated that the successful bidder would be financially responsible for both the construction and maintenance of shelters and signage, and that the city would receive franchise fees during the length of the agreed contract (currently approximately \$1.5M per annum, and projected \$3M per annum under the new contract). Commissioner Esters asked about community input into decisions on appropriate advertising included with the shelters, and Mr. Ray explained that the bill itself restricts the type of advertising allowed. Scott Pomeroy stated that he had been working with an ongoing study by DDOT in regard to the bus shelters, and that a great deal of community input had been processed. Mr. Pomeroy asked how we can guarantee maintenance of the new shelters when the current agreement is openly ignored, and also why the kiosks were being included when it is only the bus shelter contract that is expiring. Mr. Pomeroy voiced concern that the wayfinding kiosks could allow objectionable contrasts of information and advertising e.g. “Welcome to the Greater U Street Historic District” brought to you by Absolut Vodka. Mr. Ray responded that there wouldn’t be advertising on bike racks; just on the bus shelters and kiosks, and that restricting the advertising on the kiosks might be negotiable with the city or the contractor. Mr. Pomeroy said that the response was inadequate, and requested again why the kiosks had been added to the bill. Mr. Ray said that he did not know why the kiosks had been included. Mr. Pomeroy asked that the bill restrict itself to just the expiring contract for the bus shelters, and if the contractor proved reliable then be extended to other furniture like the kiosks. Commissioner Spalding asked about the current extent of kiosks, and the extent of possible new contract. Mr. Ray responded that there are very few of the kiosks in the city currently, and that there would be a limit (perhaps 200) detailed in the RFP. Commissioner Guyot moved support of the legislation being heard, and to encourage the community to involve themselves in the process as they see fit. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Commissioner Guyot offered a resolution calling for the removal of DC Inspector General Charles C. Maddox from office according to DC Law 15-22. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Commissioner Guyot requested a letter from the Chairperson to the DC Chief of Police and the Commander of the Third District MPD concerning ongoing policing problems in the neighborhood of the 500 block of T Street NW (Commissioner Guyot supplied a list of ongoing problems). The motion requesting the letter was seconded and adopted unanimously (6-0-0).

Akbar Bilal requested hearing a grant request for ‘Save Our Youth’. Mr. Bilal stated that it was his impression that the request would be on ANC1B’s July agenda. Secretary Spalding indicated that he had not received a request to place the grant request on the agenda. Chairperson Thomas asked Mr. Bilal to submit a completed grant request, and that we would assure that it would be on our August agenda.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM.

