

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1B

Government of the District of Columbia

Columbia Heights / LeDroit Park / Shaw / University Heights

7 August 2003, True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street NW

Attending: Commissioners Guyot, Spalding, Hammonds, Thomas, Houston, Butler, Glover, Skinner, Esters, Wright

Absent: Commissioner Wilson

Quorum was achieved and meeting began at approximately 7:10 PM. In the Secretary's report Commissioner Spalding reported on the success of the application for landmark status for the First African New Church. July minutes were introduced, and Commissioner Guyot questioned the accuracy of the record of the debate on the DC Street Furniture Act. Commissioner Glover moved adoption of the minutes, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0). In the Treasurer's report Commissioner Glover reported that there had been no change in our balance since the last reporting period leaving us a balance of \$82,269.02, and the report was moved, seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0). Treasurer moved acceptance of a \$3.00 bank charge for the most recent statement, and it was moved, seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0). Treasurer indicated that the DC Auditor had approved ANC1B's third quarter allotment of approximately \$7,500.00 and that we should receive the allotment in the next few weeks. Treasurer moved reimbursement for secretarial expenses for the months of June and July (\$224.43) and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0).

In Community Events and Announcements Commissioner Guyot indicated that a list of speakers with the Howard Dean campaign were available. Commissioner Spalding reported that the Historic Preservation Review Board had voted landmark status for the First African New Church, and extended thanks and congratulations to the Commissioners and community members involved in the application.

Scott Pomeroy of the 14th and U Main Streets Initiative indicated that they would be starting the Safety and Maintenance Program soon, and that this would be a demonstration program hopefully leading to a larger program. Ten local individuals will be hired to maintain the areas covered by the Main Streets program, and that constituents should look for these individuals in green uniforms. Mr. Pomeroy also invited the community to help celebrate Ben's Chili Bowl's 45th anniversary later this month, and to participate in the 'Dog Days of August' sale & celebration on August 23rd and 24th. Commissioner Guyot reported on the Help America Vote campaign and its successes. Mr. Clyde Howard reported on a "College Fair Financial Aid Seminar" being offered by the Prince Hall Masons.

Maybelle Bennett, Bruce Costello and architects introduced the changes projected for replacing Bethune Hall on the Howard University campus. The new Bethune Hall will be a 312 bed female residence to be built on the exact site of the original Bethune Hall. It will be the concluding building in the eastern edge residential complex, and is designed to be complementary to the existing structures in the complex. One block of College Street will be turned into a pedestrian plaza; however, due to the massive infrastructure below the surface of College Street it will continue to be vehicle accessible. Dan Bailey of the architectural firm spoke to the issues of traffic and parking. The traffic and parking have followed the guidelines of the 1998 master plan; however, amendments to the master plan are projected. The current plan calls for 4,700 parking slots across the campus as a whole, and currently there are approximately 4,600 spaces identified. By requirement with the zoning ordinances the projected changes in Bethune Hall will necessitate an increase of two parking spaces, which can be accommodated under the master plan's overall parking scheme. Howard University would like to further accommodate increased parking demand by razing 515 W Street and using the newly created space for parking. Commissioner Guyot stated that there is no recognition of a surplus of parking either on the Howard campus or in the surrounding communities. Commissioner Guyot stated that the modification of the campus plan is both timely and necessary, but more parking should be built into any plans. Commissioner Guyot offered a motion to support the application of Howard University pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 for a special exception under 210 to replace the building known as Bethune Hall, with the request that Howard University make increased efforts to relieve the parking crunch. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0).

Ann Simpson Mason (manager of DDOT neighborhood transportation program) introduced DDOT's traffic calming studies that grew out of the Office of Planning's Snap plans. Two of the locations proposed for traffic calming studies are in Ward 1—Euclid between Sherman and 14th, and 4th between Bryant and Florida Ave. Phil Braum & Greer Gillis discussed the scope of work and timeline for the traffic calming studies. Commissioner Guyot praised the timeliness and thoroughness of the study and appreciated the choice of 4th Street as a target for calming studies. Commissioner Spalding commented on using traditional heavy traffic time periods in a community that often has more traffic at midnight than at 5PM. Ms. Gillis responded that the study would start with 24 hour monitoring & that they would adjust to the results obtained. Commissioner Wright indicated that accurate counts might be difficult with the use of parts of 4th Street as a short cut. Commissioner Butler asked why the study of Euclid Street stopped at 14th, and why they did not consider extending the study to follow traffic on Euclid through to 18th Street. Callistus Nwadike (Ward 1 Transportation Planner for DDOT) responded that the portion of Euclid west of 16th Street would be included in currently planned Adams Morgan calming studies. Commissioner Esters inquired whether the study would include the intersection of 4th/Florida/Rhode Island and whether the study could suggest improvements to this troubled intersection.

Ms. Gillis responded that the intersection would be included in the study of 4th Street and that if the results indicated that changes to the intersection were warranted, that the information would be forwarded to the appropriate DDOT department. Clyde Howard spoke to the history of traffic

and parking along 4th Street, and indicated that the street is too narrow to accommodate parking on both sides of the street and two-way traffic. Mr. Howard also asked that consideration be given to calming studies for the race track known as 13th Street. Commissioner Guyot moved that a support letter for the study be written including the commentary from ANC1B's meeting, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0).

Alex Eckmann (Mass Transit Administrator for DDOT) and Greg Walker (Project Manager for WMATA) and others gave an overview of the DC Transit Alternatives Analysis project. The study will be looking at the next generation of transit in the District, and from received input and analysis the needs for additional methods to access currently underserved areas. Light rail transit is currently the leading candidate to supplement existing bus and subway service. Two cross town routes, one major north south route from Silver Spring, and an Anacostia route have been identified as needed. One of the proposed cross town routes would originate in Woodley Park, transit through Adams Morgan, move across U Street, and connect finally with the new convention center site. The CSX Shepherd Branch railroad track along the Anacostia is currently available, and will most likely serve as the demonstration project initiating the light rail system. The actual choice of transit technology will be contingent on study results (LRT, BRT, Tram, Streetcar), and choices may vary between corridors. The study is expected to continue through calendar 2004 and the representatives expressed their desire to return to ANC1B with updated status reports. Commissioner Spalding asked for details on continuing public involvement, and Mr. Art Lawson described a very proactive effort to contact as many community groups as frequently as possible. Commissioner Guyot cautioned that the Snap plans were suspect; however, the outreach to the ANC's and community groups was to be lauded. Scott Pomeroy said that the 14th and U Main Streets Initiative has a parking and transportation subcommittee who would be willing to meet on this topic. Mr. Pomeroy also raised the issue of the failure to complete the extension of the yellow line, which has meant to ANC1B's constituents a diminution of expected rail services. Greg Walker indicated that he did not think that the extension of the yellow line is currently a part of WMATA's planning. Melissa Kramer asked whether WMATA was ignoring the needs of the bus service, or at least downplaying the bus service for the new light rail. Representatives stated that the bus service needs are currently well addressed, and that the light rail is seen as a replacement where bus service cannot handle the projected loading. Circulator bus routes are also in the planning stages for downtown locations. Clyde Howard asked about the legal restrictions on overhead electric lines, and Mr. Walker responded that these technical difficulties were still issues that will need to be addressed. Commissioner Guyot requested that the Commission send a letter to Councilman Graham concerning the extension of the yellow line, and that ANC1B would like a response indicating when the extension will be operational. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (9-0-0).

John Stephens (Ward 1 DDOT) spoke to the need for a four way stop sign at the intersection of 11th and V Streets. A number of recent accidents have spoken to the need to slow traffic through this intersection, and also the intersection of 11th and W Street. Commissioner Thomas

requested that the W Street intersection be officially added to the request, and Mr. Stephens complied. Commissioner Spalding asked about a stoplight at 12th and U Streets, which is a more dangerous intersection and has been a concern of the community for years. Mr. Nwadike indicated that DDOT was currently reviewing the installation of a stoplight for 12th and U and received applause from the congregants. Commissioner Butler requested that when the stop signs are installed that signs indicating the nearby Garnett Patterson School be referenced. Mr. Stephens agreed that this should be possible. Commissioner Spalding moved that ANC1B support the stop signs at 11th and V, 11th and W, and additional signage indicating school crossing, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (9-0-0).

Iris Toyer of Parents United for the DC Public Schools spoke to the recent controversy surrounding possible school voucher programs for the District. This is a local opposition group aligned with People for the American Way and other organizations opposed to school voucher programs. Ms. Toyer gave an overview of the shifting political alliances that has raised the voucher issue in the District, and the position of the alliance of organizations opposing the use of school vouchers in the District. Commissioner Guyot offered a resolution opposing vouchers since they are a direct economic attack on the public education budget for the District of Columbia, and that the Congressmen supporting school vouchers for the District do not support school vouchers in their own Congressional districts because their own voters will not support it. Ama Asante speaking for the Committee for DC Youth said that the voucher system is another move genocide against black men and boys. Commissioner Guyot's motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (9-0-0).

Nigel Gragg spoke on behalf of the Howard Dean campaign. Organizational details and meeting schedules were shared.

Jair Lynch spoke on behalf of the Jair Lynch Companies and Triangle Two Development in regard to their development of two NCRC parcels in Columbia Heights. These two condominium projects have been presented to ANC1B earlier this year, and now are closer to being erected. They are hoping to conclude dealings with NCRC in September, and to begin construction in October. Mr. Lynch described their ongoing commitment to economic empowerment, and also to affordable housing. In the design phase they have taken the input from the ANC's and expanded the number of two and three bedroom units to accommodate the backlog of larger families in search of housing. Commissioner Glover asked about the sales process and schedule, and Mr. Lynch replied that until NCRC signs over the land they can't actively market the units. They do expect the marketing campaign to begin in the fall and to be accepting contracts in the spring of 2004. An architect from Eric Colbert Associates gave an updated view and explanation of the designs as they exist at this point. Commissioner Butler asked about the access to parking, and developer responded that in both buildings the access would be through back alleys.

Ward Booker described his application for Public Space approval of adding two front facing driveways to an apartment building at 1419 Clifton Street. They are renovating the property and in order to accommodate sufficient parking they are planning on using the existing basement space as the buildings parking. Due to the grading of the property, the normal rear access is not possible. One driveway will be for accessing and the other will be for exiting. Commissioner Butler asked about the location of the fire hydrant by the exiting driveway, and developer explained that they would be moving the hydrant to a safe distance from the exiting autos. Commissioner Spalding asked about the current and projected use of the building and the zoning, and developer responded that it is currently vacant and would be developed into an eighteen unit building with sixteen parking spaces provided. Commissioner Butler moved support of the Public Space application, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (8-0-0).

Commissioner Wanda Stevens Harris (6A01) requested support for a BZA use variance for the Church of the Rapture located at 1840 14th Street. Commissioner Thomas asked if this is located in ANC1B's territory and if not why we are considering the request. Commissioner Guyot explained that the property is located directly across 14th Street from ANC1B's territory, and that there was precedent for supporting requests in adjacent ANC's. Commissioner Harris explained that the church wants to establish a child care center, and that she had recommended to the pastor that both ANC's be approached for support. Michael Drayton (pastor) explained that they had been in the community since 1975, and that they own a townhouse adjacent to the church building which is currently vacant. They hope to provide nursery service for approximately 30 children if allowed the use variance & if they succeed in obtaining a grant to renovate the property. Commissioner Thomas asked if they had received support from ANC2B in which the property is located. Commissioner Ramon Estrada (2B09) responded that ANC2B has not considered the request yet. Commissioner Spalding asked what type of support letters they were eliciting from ANC1B, and the pastor responded that they were specifically looking for support for the grant that they have applied for to do the renovations. Commissioner Esters asked whether the child care services would be restricted to church members, or whether it would be extended to community members, and the pastor responded that the intention is use by community members. Scott Pomeroy explained that the grant being applied for is the Commercial Property Acquisition and Development Program, and that the 14th and U Initiative could help with the grant process and application. Commissioner Guyot offered two resolutions (1) that ANC1B support the loan/grant application before the Commercial Property Acquisition and Development Program, and (2) that ANC1B support Church of the Rapture's application for a use variance before the Board of Zoning Appeals to provide daycare for infants. Both resolutions were seconded and both were adopted by unanimous votes of (9-0-0).

Commissioner Thomas requested a letter to DDOT asking for a postponement of repaving the 1400 block of W Street. Chairperson Thomas explained that a number of construction projects will be requesting blockages and street cuttings in the next few months, and that it would be

judicious for DDOT to begin the repaving process once the construction had finished their work in the streets. Callistus Nwadike (Ward 1 DDOT) responded that they would consider the request to delay the repaving. Chairperson Thomas offered a resolution requesting that DDOT meet with the developers working in the 1400 block of W Street, and coordinate the repaving schedule to accommodate the developer's street works. Motion was seconded and adopted unanimously (10-0-0).

Vice Chairman Skinner spoke to the ongoing negotiations towards a voluntary agreement with Harvard Liquors. Commissioner Spalding attended the August ABRA hearing, and the parties agreed to further negotiations and appearing before ABRA on the morning of September 17th. Commissioner Skinner indicated that he has met with the business owner about loitering and the sales of drug paraphernalia, and that the owner was amenable to working towards remediation of these concerns. Commissioner Butler asked how this could be accomplished.

Grant request from Save Our Youth was reconsidered. Mr. Akbar Bilal representing Save Our Youth Inc. requested a grant for \$8,000.00 to fund "monthly workshops, radio advertisement, sound system, transportation, field trips, supplies to include paper training tapes & videos, & a fall youth conference to be held at Cardozo High School". Commissioner Thomas indicated that there had already been discussion about the nature of the grant, but that process issues still needed to be addressed. Treasurer Glover requested that a budget for the amount be attached to the grant request, and Mr. Bilal complied. Commissioner Skinner stated that the information had already been submitted. Commissioner Skinner requested that we approve the grant and get him the money so he can get on with his program, and we can clean up the details afterwards. Chairperson Thomas reminded the applicant that she had counseled him to get together with Commissioner Skinner and present the grant request properly. Commissioner Skinner stated that after the first presentation of the request at our June meeting Mr. Bilal was given an informal lesson in how to prepare his grant application. Chairperson Thomas responded that at the second presentation at our July meeting the application was still faulty and that she again sat down with Mr. Bilal to explain how to present his request, and suggested that he work with Commissioner Skinner to get the presentation done correctly. Treasurer Glover stated that he was now in possession of the needed documentation; however, he was not inclined to act on a large grant request without time to review the request. Commissioner Glover also indicated that the size of the request was troubling since it amounted to more than our quarterly allotment going to one organization. Treasurer Glover reminded the Commissioners of the grant to the Lincoln Theatre a few years back that was disallowed by the DC auditor, and therefore caused ANC1B to lose a quarter of its yearly allotment. Commissioner Guyot stated that the Commission has a fine Treasurer, but that the Treasurer does not make financial policy decisions for the Commission. Commissioner Guyot moved that the grant application be cut to a total of \$4,000.00 and fund it. Commissioner Esters asked the applicant if he had secured other sources of funding for this project. Mr. Bilal responded that they have two foundations that support them as well as ongoing projects in the community. Commissioner Esters asked about the number and scheduling of workshops and Mr. Bilal responded that they are doing workshops on a daily

basis. Commissioner Esters asked about the participation and projection of “30-40 youth” mentioned in the application, and Mr. Bilal responded that he thought it could be more. Commissioner Esters asked about the youth conference at Cardozo High and whether it would be 1B youths involved, and Mr. Bilal responded that it would be 1B youths involved. Commissioner Butler asked about Save Our Youth’s building & whether it was a residential facility, and Mr. Bilal responded that they do not house youths but the entire building is the Alliance house for field operations. Commissioner Butler asked about other programs working out of the facility, and Mr. Bilal explained that there are a number of programs like their prison outreach that have been going on for the past ten years. Commissioner Spalding commented that he was still not in receipt of a copy of the grant application, and that to be presented with a substantial grant request and no time to consider it is unacceptable. Mr. Bilal stated that he had been more than fair in coming to ANC1B for the past two meetings, and Commissioner Spalding replied that he still did not have enough information to make a reasonable judgment, and that despite asking for that information at both previous meetings it had still not been provided. Commissioner Skinner stated that Commissioner Spalding could read the request in a minute. Commissioner Skinner stated that the Commissioners were badgering the applicant whose only desire was to help the neighborhood. Commissioner Skinner stated that ANC1B had given money to films and ice cream socials, and that this might prevent people getting shot on our streets, and that he took it personally. Commissioner Skinner said that he comes up emotional because if someone else gets shot today because they didn’t have an opportunity to participate because this bs we didn’t waste eight thousand dollars. Commissioner Spalding asked Mr. Bilal to explain his relationship with the Million Youth March scheduled for September 6th. Mr. Bilal said that he had no relationship, but that he supported any activity that helped the youths. Commissioner Spalding asked Mr. Bilal if he was just a supporter, and Mr. Bilal responded that he was just a supporter. Commissioner Spalding asked if it was true that a donation made to the Million Youth March would be directed to the same Save Our Youth program that was requesting the grant, and Mr. Bilal responded that they are not interrelated. Commissioner Spalding read from a flyer for the Million Youth March “this site is the exclusive property of the Million Youth March organizing committee..... send donations to: Save Our Youth, Inc. PO Box 4481 Washington, DC 20017.” Mr. Bilal responded that that was another division within Save Our Youth, this project inside Save Our Youth; it is not the entire Save Our Youth. The Million Youth March is another project under the umbrella of Save Our Youth. Mr. Bilal referred back to the ‘raised eyebrows’ over the \$8,000 requested, we’re getting 30K for the march. Chairperson Thomas asked if these were two separate projects, and Mr. Bilal responded that yes these are two separate projects. Commissioner Spalding asked what is the organization, is Save Our Youth the umbrella organization, and is it national or local. Mr. Bilal responded that Save Our Youth is a local organization tied to a national organization. Commissioner Spalding asked if there was a national organization, and Mr. Bilal responded that the organization was in DC, New York and New Jersey. Commissioner Spalding asked what type of organization it was, non profit, 501C3? Mr. Bilal responded that they are specifically a youth organization that benefits the community that has a track record. Commissioner Spalding asked if Save Our Youth was a nonprofit or a corporation, and Mr. Bilal responded that they are an independent organization that functions from foundations we have not completed our dot org status, but our parent organization the Alliance of Concerned Men is a non profit concern. Commissioner Skinner stated that ANC1B had given money to all sorts of organizations and projects like making sure the tree boxes were safe, all kinds of ice cream socials, and now we have a proposal in front of us

where the biggest mistake we might make is some kids might get helped by it. Commissioner Skinner stated that if ANC1B wanted to help Mr. Bilal prepare his taxes, then our questions about his organizations tax status might be relevant, but if we're asking these questions to undermine or demean what this man has said he's going to do for our community, then that's just wrong and off base. Commissioner Guyot reintroduced his compromise support at the \$4,000 level, and Commissioner Esters seconded. The grant was awarded on a vote of (7-3-0).

Commissioner Guyot introduced a resolution coauthored with Scott Pomeroy concerning the projected changes in the PSA boundaries. Mr. Pomeroy gave an overview of the history of the PSA boundaries and the difficulties in establishing appropriate new boundaries for the new projected PSA's. Mr. Pomeroy explained that the new boundaries had been derived from the Office of Planning's clusters, which may not be suitable as policing boundaries. The natural boundary at 16th Street should be maintained in the new alignment, which has run into opposition from the residents in the blocks bounded by 16th and 14th and S and U. It has been proposed that these blocks be included in the Dupont PSA in recognition of their political ties to Ward 2 and its ANC's. Commissioner Skinner asked if that meant that the corner of 14th and U would be considered Dupont, and Mr. Pomeroy responded that that indeed was being proposed. Commissioner Guyot read the proposed resolution: ANC1B resolves to request that the Metropolitan Police Department maintain the current boundary of 16th Street for the new PSA 304. There are proposals to move the area bounded by S St. on the south, U Street on the North and 14th Street on the East and 16th Street on the West into a much larger Dupont Circle PSA 305. This resolution opposes that change and seeks to maintain the current western boundary at 16th Street as is consistent with the principals of Community Policing. This area was until eight months ago a part of ANC1B until it was redistricted to Ward 2. While redistricting relied upon census numbers to adjust boundaries, the PSA system relies upon community boundaries. We recognize that the area defined above comprises a small neighborhood unit that is part of the greater 14th and U Street community, not Dupont Circle. The 14th & U community has its own strong and unique heritage and evolving future of which the intersection of 14th and U is the heart. Dividing the corridor down the two major commercial corridors of 14th and U Streets would result in poor management of police resources and compromised statistical data when assessing the crime problems of 14th and U. 16th Street is a major commuter and vehicular artery that has far fewer crime issues than a commercial corridor. Motion was seconded and adopted on a vote of (9-1-0). A compatible resolution was presented to align the PSA boundaries with the ANC boundaries was tabled for consideration at a future meeting.

Dan Driscoll and Beverly Duvall-Riley requested support for renovation and expansion of the Easter Seals facility at 13th and Girard Street. They have submitted an application to the DC Department of Housing and Community Development for financial support in renovating the building. The total project costs will run to approximately \$700,000 and they have already secured nearly half of that amount. The renovations would allow Easter Seals to double the number of slots available for infant care. Commissioner Skinner moved support, and it was seconded and adopted unanimously (9-0-0).

Commissioner Spalding requested support letters for DC Healthy Start's use of the 1800 block of 12th Street on Wednesday, August 27th from 10 AM to 4 PM. This will be a combination of DC Department of Health and DC Department of Education mobile vans doing immunizations and other required back to school activities. They will need either a temporary street closing or a relaxation of the parking restrictions to work from the Thurgood Marshall Building on 12th Street. Commissioner Guyot seconded the request and it was adopted unanimously (9-0-0).

Commissioner Skinner moved adjournment, and it was seconded and heartily endorsed. Meeting closed at 10:05 PM.