



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E

**TENLEYTOWN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK
FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS**

c/o Lisner Home 5425 Western Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20015

Minutes of ANC 3E February 9, 2012 Meeting

Announcements and Open Forum

Lucy Cummings, Board President of the Friends of Friendship Park, requested the commissions' endorsement for the group's continued relationship with DC Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR") as the official partner for the park. (The relationship must be renewed every two years.) She noted plans for eight upcoming Friendship Park events, including the spring May Fair, as well as discussion with DPR over upcoming renovation plans. The commission unanimously passed a motion to endorse the relationship between the Friends of Friendship Park and DPR and to write a letter stating its approval of the request and endorsing the designation of the Friends of Friendship Park as the official representative for the site.

Presentation by Second District Police

PSA Lieutenant Alan Hill gave an update about the recent spike of robberies in northwest DC neighborhoods, following up on the special presentation made at last month's ANC 3E meeting by DC and Montgomery County police officials. He reported that a spike in robberies since January 1 continues to affect the entire northwest DC area. He noted that there had been no homicides to date this year as well as a 63% decrease in burglaries and a 67% decrease in stolen automobiles. However, he noted more than a 100% increase in thefts from automobiles citywide to date this year. Violent crime has also increased by 100% citywide to date this year in part as a result of the fact that there have already been 43 robberies.

Lt. Hill reported that the dynamics of the robberies have changed. Juveniles were previously committing robberies with "mob-rops:" knocking down victims, forcing them to assume the fetal position, robbing them and running. The police now see a new pattern of "second-person" robberies:

calm, composed, armed perpetrators who approach from the rear and direct all movements. After the robbery is committed, rather than run away the perpetrators direct the victims to walk away.

Lt. Hill stated that police presence has been increased in targeted neighborhoods, including plain-clothed officers. A commissioner asked if the perpetrators were the same two or three individuals and Lt. Hill responded that the number of perpetrators appear to be expanding as committing robbery has become more popular. Some of the perpetrators are juveniles with no previous record. The police have profiled one suspect who is stealing high-tech devices from automobiles, and while they have not caught many suspects they have caught a few. The police are thinking out of the box to try to apprehend perpetrators, such as tracking recent parolees out on robbery charges and calling in violent offenders to see if they are in compliance with the terms of their parole. The police also use high-end bait cars. He noted that a \$2,000 to \$3,000 MacBook computer sells immediately on the black market for \$100.

He offered the following advice to neighborhood residents: Be pro-active. Use better-lit routes to walk home and stay in well-lighted areas. If drinking alcohol, take a taxi home. Remove all valuables from cars. A perpetrator can see the suction cup ring left in a car when a GPS is removed. As such, make sure not to put your GPS in your glove compartment. Don't leave keys in the center console or valet keys in the glove compartment. Make sure to lock your cars. In response to questions, he noted that alarm systems and dogs are good deterrents and that pepper spray is legal (it must be registered, however). In addition, Lt. Hill stated that given that the number of thefts is increasing from lockers at Wilson Pool and Sport & Health on Brandywine Street, residents using lockers at those facilities should use a key lock rather than a combination lock, as the perpetrators have figured out a way to open certain combination locks easily. Lt. Hill also volunteered that residents could e-mail him with questions or concerns at alan.hill@dc.gov.

A resident reported that when she called 911 to report suspicious activity in a car the operator asked her how she wanted 911 to respond. Lt. Hill said that 911 is now a civilian run organization. He indicated that the operator should always err on the side of sending someone to look into a situation and callers should request that. He acknowledged that 911 can feel slow but said it is designed to pull information out of the caller while sending a report to the dispatcher.

An attendee asked about police resources allocated to curfew enforcement. Lt. Hill said that two officers are assigned during the day and another two officers are assigned at night. Officers go out on random patrol as well as target specific areas where juveniles under 17 years congregate. Curfew for school days is 10pm and 11pm for weekends.

On a separate topic, a commissioner asked if information is being gathered on the intersection of 41st and Fessenden streets to prevent cars from rolling through stop signs and jeopardizing pedestrian safety. Lt. Hill said he would look into this issue and urge one of the traffic enforcement officers to do so as well.

Presentation and Potential Vote on Application for a Special Exemption for 4601 Western Ave. NW

Adam McGraw of McGraw Bagnoli Architects presented a proposal for a two-story addition with basement to 4610 Western Ave, NW at the corner of Brandywine Street, a three-bedroom brick colonial on a wooded site. He requested that the commissioners support an application to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (“BZA”) for relief — in the form of approval of a variance — from the lot occupancy limits. The addition would keep the current garage, curb cut, driveway, and parking. Mr. McGraw stated that in his view the addition would not infringe on the neighbors’ light or air. The neighbor residing at 4603 Western Avenue has reviewed the plans and written a letter of support. A commissioner asked if the owner has surveyed neighbors on Brandywine Street about the addition. The owner said he has good relationships with all of his neighbors and could gather more letters of support. A commissioner circulated a draft resolution of support. The commission unanimously passed the resolution for a variance. A commissioner urged, as a courtesy, that the owner collect additional letters of support from neighbors.

Presentation and Potential Vote on Application for Valet Parking Permit for Rosa Mexicano on Wisconsin Avenue, NW in Friendship Heights

Lawrence McCray, senior operations manager of MarcParc Valet, requested that the commission support its application to the DDOT for a permit to provide valet parking to patrons of Rosa Mexicano, at 5225 Wisconsin

Avenue, NW. Valet parking services would be offered 6:30pm to 11pm Monday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday 5pm to 12midnight. Mr. McCray explained that the application called for all vehicles to be parked off street in the parking lot behind Gawler's Funeral Home at 5130 Wisconsin Avenue, NW. Mr. McCray similarly acknowledged that MarcParc had agreed to provide free valet parking for customers arriving after 10pm. He assured the commissioners that MarcParc drivers would not make illegal U-turns on Wisconsin Avenue.

An attendee said he had no objection to the valet service but expressed concerns that the cars might overwhelm Harrison Street. A commissioner noted that cars circling while looking for parking spaces increase congestion and that in theory valet parking could reduce parking congestion by getting cars off of the street. A commissioner asked as to the number of designated spaces for valet service in front of the restaurant and Mr. McCray said they would have three parking spaces, metered spaces 15, 17, and 19. In response to a question by a commissioner Mr. McCray said the restaurant pays the city for the use of the parking spaces and that they would remain metered while not in use by the valet service. A commissioner asked if the three spaces were enough to avoid the valet service obstructing traffic on Wisconsin Avenue. Mr. McCray said that the three spaces actually accommodate six cars: three attendants park cars while three attendants use the spaces as a staging area. A commissioner asked if other nearby businesses could use valet services as well as it might prove beneficial to the neighborhood. Mr. McCray suggested that was not currently possible as MarcParc would be operating under a contract with Rosa Mexicano. An attendee asked if the valet service could have an adverse impact on Federal Express, which is also housed at 5225 Wisconsin Avenue NW. A commissioner noted that there is a great need for short-term parking on this block for customers frequenting Federal Express/Kinko's, two banks, a liquor store, and other businesses, and that the parking spaces are not well matched to the demand. Commissioners inquired as to the duration of the permit; Mr. McCray said the permit would need to be renewed annually. A commissioner asked Mr. McCray to comply with the terms of the application so the valet service remains positive for the neighborhood. A commissioner noted that the MarcParc Valet service at Maggiano's restaurant on Wisconsin Avenue runs smoothly with no double-parked cars.

The commissioners unanimously approved the amended resolution in support of the application provided that MarcParc Valet adheres to all of the agreed-upon conditions.

Presentation by E. Gail Anderson Holness, candidate for DC City Council

Ms. Holness made a brief presentation to the commission to garner support for her candidacy as DC Council member at large.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Resolution Concerning Traffic on 41St Street NW

Due to numerous accidents at the intersection of 42nd Street and Military Road NW, DDOT is considering closing the intersection of 42nd and Military Road to north-south traffic by prohibiting left turn and straight ahead driving and may enforce this requirement by erecting channelized barriers. A commissioner who lives on 41St Street said he recently met with DDOT officials to discuss the volume of cars and speed issues in the neighborhood and specifically on 41St street, where he resides. He said his concern is that erecting barriers on 42nd Street will increase the volume of traffic on 41St Street, which is already heavily used, as it will become the only north/south street between Connecticut Avenue and River Road other than Wisconsin Avenue and the only such street that reaches Fessenden Street. The 5300 block of 41St Street, for example, has had two rollover accidents in the last four months due to speeding cars. Many residents of that block park on the street and have had their cars damaged by vehicles speeding on 41St Street and fear for their safety. The commissioner urged that the commission request that the DDOT look at the intersections and corridors collectively in the neighborhood before taking any permanent action on the 42nd Street and Military Road intersection.

An attendee who lives on 41St Street said that accidents on her street have been an issue for 30 years. She said hit and run accidents occur regularly and her own car has been hit every year by drivers speeding through the 15-second traffic light north across Military Road. She recommends that a barrier be erected on the north side of 41St Street preventing drivers from traveling south at the fork in the road and that a longer traffic light be installed for drivers traveling north.

A resident said that the biggest issue for 42nd Street is speeding drivers. A commissioner suggested that a four-way stop sign be installed at 42nd and Military Road but another commissioner said that stop signs could bring more traffic to the streets. Traffic is squeezed onto too few streets, he said.

The commissioners discussed the need for the DDOT to address the concerns of both 42nd and 41st streets before any permanent action is taken and to examine traffic calming in the area holistically.

A commissioner said that DDOT has not included ANC 3E in the decision-making process and has provided no documents for ANC 3E to respond to.

An attendee who lives on the 5200 block of 41st Street expressed concerns that even temporary barriers could become permanent over time. He said he appreciates the balanced approach taken by the commissioners and supports the resolution. A resident proposed that the commission consult a former resident of 41st Street with a doctorate in transportation now living in New York City.

A commissioner asked Councilmember Cheh's staff person Matthew Orlins, who was present, if the Councilmember could intervene with the DDOT to request that they give a full written report of their plans and make a presentation of its findings to the ANC 3E as soon as possible before they take any action. A commissioner said that the DDOT must give the commission notice and 30 days to consider proposed plans. A commissioner suggested that the ANC 3E select a few key issues for the DDOT in advance of their presentation for which the commission could provide input. Commissioners discussed proposed language changes to the resolution and whether the DDOT will hire a Ward 3 planner.

The commissioners unanimously passed the resolution regarding 41st Street NW as amended based on the discussion at the meeting.

ANC Business

Commissioners unanimously approved Treasurer's Report for January 2012.

Commissioners unanimously approved January 2012 Meeting Minutes.

Commissioners unanimously approved the 1st Quarter FY 2012 Report.

Commissioners unanimously approved the election of officers: Matthew Frumin Chair and Secretary; Jonathan Bender Vice-Chair; Thomas Quinn Treasurer.

Commissioners unanimously approved ANC 3E assistant January 2012 invoice.

The commission meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Frumin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Frumin, Chair