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Advising prompt approval of Fiesta DC permits

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the Mayor’s Special Events Task Group member agencies to approve, as promptly as possible, permits for Fiesta DC, a large event on Mount Pleasant Street and side streets, set for Sunday, 30 September 2007. Specifically, ANC1D advises these agencies to issue permits by Wednesday, 12 September 2007, so that the organizers can direct their energies towards thorough organization and supervision of this event.

Resolved further, that the organizers of Fiesta DC be assigned a superior grade for their performance in the 2006 Fiesta.

Corresponding to that superior grade, ANC1D advises DCRA to waive the requirement for a consent list comprising ninety percent of neighboring residents and businesses, *so long as* Fiesta DC promises in writing not to place trash, toilets, and festival parking on the adjacent streets with several medium-rise multi-family apartment buildings, but instead to maintain normal parking and order for the high density of residents living on those streets.

Resolved further, that ANC1D advises the member agencies involved to assign or detail their own personnel to assist in the planning, design, and conduct of the upcoming Fiesta DC event, with an eye to implementing innovations and creating a simplified permit process for future producers of large special events.

Why: Last year’s Fiesta DC in Mount Pleasant was a highly successful event, alcohol free, family oriented, and well-behaved. The next day, the Commercial Corridor Committee of ANC1D held a well-attended meeting to evaluate the results, finding near-unanimous approval, and few criticisms. Given the many thousands of people attending the Fiesta, the quality of this event was simply extraordinary.

Mount Pleasant has one of the highest concentrations of apartment dwellers, and perhaps the highest concentration of Latino and other immigrant populations in the metropolitan area. While making this kind of festival all the more desirable and appropriate, this high density and diversity complicate meeting the requirements for obtaining permits. The current major event guidelines may be more appropriate for less orderly events in areas with less density and diversity, than for inner-city neighborhoods such as Mount Pleasant.

Given the three decades of experience by the organizing team, their obvious expertise in providing such a high quality event last year, and the daunting if not practically impossible bar set by guidelines designed for neighborhoods with less challenging circumstances, regulatory relief and permit expedition are appropriate.

Indeed, this is the kind of event that DC agencies really should cosponsor, and should detail their own staff to assist, rather than putting such obstacles in the way of production. Here is an opportunity for DC agencies to advance the state of the art of large event operation in DC.

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Addressed to the Mayor's Special Events Task Group Member Agencies: Executive Office of the Mayor, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, Metropolitan Police Department, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Department of Public Works, Department of Transportation, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Health, Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Tax and Revenue

Passed by 5 to 0 vote at the legally noticed, public meeting of ANCID on September 4, 2007, with a quorum present.