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Police Security for residents of Harvard Towers

Passed by five to zero vote at the legally noticed, public meeting of August 1, 2006, with a quorum present.

Resolved: ANC1D asks the Mayor's Office of Aging, and the DC Housing Authority to immediately reorganize personnel and practices to assure a substantial upgrade in the security of the Residents of DCHA properties in Mount Pleasant, specifically Harvard Towers.

In particular,

- 1] A comprehensive security plan should be drawn up for policing, fire, and emergency interventions within 30 days that meets the standards of best practices in the top twenty cities of the US.
- 2] These plans be critiqued by outside consultants hired by the Mayor's Office on Aging as experts in those fields, by October 1st 2006.
- 3] The plans be certified every two years, starting by November 1st 2006 by the DC Police Department, the DC Fire Department, and the DC Office of Emergency Preparedness.
- 4] The DC Police Department make random checks of the state of security and the promised level of security at least three times a month, two of which times are with due diligence for at least 15 minutes, and one of which is for at least 45 minutes.
- 5] Extra steps must be taken to assure that non-residents (unless visiting in a residential unit or in the company of their hosts) do not enter and loiter, and do not sojourn with residents for more than a day at a time.

Why: Residents have complained for at least five years at neighborhood civic meetings about the low level of security experienced in Harvard Towers. There have been large discrepancies between the reports on level of cooperation expressed by DCHA staff, and that by MPD. Requests to resolve these discrepancies have been ignored. There have been numerous fires, and residents complain that there have been very little effective response by DCHA. Groups of non-residents congregate in the halls or stairways and accost residents, or engage in what appear to be unwelcome activities.

There have been continuing spates of fires, resident-on-resident abuses, and reports of drug trade.