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Minutes of the October 19, 2010 meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1-D

These minutes accepted at the November 16, 2010 meeting.

Call to order

[7:01 pm] Chair Edwards called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Present were ANC1D commissioners Edwards, Bosserman, Lepanto, and McKay, constituting a quorum. An interpreter from Multicultural Community Service was available to provide simultaneous Spanish-English interpretation.

Secretary's report

[7:02 pm] Because of a need for early departure by one Commissioner, a departure that would leave the meeting without a quorum, the meeting proceeded directly to the business of the evening, the public discussion being postponed until later in the evening.

Jack asked if there were any corrections to the September 21 meeting minutes. None being offered, the minutes were declared accepted.

Treasurer's report

[7:03 pm] Jack asked if there was any objection to a routine check to Tony Grillo for \$100 for postering. *No objection.*

Jack noted that the Q4FY10 quarterly report had been distributed to the commissioners, and asked for formal approval of that report. *Approved, 4 to 0 vote.*

Jack moved the following resolution: "until advised of the FY2011 ANC1D allotment, and the convening of the 2011-2012 session of the ANC, the Commission agrees to continue to function according to the current, FY2010 budget." Gregg offered an amendment to this formulation, deleting the reference to the 2011-2012 ANC session, but that amendment failed for lack of a second. Jack's resolution was then approved by a 4 to 0 vote.

Jack then moved declining the Check Image Service of the Bank of America, which would cost \$3 a month, beginning in January. *Approved, 4 to 0.* Jack suggested instead that the Commission formalize the policy of the Treasurer downloading check images regularly. This was not considered formally, leaving the matter to the officers to be chosen by the incoming commission.

Harvard Triangle Intersection Plans

[7:14 pm] Jack moved the following:

Resolved, that ANC1D appreciates the cooperation of DDOT in creating an intersection design consistent with its requests, and advises the Department to proceed with this project as expeditiously as possible. The Commission does prefer that there be only “soft”, painted barriers, rather than concrete, within the intersection.

Passed, 4 to 0 vote.

Harvard Triangle Traffic Design

[7:20 pm] Gregg moved the following:

Resolved, ANC 1D advises the DC Department of Transportation to assure that the design of the Harvard Triangle exchange does not preclude the possibility of traffic heading east on Harvard Street.

Why: This possibility was recommended for future action by the consultant's report arising from the Mount Pleasant Traffic Study.

Passed by 3 to 1 vote. Voting “yes”: Dave, Jack, Gregg. Voting “no”: Phil.

Pedestrian signal at the Woodner

[7:27 pm] Gregg moved the following:

Resolved, ANC 1D advises the DC Department of Transportation to install a pedestrian traffic signal on 16th Street at Spring Place and directly in front of the Woodner Apartment Building.

Why: There are many residents of the large apartment buildings on both sides of 16th Street that every day cross without benefit of traffic control. While there is a control light 195 feet to the north at Spring Road, very few people are observed walking north to cross the street in order to catch the bus.

There are several thousand residents of these buildings, with relatively few owning cars. An estimate of over a thousand of hazardous crossings a day is quite plausible. Since this is a major arterial, the reports of multiple pedestrian fatalities is also plausible, as is the likelihood of future fatalities.

Since the new light would be within 200 feet of the current light, a new light could be synchronized with the old, greatly reducing the cost.

Passed, 4 to 0 vote.

Improve robbery clearance rates

[7:31 pm] Jack moved the following:

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the Metropolitan Police Department to compare its robbery investigation procedures to those in other, comparable cities, in order to understand why the robbery clearance rate in the District is substantially lower than the nationwide average for cities of similar size, and possibly to determine how the District's robbery clearance rate could be brought up to those nationwide averages. Furthermore, ANC1D advises the Council of the District of Columbia to pay close attention to this statistic, and to encourage and assist the Metropolitan Police to achieve a higher robbery clearance rate.

Why: Robbery is the crime of violence that most seriously threatens District residents of peaceful lifestyles. In Mount Pleasant, two-thirds of all violent crimes are robberies. In the Third Police District, two-thirds of all violent crimes are robberies. Because many of the other categories of violent crime involve persons acquainted with each other, whereas the victims of robbery are almost invariably chosen at random on the street, robbery is by far the crime that most seriously threatens residents of peaceful lifestyles.

The District does not do well at identifying and capturing robbers. The rate at which robberies are cleared by arrest in the District is currently (FY2009) a mere 16.1 percent, well below the nominal MPD target of 22.5 percent. It is understood that robbery, because the victim virtually never knows his attacker, is among the most difficult crimes to solve, but the average for U.S. cities of 500,000 to 999,999 population is 21.5 percent, representing one-third more robberies closed by arrest than is accomplished here. This ANC first brought this deficiency to the attention of the MPD in 2004, when the District's robbery clearance rate was a dismal 14 percent. Little progress is evident in improving this parameter, six years later.

Improving the robbery clearance rate would be doubly valuable for decreasing the threat of violent crime to District residents. Robbers do not commit one crime and stop, but commit repeated robberies, until they are caught, or simply age out of the high-crime age bracket. Hence, removing a robber from the street prevents numerous future robberies. Secondly, the best deterrence to crime is a reasonably high probability of being caught. The District's low robbery clearance rate suggests that it is too easy for young men to commit robberies and escape with impunity.

Other cities evidently do better than the District in solving robberies and arresting the perpetrators. ANC1D advises the Metropolitan Police Department to compare its practices with those of cities with higher robbery clearance rates, in order to learn how to improve this statistic. ANC1D furthermore advises the Council of the District to monitor this performance closely, for the benefit of the residents of this city.

Passed, 4 to 0 vote.

At this time (7:33 pm) Gregg departed, and the meeting continued with Phil, Dave, and Jack. Being short of a quorum, no formal business could be considered after this point.

Public discussion

[7:33 pm] The meeting continued with the public discussion period. The proposed renovation of the large house at 3324 Monroe Street was the principal topic.

Adjournment

[7:48 pm] By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.