

Government of the District of Columbia

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C

June 2023 Meeting Minutes

DATE: June 13, 2023

ANC-2C COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioner Michael Shankle, Commissioner Kristin Roe, Commissioner Rebecca Strauss, and Commissioner Thomas Lee

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Shankle called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm over Zoom (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vucZ6hRPbo>).
- 2. ROLL CALL:** A quorum of four commissioners was present.
- 3. INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS:**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Shankle reviewed the agenda (available at www.anc2c.us) and some modifications were made to the timeline. Roe motioned to approve the May 2023 agenda, seconded by Strauss. (Vote 3-0-1)
- 5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:** No previous minutes were available to approve.
- 6. TREASURER REPORT:** Checks were issued for the minute taker. The treasury report will be available next week.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. MPD 2nd District Crime and Community Awareness, Lieutenant Sylvester Garvin, sylvester.garvin@dc.gov.

Lieutenant Sylvester reported that in the past 30 days, there were no homicides or sex abuse and four ADWs. Burglaries were down, thefts were up, and motor vehicle thefts were down. Details of the ADWs were shared. A significant arrest was made, with the perpetrator connected to several other burglaries over the past year.

Thefts at retail stores such as Macy's and Zara occurred on a regular basis, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars over the past year. The uniformed loss prevention employees at the stores do not have police powers and are usually told not to engage. The perpetrators often escape using the metro. Other details of these type of incidents were discussed. A pilot program using QR codes to track officers going into the store at random times was shared as a potential solution to reduce the frequency of these events.

2. MPD 1st District Crime and Community Awareness, Captain Justin Roth, Justin.Roth@dc.gov, 202-729-2179 or Lieutenant Jeremy Kniseley, jeremy.kniseley@dc.gov, 202.839.1357.

Captain Roth shared that over the past 30 to 60 days, robberies are up slightly, but generally other metrics are good. Details of a car jacking and a robbery on Mass Ave were shared. Captain Roth stated that the closure rate in the 1st District is high. Arrests in the Chinatown area are increasing. Courts are putting stayaways in place, which are generally not being followed. Many complaints that have been received are regarding homelessness, which has gone down since the shelter has closed. The homeless issues are addressed when seen by officers, but the priority is on other more serious crimes. Captain Roth also shared details of two different cases of unlawful discharge of a firearm.

A question was raised about the traffic fatality regarding construction vehicles. Those type of incidents are reviewed by major crash investigators, so Captain Roth does not have significant updates to share.

The stairwells on the stoops are considered private property, as confirmed by Captain Roth. Business owners who have individuals sitting on the steps can get police assistance to help with the situation. More specifics of these types of situations were shared.

Specific community questions were raised and answered regarding the buskers, which are ruled by the courts to be protected by the 1st amendment, and noise complaints after 10pm, which are promptly addressed by officers. Captain Roth shared that traffic enforcement is not the highest priority for his team, and they choose to focus on other crimes like guns and drugs. Certain key traffic issues are addressed, but there are no quotas that his team needs to hit.

Captain Roth shared the text tip hotline number, which is 50411. This number can be used to text information anonymously.

3. Office of Mayor's Office Ward 2 Mayor's Liaisons – Christopher Powell, Ward 2 Liaison, Christopher.powell2@dc.gov, 202.805.7122 and Grace Reeder, Ward 2 Liaison Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS), grace.reeder@dc.gov.

Powell shared Ward 2 updates from the Mayor's office. Mayor Bowser launched a downtown action plan to revitalize the community. Mayor Bowser also announced a plan to distribute free cameras to delivery driver employees to improve safety in the community. Richard Livingston has been appointed Director for MOCRS and Ashan Benedict has been named interim Chief of Police. There are several upcoming events, including a BBQ battle and a community telatownhall.

A community question was raised regarding meeting format. Meetings will be going back to a live format in the Fall. Another community question about business revitalization in Penn Quarter was raised and discussed. A member from Councilmember Pinto's office shared information on how Councilmember Pinto's plans may help address that concern.

4. Office of Ward 2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto -- Brooke Pinto Councilmember, Ward 2, bpinto@dccouncil.us, 202-724-8058, Pablo Velasco

Rodriguez, Constituent Services Coordinator,
pvelascorodriguez@dccouncil.gov, 202-724-8058, and **Brian Romanowski,**
Constituent Services Director, bromanowski@dccouncil.us, 202-285-9195.

Victoria Casarrubias filled in for Pablo Velasco to share updates from Councilmember Pinto's office. Updates from events over the past month were shared. The final budget was voted on, and every ANC will be sent final budget numbers for projects in their area. The budget is awaiting Congress approval. Budget requests for 2025 are now being taken.

Public safety-related actions have been taken, such as a proposed public safety bill and addressing Metro fare evasion and enforcement. There are plans to support children and low-income individuals with free or subsidized Metro cards. Councilmember Pinto still supports the decriminalization of fare evasion but wants to focus on the enforcement of the problem as a civil offense. Community members shared their input on the topic.

Shankle shared that the Ward commissioners met with Councilmember Pinto in the prior week, with public safety being a large point of discussion.

LOCAL EVENTS THAT IMPACT THE COMMUNITY

2. DowntownDC Pedestrian Safety and Experience Study -- Chinatown Park and Mt. Vernon Square. Alex Davis, Planning Associate, DowntownDC Business Improvement District, alex@downtowndc.org, 202.281.6532

Alex Davis, along with his colleague Scott Harris, shared updates on the DowntownDC Pedestrian Safety and Experience Study. Davis and Harris are representing Toole Design. They are seeking a letter of support from the commissioners so that they can move forward with the study.

The goals for the study are to address pedestrian safety and experience, implement three quick-wins projects, implement long-term strategies, and align work with concurrent plans for the area. Seven potential locations for quick-wins projects had previously been shared. Two quick-win sites were selected – Chinatown Park and 7th & F/G. Concepts for these sites were shared, along with long-term visions for those areas. Both plans include traffic calming measures, curb extensions, and an expansion of public space.

Davis shared the list of stakeholders that have been engaged regarding these projects, including several community engagement initiatives. The quick-win designs have been finalized and RFP submissions for art elements are being reviewed. The goal is to complete the quick-win installations by August and an evaluation and final report in September.

Commissioner Lee inquired about adding playground equipment in Chinatown Park, but due to permitting difficulties, that would be beyond the scope of a quick win. Other entertainment options for children could be possible in the area. Outdoor seating areas for businesses in the area were also discussed. Maintenance of the fixtures to be added was a topic of discussion as

well. Commissioner Shankle expressed the importance of using D.C.-based artists for the projects.

MOTION: Shankle motioned to send a letter of support for the quick-wins project, seconded by Roe. (Vote 3-0-1)

3. DC Bike Ride 23, Saturday, September 9, 2023, Diane Romo Thomas, dianeromo-thomas@hotmail.com.

Thomas shared information on the bike ride, including the length of the ride, start and finish locations, and timing. The ride will start at 8am and finish at 12:30pm and will be similar to previous years. The area will likely remain closed until 5pm.

MOTION: Shankle motioned to send a letter of support for DC Bike Ride on September 9, seconded by Roe. (Vote 3-0-1)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSING (ABCA)

1. HQ DC House, The Burns Brothers, Inc., 600 F Street, NW, New Retailer's Class "CX" Private Club (ABRA-- 124692). Johnathan Burns, John@theburnsbrothers.com, 202.601.9770.

Will DeSantos presented the information in place of Johnathan Burns. DeSantos shared background on The Burns Brothers mission and history. They are focused on working with clients to promote inclusivity and diversity. DeSantos shared information on HQ DC House, which is a private membership club where members of the community can gather and engage in wellness sessions and other events. The Burns Brothers has applied for a license to serve alcohol from ABCA for the HQ DC House location.

MOTION: Shankle motioned to send a letter of support for The Burns Brothers' application, seconded by Roe. (Vote 3-0-1)

MOTION: Shankle motioned to send a letter of support for a stipulated license for HQ DC House, seconded by Roe. (Vote 3-0-1)

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SPACE

1. CityCenter -- Placement of four benches on either sides of I Street near Del Frisco's Steakhouse, Bulgari, and Chanel. Ashley Tew, Director of Operations, Hines, CityCenterDC, ashley.tew@hines.com, 202.289.9000.

Tew shared plans to install four benches along I Street to create a safer environment for pedestrians and prevent cars from driving into the pedestrian area. Drawings and renders of the benches were presented.

MOTION: Roe motioned to send a letter of support for the placement of the benches, seconded by Shankle. (Vote 3-0-1)

PLANNING, ZONING, ENVIRONMENT, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1. 1717 K Street, NW, (aka 1000 Connecticut Ave NW, Square 163, Lot 56).

Application for a Minor Modification to PUD Order No. 06-13 to Allow Habitable Penthouse Space. Mary Carolyn ("Carolyn") Brown, The Brown Law Firm PLLC, cbrown@BrownLaw.law, 202.763.7538.

Brown shared plans to add habitable space for a penthouse to the roof of the building. The additional space will require a contribution to the affordable housing fund of roughly \$800,000 and meets all zoning and setback requirements.

MOTION: Roe motioned to send a letter of support to the zoning board for the application, seconded by Strauss. (Vote 4-0-0)

2. 509-517 H Street NW Residential Project. Stephan Rodiger, Managing Partner, Rift Valley Partners, Stephan@riftvalleycapital.com, 202.361.0570.

Rodiger shared updates on the project for 509-517 H Street NW to convert the area to 42 longer-term stay fully furnished residential apartments. Over the past few months, Rift Valley Partners has engaged with several businesses and residents in the area. They plan to restore the façade and stairways as a part of this plan. Architectural plans were shared.

Rift Valley Partners plans to apply for zoning relief in three areas. The first relief is related to the alley space. Rift Valley Partners is asking for a rear setback of 13' 7" instead of the 20' 10" requirement facing the back alley. The 3rd and 4th floors will be a cantilever that goes into the setback in order to preserve alley space and maintain sufficient space for functional units. The second relief is related to the loading area. They are asking for the loading berth to occur outside of the building. The third relief is for the ground-floor units to be converted to residential use. The justifications behind these reliefs were shared.

MOTION: Shankle motioned to send a letter of support for the three areas of relief, seconded by Strauss. (Vote 4-0-0)

OTHER

1. 1339 Green Court NW Update – Transition to Shelter.

Commissioner Strauss introduced Christian Calleri, who is an architect who worked to generate ideas for this project. The commissioners expressed interest in improving the alley to make it a more community-oriented space.

Calleri presented on urban design & urban architecture and shared potential ideas for the use of the space. The presentation covered background on certain theories in architecture relevant to this area, including the importance of the past use of the space and the role of automobiles in city design. Calleri also shared some of his past designs. Then, Calleri presented on potential

ideas for the alleyway surrounding the future shelter, including community gardens, increased retail frontage, and pedestrianizing some of the alleyway. He also shared examples of similar space design in other parts of the country.

Commissioner Shankle provided context on the procurement of the building by the city and the plans to use it as a shelter for DHS. The building was originally purchased to be an overnight hypothermia shelter, but has not been used since it was purchased in July 2021. The type of shelter is yet to be determined. The possibility of proposing the shelter be designated as an LGBTQ shelter was discussed. Several questions from community members were addressed.

ADJOURNMENT: X made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 pm, seconded by Lee. Commissioners were in favor of adjourning the meeting (Vote 4-0-0)

Minutes Submitted by: Ryder Winans, Minutes Services

Minutes Approved by:

Next Meeting: August 8, 2023, 6:00 pm

ANC Commissioners and Website

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Meetings are scheduled for the Second Tuesday of each month.