



Government of the District of Columbia1
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G

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COMMISSIONERS

3/4G-01 - Lisa R. Gore, Chair 3/4G-02 - Bruce Sherman

3/4G-03 - James Nash, Secretary 3/4G-04 - Michael Zeldin 3/4G-05 - Peter Lynch

3/4G-06 - Peter Gosselin, Vice Chair 3/4G-07 - Zachary Ferguson, Treasurer

Minutes

ANC 3/4G Public Hybrid Meeting

November 27, 2023

00:00:00 Call to Order and Commissioner Introductions

Commission Chair Lisa Gore called the meeting to order shortly after 7:00 pm. Also present at the meeting were Commissioners Gosselin, Ferguson, Nash, Sherman and Lynch. Commissioner Zeldin arrived shortly after the call to order.

00:00:00 Announcement of meeting procedures and adoption of agenda

Commissioner Gore moved that the commission move the discussion of the ANC Civic Core Survey ahead of the agenda items dealing with bio-retention cells. The change was approved 7-0.

00:06:00 Consent agenda

The consent agenda had the November 13, 2023 meeting minutes on it, which had not been completed, rather than the October 23 minutes which have been completed. Commissioner Gore suggested all the completed minutes be approved at the next ANC meeting.

00:06:53 Resident Forum

00:21:24 Discussion and update on the ANC Civic Core Survey

Commissioner Sherman summarized the results of the ANC survey. He noted the ANC wanted the survey to be open to everyone who wanted to take it rather than a more limited sample survey that would seek to be representative of the approximately 15,000 residents of the ANC; 2836 surveys were completed of which 2297 were from those living in the ANC. The survey is representative of those who took the survey, but not necessarily representative of the ANC as a whole.

Commissioner Sherman noted that certain demographic groups are over-represented in the survey when compared to the ANC as a whole: proportionately more females, more older people, more homeowners and more White people took the survey than reside in the ANC. For example, roughly ten percent of the ANC is African American, but less than five percent of survey takers were African American.

On the survey substantive questions, Commissioner Sherman said about 40 percent of survey takers supported the city's plans to redevelop the civic core, while 57 percent oppose redevelopment.

Commissioner Gosselin then explained his resolution on the civic core site. He said it has two purposes: to convey the results of the survey to the city; and to convey the ANC's sense of what is to be done with these results. He said the resolution conveys to the city that the survey shows a roughly 60/40 ratio of survey takers oppose housing on the site. The resolution also supports building affordable housing on the site and calls on the preservation of green space and buildings lower than the 80-foot height currently permitted.

Because the city intends to build affordable housing on the site regardless of the survey results, the resolution states that the best way for the community to retain influence is to support housing but also to insist the city must respect community concerns, expressed in the survey, about the preservation of green space, building height, and ownership of the property.

Community members then voiced their views about the survey and the resolution. Many residents disagreed with Commissioner Gosselin's resolution and wanted the ANC to oppose all housing and redevelopment of the civic core because they said this is what the survey results require. Others questioned the accuracy of the survey because it under-counted apartment dwellers and minorities and argued the survey is more supportive of housing than the 40 percent reported by Commissioners Sherman and Gosselin.

Commissioner Gore reminded housing opponents that the City Council has already voted on the redevelopment, so that the project is happening. The Comprehensive Plan and the Small Area Plan also call for more affordable housing west of Rock Creek Park. Commissioner Gosselin added that the city is planning to go ahead with the project no matter what. The question of what the ANC should do with the survey, he argued, depends on what the best way for the community is to get the best deal it can, to address those concerns identified in the survey. Commissioner Gosselin argued his resolution aims to achieve this goal.

Commission Chair Gore repeated what she said had been stated by the ANC many times before regarding the survey. The Commission never stated the survey results would determine the ANC's policy position. The objectives of the survey were to obtain community input on the redevelopment and then use that as one more tool among many others to determine its positions

to try to shape the RFP. She said there are many other data points that have arisen over the past three years.

Commissioner Nash emphasized that while Commissioner Sherman touted the 20 percent response rate as very high, it also means that as many as 80 percent of the community did not take the survey. Nash said, given that, he will take the survey results very seriously when they indicate a consensus. He added that for him, the fact that 60 percent of 20 percent of the community may oppose housing, is not definitive. On the other hand, the fact that nearly everyone, including those on both sides of the housing issue, wants to preserve green space, is a very significant survey result. He rejected the notion that unless one opposes housing, one is ignoring the survey, because the survey was about more than housing.

Commissioner Zeldin said when he took his oath of office, he swore to use his best judgment to serve the best interest of the District of Columbia and that he intends to do that.

Commissioner Sherman responded to Commissioner Nash by arguing that no survey has a response rate of 100 percent, and that because 2836 surveys were completed, the survey provides far more data of community sentiment than the 40 or so people who show up for a meeting.

A community member reminded the Commission that throughout U.S. history, majorities can be wrong; majorities have often been in favor of unjust positions. Majorities opposed same sex marriage, allowing women to vote and ending slavery. She said what should be considered is what is in the best interest of people.

Randy Speck, a former ANC Commission chair, said he and the ANC have been involved in this issue for many years, and the Commission has always supported housing on the site. He pointed out the Mayor and the City Council have also taken public positions on the matter in support of housing. He said he supported Commissioner Gosselin's resolution.

Many other community members opposed Commissioner Gosselin's resolution because it does not fully reflect the survey results. Some said they favored affordable housing, but not on the civic core site on public land. Other urged the Commission to take a stand against the mayor and the council. They felt the majority view against housing reflected in the survey, should trump the ANC's previous resolutions, individual commissioner views, as well as the public positions of the mayor and city council.

Others noted that the survey was flawed because older people are over-represented, younger ones under-represented. Commissioner Sherman agreed and said that extrapolating from the survey to the broader population is methodologically problematic.

Commission Chair closed out the discussion by saying there will be another discussion on the civic core survey December 6. No vote was taken on Commissioner Gosselin's resolution, as he would continue to develop it based on the discussion. Commissioner Sherman promised he would offer an alternative resolution on the survey and the civic core redevelopment.

01:31:49 Discussion and possible vote on Bio-retention Cell Resolution

Commissioner Gosselin introduced his resolution on bio-retention pits. He noted that the Commission supports the goals of the program, which are to reduce polluted runoff from entering local streams. However, many residents have complained about the way DDOT is implementing the program because the pits are so large they eliminate too much parking and create traffic problems along the streets. The resolution asks DDOT to re-open the comment period on the program to Feb. 1 and to come before the Commission to explain their decision-making process in terms of the location of these pits, and the goals of the program.

Commissioner Nash proposed a separate resolution on bio-retention pits that addressed the specific situation on the 5300 block of 28th Street NW. His resolution called for DDOT to reduce the size of its proposed pit from 1105 feet to 40 feet.

Commissioner Gosselin's resolution was approved 6-1-0. Commissioner Ferguson opposed.

Commissioner Nash's resolution was approved 4-1-2. Commissioner Ferguson opposed, Commissioners Lynch and Zeldin abstained.

01:52:50 Meeting adjourned

APPROVED at a regular public meeting notice of which was properly given and at which a quorum of four (4) of seven (7) members was present on XXXXXXXX by a vote of XX yes, XXX no, XXX, abstentions.

**Lisa R. Gore, Chair
Secretary**

James L. Nash,

