



Minutes of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B

September 12, 2023

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B

Regular Monthly Meeting

Held Over Zoom September 12, 2023

Commissioner Edward Stillwell Ryder, Chair

Participating: Commissioners Avery, D'Andrea, Durkit, Jayaraman, LaFortune, Mareino, Ryder, and Sobelsohn.

Absent: Commissioner Sroufe.

Commissioner Ryder called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Meeting Agenda.

At Commissioner Avery's request, approval of the Quarterly Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2023's 3^d quarter, and the ANC's proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget, were moved to the Consent Agenda, and approval of new vendors for the ANC debit card was added to the Treasurer's Report. At Commissioner LaFortune's request, discussion of the 8th Street Bus Priority Project was moved from the Consent Agenda to the Transportation Committee's report. At Commissioner Ryder's request, a resolution regarding the DC Housing Authority was added to the agenda. Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/Commissioner Jayaraman seconded to approve the agenda as modified. The motion passed 8-0.

2. Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/Commissioner LaFortune seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as modified. The motion passed 8-0. Items on the Consent Agenda included approval of--

a. Minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting, as presented. But see Motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted, below.

b. Recommendations of the--

1) Alcoholic Beverage & Cannabis Control Committee that ANC 6B endorse applications of--

a) Ugly Mug Dining Saloon/Valor Brew Pub, 723 8th St., SE (Partners at 723 8th Street S.E. LLC) for a “games of skill” endorsement to its retailer’s class “C” restaurant license (ABCA-071793).

b) Wine and Butter Café and Market, 1023 E. Capitol St., SE (Wineandbutter, LLC) for renewal of its retailers’ class “B” liquor license with a tasting endorsement (ABCA-105990).

2) Planning & Zoning Committee that the ANC support applications to--

a) Officially name, as “Sladen’s Court,” the alley previously informally bearing the name “Sladen's Walk” at 223 8th St., SE (Square 969).

b) Build a rear addition to an existing, semi-detached, three-story principal dwelling at 223 8th St., SE (Square 900, Lot 35, RF-1 zone; BZA 20959).

c) Enclose a second-floor rooftop deck to extend an existing bedroom, and the add a third floor with a bedroom and bathroom, all at 116 5th St., SE (HPA 23-439).

d) Build a rear addition to an existing attached two-story principal dwelling (with cellar) at 744 13th St., SE (Square 1045, Lot 129, RF-1 zone; BZA 20955).

3. Presentations.

a. DC Department of Transportation (DDOT). Joined by DDOT’s deputy chief engineer Ravindra D. Ganvir, its bicycle program specialist Greg Matlesky, and its community-engagement manager Kelly Jeong-Olson, DDOT deputy director Sharon Kershbaum discussed plans for the 11th St. corridor. DDOT expects 65% design completion by summer 2024. Ganvir reported that DDOT plans to expand the I-695 exit ramp to four lanes as a safety measure. Kershbaum explained that, currently, at that exit, impatient drivers in traffic queues cause accidents, especially rear-enders. Ganvir promised that, with an extra lane for cars, DDOT will also arrange for pedestrians to have more time to cross the street. Ganvir also admitted that DDOT hasn’t yet decided yet how to protect bicyclists at that exit. Kershbaum and Ganvir agreed that DDOT should institute a traffic camera at the exit. Kershbaum claimed that traffic cameras have reduced speeding, but admitted that most of DDOT’s evidence is anecdotal, not systematic. As safety measures, DDOT will also consider raised crosswalks to remind drivers they’re entering a residential neighborhood, and flexiposts to discourage illegal left turns.

DDOT’s representatives also reported on the redesign of Pennsylvania Ave., SE. Drivers are still confused about the new bus and bike lanes. Kershbaum conceded that the signs have been improperly placed, and not enforced. On September 18, the city plans to start ticketing cars illegally parked in the bus lane.

Kershbaum invited further questions addressed to sharon.kershbaum@dc.gov.

b. DC Smart Street Lighting Project. Ashley Wells, project consultant, reported that, to increase sustainability, save energy, and enable remote monitoring and control, DC is converting over 72,000 streetlights to remotely adjustable LED. Work started in May 2022 and will conclude in May 2024. ANC 6B has about 2100 streetlights. Replacement will take about 15 minutes per streetlight. There are no plans to replace the light poles themselves.

Ana Hasegawa, project engineer, reported that ANC 6B is towards the end of the schedule, between March and May 2024; that they've divided ANC 6B into three sections; and that completion of each section should take about 2 weeks. Currently the first section is 4th-15th Streets, SE, north of Pennsylvania Ave., SE; the second section is 8th St., SE, east to the Anacostia, mostly south of Pennsylvania Ave., SE; and the third section is the rest of ANC 6B. Wells promised that all ANCs will get specific notice, from doorhanger information cards, 45 days prior to commencement of work, with "no-parking" signs going up 7 days in advance. For streetlight problems before May 2024, residents should call 311 and provide the reference number on the light pole. For further information, people should check streetlights.dc.gov or email press@dcsmartstreetlights.com.

4. Community & Commission Announcements.

a. Commissioner Avery announced a September 20 walk through ANC 6B01 with the acting director of the Department of Buildings (DOB) to get first-hand accounts of what neighbors are dealing with regarding the use of residences for commercial purposes.

b. Commissioner LaFortune announced a September 14 walk through ANC 6B09 with a DOB representative to inspect a vacant property at 15th & Ives Streets, SE.

c. DDOT's Andrew Grinberg reported on the 8th St. Bus Priority Project. About 2,900 riders ride buses daily on 8th St., SE. The project will go between East Capitol and M Streets. DDOT will convert all angled parking to parallel parking, but reduce the total number of street parking spots by only 8%, from 660 to 609 spots, with no reduction between D and L Streets, SE. DDOT hopes to begin building project infrastructure by fall 2024. Residents can contact Grinberg at 202-855-2530 or Andrew.Grinberg@dc.gov, and learn more about the project at <https://buspriority.ddot.dc.gov/pages/8thstse>.

d. Jake Stolzenberg, of the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services, noted the new city curfew in seven areas, including Navy Yard, for children under 17.

e. Erik Salmi, Ward Six Councilmember Charles Allen's deputy chief of staff, announced upcoming Council hearings: September 18, on expanding a private-security-camera program for private businesses; October 4, on dangerous driving and fake license plates; and October 5, on problems with the 911 program.

5. Public-Housing Resolution and Letter. Commissioner Ryder reported that DCAH marks work as "completed" when it isn't; that many units remain vacant and unready for occupancy for years; that some of those units are designated for people with disabilities; that security at public housing buildings remains woefully inadequate; and that DCAH often pressures aged residents to move. Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/Commissioner Durkit seconded to adopt a resolution, to be sent with a letter from the ANC as a whole, to the DC Council and to DC Housing Authority director Dorian Jenkins. The motion passed 8-0. The resolution and letter are linked to these minutes.

6. Committee Reports.

a. Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Committee. Committee chair Commissioner Jayaraman reported that, in response to safety concerns, the manager of Wine and Butter Café and Market, 1023 E. Capitol St., SE, has moved his sidewalk tables closer to the café. A written committee report is linked to these minutes.

b. Transportation Committee. Committee chair Commissioner LaFortune reported on a committee discussion about DDOT's 8th Street Bus Priority Project. Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/Commissioner LaFortune seconded to send a letter, mostly drafted by Commissioner Mareino, to DDOT, with copies to DC councilmembers, about the project. Regarding the project, the letter encourages DDOT to meet again with Barracks Row Main Street, and to seek Barracks Row businesses' support for this project. Commissioner Jayaraman moved to table the motion until the ANC's October 10 meeting. The motion failed for want of a second. Commissioner Jayaraman moved to ask DDOT for data to support DDOT's plan to reverse traffic on D St., SE. This motion also failed for want of a second. Commissioner LaFortune moved/Commissioner Sobelsohn seconded to add, to the letter, that "some residents" have expressed opposition to reversing traffic on D St., SE. The motion to amend passed 8-0. Commissioner Avery moved/Commissioner Mareino seconded to add to the letter a request for alternate options to the project. The motion to amend passed 8-0. Commissioner Avery moved/Commissioner LaFortune seconded to end debate. The motion passed 8-0. The motion to send the letter, as amended, passed 8-0. The letter, as amended, is linked to these minutes, as is the written report of the Transportation Committee.

c. Planning and Zoning Committee. A written report of the Planning and Zoning Committee is linked to these minutes.

d. Southeast Library Task Force. Committee chair Commissioner Sobelsohn announced that the library system has finally agreed to provide interim pick-up and drop-off services, of borrowed library materials, at the Arthur Capper Recreation Center during the years the Southeast library will be closed for renovations. Commissioner Sobelsohn noted that several issues remain unresolved, including the amount of time, after the branch closes, that Arthur Capper services will begin. Minutes from the August 21 and September 10 taskforce meetings are linked to these minutes.

e. Public Parks and Recreation Spaces Task Force. Commissioner D'Andrea moved/Commissioner Jayaraman seconded to send the Department of Parks and Recreation a letter regarding maintenance of the Eastern Market Metro Park. The motion passed 8-0. The letter is linked to these minutes.

f. Public Safety Committee. A written report of the Special Committee on Public Safety is linked to these minutes.

7. Treasurer's Report. Noting that, to hold hybrid meetings, requires buying equipment to use our ANC debit card, and that the ANC must specifically approve every vendor, ANC 6B Treasurer Commissioner Avery moved/Commissioner Sobelsohn seconded to authorize ANC use of its debit card for OWL Labs, Amazon.com, and Office Depot. The motion passed 8-0. Commissioner Ryder moved/Commissioner Jayaraman seconded also to authorize use of the ANC debit card to pay WP Engine and Amazon Web Services for website hosting for hybrid meetings. The motion passed 8-0.

8. Administrative Matters. Pending hiring administrative staff, Commissioner Ryder asked committee and taskforce chairs to manage their own committee and taskforce portions of the ANC website. Commissioner Ryder also offered to conduct a WordPress Zoom call for anyone who needs the relevant training.

9. Motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted. Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/- Commissioner Durkit seconded to add, to the agenda, a motion to amend something previously adopted. The motion passed 8-0. Commissioner Sobelsohn moved/Commissioner Durkit moved to amend minutes of the July 11 meeting, approved earlier in this September meeting, to indicate that Commissioner Durkit attended the July 11 ANC 6B meeting. The motion passed 8-0. The July 11 minutes, as amended, are linked to these minutes.

10. Adjournment. Commissioner Ryder moved/Commissioner Sobelsohn seconded to adjourn. The motion passed 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 11:01.