

ANC 1C Meeting Minutes



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Minutes of Meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C January 12, 2000

The following is a draft of the Minutes of ANC 1C's January meeting. The final minutes are subject to review and approval by the Commissioners.

A meeting of the Commissioners of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C (the "ANC") convened at the Marie Reed School at 7:00 p.m. on January 12, 2000.

1. Attendance.

Commissioners Present: Faith,* Eleanor Johnson,* Eric Letsinger,
Carolyn Llorente, Richard Mason, Andrew Miscuk,
Peter Schott and Linda Softli.
*Arrived late.

Commissioners Absent: Mark Wright.

Also Present: Lisa Duperier, Community Chair, Public Safety
Committee

Mark Petruzzi, Community Chair, Zoning & Permits
Committee

Approximately 50 additional persons were present
or signed the meeting attendance sheet.

2. **Notice of Meeting.** Each Commissioner and the community received notice of the meeting.

3. **Presiding Officer and Secretary.** Commissioner Softli presided and Commissioner Mason kept Minutes of the meeting.

4. **Call to Order and Introduction of Commissioners.** Commissioner Softli called the meeting to order as soon as a quorum was present and, as is their custom, the Commissioners introduced themselves to the community. She also announced a number of events of interest to the community.

5. **Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** Commissioner Softli noted that Commissioner Johnson was late and had asked to postpone this agenda item until later in the meeting so she could provide comments before approval. Commissioner Mason noted that the Commissioners received a draft of the minutes several weeks earlier and had ample opportunity to provide comments. He noted that the draft Minutes erroneously listed Commissioner Johnson as voting in favor of recognizing the participants in Cocktail Charities and that the final minutes would reflect her abstention on that

vote. Upon further discussion and on a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes of the December 1, 1999 meeting of the Commission were unanimously approved, as amended.

6. Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Llorente distributed the reconciled balance of the Commission's account, together with a detail of expenditures for the last several months. She particularly noted that the Commission had budgeted for a new photocopy machine and thus, would not pay the maintenance contract on the existing machine. Commissioner Softli stated that she will obtain quotes so that the Commission can take action on the matter in February.

Upon further discussion, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer's report as presented at the meeting shall be and hereby is ratified and approved.

7. Annual Elections. In accordance with the Commission's By-laws, Commissioner Mason, as Secretary, presided over the election of the Chair of the Commission. He nominated Commissioner Softli and Commissioner Miscuk seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Commissioners Letsinger, Mason, Miscuk, Softli, Schott voting in favor and Commissioner Llorente abstaining, Commissioner Softli was elected Chair. She then presided over the remainder of the meeting. She called for nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Mason nominated Commissioner Miscuk and Commissioner Letsinger seconded. Commissioner Miscuk declined the nomination. Commissioner Miscuk then nominated Commissioner Schott and Commissioner Mason seconded. There being no additional nominations, Commissioner Schott was unanimously elected Vice Chair. Commissioner Miscuk then nominated Commissioner Mason for Secretary and Commissioner Softli seconded. There being no additional nominations, Commissioner Mason was unanimously elected Secretary. Finally, Commissioner Miscuk nominated Commissioner Llorente for Treasurer and Commissioner Schott seconded. There being no further nominations, Commissioner Llorente was unanimously elected Treasurer.

8. Councilman Graham's Report. Due to a conflict with another ANC, Councilman Graham was unable to attend the meeting, but provided a written letter to the Commission stating that he had received a commitment from Chief Ramsey for an increased permanent police presence in Adams Morgan-U Street area. His letter also expressed his opposition to the Hilton Hotel zoning variance application request.

Commissioner Faith arrived at this time.

9. SMD Reports. The Commissioners reported on various developments in his or her Single Member District. Commissioner Letsinger explained that, he, Councilman Graham and the community were successful in raising approximately \$35,000 from Pepco and Security Storage to build a new fence and landscape the electrical transfer station on Ontario Road. Commissioner Mason questioned the community regarding their experience with water pressure and the Commission learned that the entire area was suffering from a noticeable drop in pressure recently. Upon further discussion, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Commission shall write to DC WASA to determine the reason for the community's loss of water pressure and to urge it's expedient restoration.

Commissioner Miscuk explained that fundraising efforts had begun for Walter Pierce Park improvements and that old playground equipment and a sandbox had already been removed. He also explained that he continued to work with Councilman Graham toward installation of speed bumps or other traffic calming devices by the park. Finally, he announced that beginning at 5:00 p.m. on February 6, Cocktail Charities would be raising money to have Ready, Willing & Able clean the non-commercial side streets of Adams Morgan. The event will be held at Tryst and, he added that Tryst would match all tips he received if he agreed to wait tables wearing a dress. The Commissioners encouraged community support for this effort.

Commissioner Faith expressed her continuing desire to raise consciousness about saving the Tivoli Theater in Columbia Heights.

10. Hilton Hotel Zoning Variance Application. Commissioner Softli summarized the events and discussion at the Commission's Town Hall Meeting on January 6, 2000 on the matter of the Hilton Hotel's application of a zoning variance to permit expansion.

Commissioner Johnson arrived at this time.

A number of residents expressed their personal or their organization's opposition to the variance. In addition, DC School Board Chair Wilma Harvey appeared and personally presented the School Board's written opposition, in light of the Hilton's proximity to Adams School. In this regard, a number of Adams School pupils attended the meeting to express their opposition.

Upon further discussion, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, Hilton Hotels Corporation has requested from the Board of Zoning Adjustment a variance under Subsection 350.4(d) to allow the addition of function rooms and exhibit space to an existing hotel in an R-5-D district at premises 1919 Connecticut Avenue, NW, in an application numbered 16511; and

WHEREAS, said premises fall within the jurisdiction of the Adams Morgan Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 1C); and

WHEREAS, ANC 1C held a town meeting on January 6, 2000 with representation from the Hilton Hotel, approximately 67 residents and a quorum of duly elected Commissioners in attendance; and

WHEREAS, the applicant gave a presentation and the community responded, and

WHEREAS, the community raised a number of demonstrated existing difficulties with truck and bus noise, pollution and traffic, close proximity to John Quincy Adams Elementary School, employee parking, and regulations regarding hotel expansion in residential areas:

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT, ANC 1C opposes Application Number 16511 pending before the Board of Zoning Adjustment because:

- 1- Order No. 314, of Zoning Commission Case No. 79-1, prohibits hotel expansions in residential areas and the Hilton is in a residential zone.
- 2- The Ward One Comprehensive Plan prohibits expansion of hotels in residential zones.
- 3- The request for expansion of 35,000 square feet for function rooms and exhibit/meeting space will increase by one-third the current space devoted to

such uses as well as increase both truck and parking problems, exacerbating the currently nonconforming loading dock.

4- The request does not address the issue of problems of trucks queuing up, nor does it allow an increase in turning radii or lessen the impact on parking in the residential streets nearby, nor of dangers posed to young children walking to and from Adams School.

5- The Hilton has not demonstrated that there is a hardship nor does it meet any other criteria required by the Board of Zoning Adjustment to warrant a variance.

6- Approval of this Application would undermine the protections contained in the 1980 Zoning Order and the Comprehensive Plan and thus would set an extremely harmful precedent for future expansion of hotels in residential neighborhoods.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the officers of the Commission shall be and hereby authorized to take such actions as are necessary to carry out the purposes of the foregoing resolution.

11. Police and Public Safety Committee Report. Chairperson Duperier introduced Commander Mark Beech, the new Commander of MPD's Third District. He discussed his experience in the neighborhood and responded to a number of questions from the Commissioners and the community. He promised that, given some time to effect necessary changes within the Third District, the community will see a noticeable improvement in service. The Commander addressed the recent shootings on 18th Street and discussed the increased police visibility that will be provided. Commissioner Llorente noted that a daytime police presence is also necessary in order to promote a healthy retail environment in the community. Finally, the Commander provided his office's phone number: 202-673-6820.

12. Visions Theater. Commissioner Mason explained that the Commission's Zoning & Permits Committee had negotiated an agreement with Visions Theater concerning its liquor license application. The applicant is located at the old "Embassy" Theater on Florida Avenue. Commissioner Mason explained that the Commission's agreement was jointly reviewed by and received input from the bordering ANC's: Dupont Circle and Sheridan/Kalorama. He then introduced Andrew Frank who made a presentation and responded to questions from the community and the Commissioners. Upon further discussion, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, Commissioners Faith, Letsinger, Llorente, Mason, Miscuk and Softli voting in favor, Commissioner Johnson opposed and Commissioner Schott abstaining, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Commission approves the Voluntary Agreement with Visions Theater Bistro Cafe regarding its pending ABC license; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the officers of the Commission shall be and hereby authorized to take such actions as are necessary to carry out the purposes for the foregoing resolution.

13. Cafe Aristide. Representatives of Cafe Aristide were available to answer questions regarding the current ABC license under protest by the Commission. Commissioner Miscuk noted that there was no reason to withdraw the protest at this time. Commissioner Mason explained that a status hearing is scheduled before the ABC Board after the Commission's February meeting and that the applicant and the Commission's Zoning & Permits Committee should use the intervening time to determine whether a voluntary agreement can be reached.

Commissioner Johnson introduced a motion to drop the Commission's opposition to the ABC license application, but the motion was not seconded.

There was inadequate time left to discuss the matter in greater detail.

14. Adams Morgan Festival 2000. Tom Oliver of Western Public Interest explained that proceeds from the 1999 Adams Morgan Festival would be distributed to charity later this month and requested Commission support for the current year's festival. Commissioner Johnson introduced a motion to endorse WPI and the motion was duly seconded. Because there was little time left during the meeting and because this matter was added late to the agenda, a vote on the matter was tabled until the February meeting.

15. Adjournment. There being no further business, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned. The Commission noted that the next meeting had been previously scheduled and would be at Marie Reed School on February 2, 2000 between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Richard Mason
Secretary

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