

**ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1C
ADAMS MORGAN**

Minutes of the November 15, 2004 Public Forum

The forum was called to order at 7:14PM. Commissioners Gibson, Miscuk, and Roth were present; Commissioners Apostilides, Moretti, and Weaver were absent. Approximately twenty members of the public were in attendance.

Commissioner Roth called the meeting to order, invited his fellow commissioners to introduce themselves, and explained why certain commissioners were absent from the meeting.

Commissioner Roth discussed the background of the topic of construction equipment on public space in our community. He explained the specifics of a construction project at 2424 18th Street, NW, where a developer requested that a crane permit be issued that would have closed the sidewalk and multiple driving lanes on 18th Street for a minimum of a couple of weeks. Despite the subsequent ANC vote to oppose this crane, and any other such permits that had not been approved by the ANC, a crane permit was issued, and later renewed, that led to the blocking of a rear alley at the property which led to significant parking and sanitation disruptions.

Expanding on this particular case, Commissioner Roth stated that the neighborhood cannot deal with the cumulative and unplanned disruption caused by the uncoordinated multiple development projects underway in our community. He stated that the office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development has been successful at generating economic development but has not focused appropriately on planning. Roth stated further that there is currently no planning or coordination underway between multiple development projects, and the city does nothing to force this. Finally, Roth stated that current law states that no developer can make use of public space without a permit, and that no public space permit can be issued if it generates harm to the public health, safety, or traffic.

Commissioner Roth also spoke of the progression of ANC 1C's involvement in construction and transportation plans for developments. After being frustrated by the disruption construction caused on early projects, the ANC sought voluntary participation in subsequent projects, and finally requested that consultation with the ANC on construction/transportation be made part of the actual zoning order approving a project. Yet the ANC has received ongoing pushback from the city, stating that such involvement is not an intrinsic part of the zoning process.

Commissioner Roth stated that as a result of the particular circumstance at 2424 18th Street, as well as other cumulative issues, Councilmember Jim Graham convened a meeting in his office that included himself, Commissioner Roth, Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Moretti, Commissioner Weaver, DDOT Director Dan Tangherlini, as well

as representatives from several implicated DDOT's and Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development's offices.

He then introduced the evening's speakers:

- Lennox Douglas, Building and Land Regulation Administration, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
- Colleen Hawkinson, Transportation Policy and Planning, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Karyn LeBlanc, Communications Specialist, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- David Toland, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

Ms. LeBlanc then narrated a PowerPoint presentation on the status quo regarding the problem of construction equipment on public space, and some proposed ways to move towards a solution. She indicated that the initial meeting in Councilmember Graham's office had been a helpful catalyst, by putting people in the same room and opened their eyes to their divergent processes. Out-of-date and unintegrated technology is among the problems faced by agencies individually and in coordination. DCRA and DDOT use different technologies that are not coordinated, and additionally, while DCRA is required to share the list of its permit applicants, DDOT is not.

Commissioner Gibson indicated that the community's problems with construction disruption are "a death by a thousand cuts," that while no one transgression is necessarily particularly harmful, the accumulation of all of them is unsustainably harmful to community quality of life. He stated that regulation was not necessarily the answer, and that common sense decisions by developers would alleviate many of the neighborhood's concerns. While the ANC will remain vigilant, he indicated, that if developers would simply ask themselves "what if I lived here" and react accordingly, many of our problems could be avoided.

Commissioner Miscuk asked that the members of the public introduce themselves. A number of neighborhood residents were present, as were representatives of many developers with projects underway in the community. He also questioned many of the technological decisions made by the various agencies, and volunteered to meet with the agencies' technological representatives to attempt to improve their systems.

Community resident Carmela Vetri and Meridian International Center Chief of Staff Larry Kolp spoke of their experiences with the Meridian Crescent development project, stating that proper outreach and negotiation can disarm potentially combative situations.

Community resident Joe Kisha cited the repaving of Kalorama Road as a good example of city agencies coordinating their efforts with local developers (allowing developers to make their utility cuts prior to commencing repaving). Commissioner Gibson echoed Kisha's comments, but also indicated that this was an example of the tradeoff between maximizing community improvement while minimizing community disruption.

Originally, Kalorama Road was to be entirely rebuilt from the bottom up, but due to community concerns with the disruption this would have caused, DDOT instead chose simply to repave the road. Less disruption took place, but the scope and the quality of the final product the community received was also greatly reduced.

Community resident John Pendzick stated that it was the element of surprise in many of the construction disruptions we've faced that is the most upsetting (e.g. coming home from work and finding three parking spaces in front of your building will be unavailable for several months). He echoed Commissioner Gibson's "death by a thousand cuts" comparison, and Commissioner Miscuk's frustration with the city's technological standards.

In concluding the meeting, Commissioner Roth stated that providing the ANC with advance notice does not mean simply letting the community know that it's about to "get screwed."

Commissioner Gibson moved to adjourn. Commissioner Miscuk seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05PM.

Commissioner Gibson, Acting Secretary