

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C
Adams Morgan
Minutes of March 4, 2020

I. Call to Order and Introduction of the Commissioners

A regularly scheduled meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C was held on March 4, 2020 at Mary's Center. Commissioner Irani called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm. About 40 members of the public attended. In attendance were Commissioners Amir Irani (1C01), Ted Guthrie (1C03), John Zottoli (1C04), Damiana Dendy (1C05), and Japer Bowles (1C07).

II. Officers' Reports

A. Chair's Report

Commissioner Irani reported that the Department of Public Works has started issuing \$150 tickets for standing, stopping, or parking in bike lanes. He said new enforcement officers have been hired and there will be some photo-enforcement as well.

Commissioner Irani also reported that ANC 1C's comments on DC comp plan have been submitted to the Office of Planning.

B. Secretary's Report

There was no secretary's report in Commissioner Wright's absence.

C. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Bowles gave a financial report on amounts spent in the past month. He also reported that grant applications are welcome and that the Public Services and the Environment Committee will be considering a grant request from DC Lightwell at its March meeting.

III. Commissioner Announcements/Comments

- Commissioner Bowles reported on the February PSE Committee meeting that was held at Sarah's Circle and focused on senior services. He said several DC department representatives were present to provide an overview of their programs. Commissioner Bowles also reported that the theme for the March meeting is parks and will include a presentation from the DC Department of Parks and Recreation and possibly someone from the Fund for Kalorama Park.
- Commissioner Bowles also said that later in the meeting he would be offering a resolution in support of DC Council legislation to complete the 9th Street NW protected bike lane.
- Commissioner Irani reported that as yet there was nothing on the Planning, Zoning, and Transportation Committee agenda for March, but a petition regarding a crosswalk at Biltmore 19th Street may be added.
- Commissioner Zottoli reported that workers at Safeway and Giant are on strike. He said that Cerberus, the company that owns Safeway, is offering terms that would threaten workers' pensions and that picketing is scheduled to start Friday morning.
- Commissioner Guthrie noted that Streets Market on Columbia Road is now open.

IV. Public Announcements / Comments

- Kristen Barden announced that the Adams Morgan BID date nights will last through the end of March. She also announced that a new video is now up on the BID's website at Admo.org; a smaller scale Porchfest Unplugged will be held on Saturday, May 2 featuring acoustic music; and Bike to Work Day on May 15 will include a station at Unity Park. Finally, she announced that

movie nights this year will celebrate 100 years of women suffrage and include a Wonder Woman drag contest.

- Fiona Clem from the Reed-Cooke Neighborhood Association announced a clean-up day on Saturday, March 7 at Unity Park. She also announced that she will be running for the 1C08 seat which is currently vacant. She asked people in that single member district to sign her candidate petition. Commissioner Irani added that 1C02 is also vacant and if anyone is interested in running for that seat there is information on the Board of Elections website on how to do that.
- Allie Bobak from Councilmember Nadeau's office announced that she left sheets in the back with contact information including how to sign up for their email updates.

V. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Irani moved for adoption of the consent agenda which included:

1. [Minutes](#) from the February 2020 ANC meeting, and
2. Support for a [solar installation](#) at 1838 Wyoming Avenue.

Commissioners passed the consent agenda by a vote of 5 to 0.

VI. Angela Fowlkes, for At-large Councilmember Robert White

Angela Fowlkes, senior legislative staff member for At-large Councilmember Robert White, gave an update on legislation and the budget, and provided copies of the Councilmember's [2019 Annual Report](#). Her legislative highlights included a school program to educate students about personal finances; a program to encourage seniors who own homes to rent rooms to other seniors; a public facilities and environmental safety bill to address hazards such as lead on playgrounds; and, a bill to encourage reporting of sexual misconduct in schools. She said the Councilmember will be sending the budget letter to the Mayor this week which will include requests for increased funding to reduce crime and violence. Ms. Fowlkes also provided an overview of budget wins from last year including increases for early childhood education, school funding, housing vouchers, workforce education, the public restroom initiative, ANC allocations, language translation, and bike lanes.

VII. Presentation by DC Relay re services to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or who have speech differences

Renate Buttrum of [DC Relay](#) provided information about free telecommunication services for individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or who have speech differences. She said by dialing 711 people can access services such as caption relay, or speech-to-speech relay which uses operators who re-voice a message. Ms. Buttrum also said her organization gives an award each year for individuals who are hard of hearing or have speech differences who are leaders in their community, and they are looking for [nominations](#) for this year's award. She said more information can be found at [DCRelay.com](#).

VIII. Presentation by DecrimNature DC re entheogens

James Salt with [DecrimNature DC](#) asked for support for lowering the enforcement priority for entheogens, naturally occurring holistic medicines. He explained that this will be listed as Ballot Initiative 81 on the November ballot and passed around a sign-up sheet for those interested in more information. Lia Kuduk spoke about the use of plants and fungi to treat a variety of mental health issues and addiction.

Commissioners asked about the ballot process, the possibility of getting signatures electronically, and considering this matter at the Committee level.

IX. Regular Agenda

A. ABC and Public Safety Committee

Commissioner Guthrie noted that the Commission received a request from SpacyCloud to allow cover charges for live music. He said this would be considered at the ABC and Public Safety Committee

meeting. Commissioner Guthrie also noted that the ABC Board would be holding a hearing on March 25 on the proposed tavern at Florida Avenue/Vernon Street and that neighbors had filed a protest and a motion to dismiss the application.

B. Planning, Zoning, and Transportation Committee

1. HPRB submission for renovation plans at [1918 Belmont Road NW](#)

Commissioner Irani provided an update on a proposed renovation at 1918 Belmont Road and the discussions between the owners and neighbors. The owners and their architect presented revised drawings emphasizing shifted massing and reduced amount of glass, which they believe is consistent with the historic district.

Commissioners discussed compatibility with neighboring houses, the view from the alley and from the street, the material of the windows, and the response of the owners in postponing their plans in response to the community. Neighbors said they appreciated the changes in the drawings, but they still see it as inconsistent with the rhythm of the block. Other neighbors objected to the proposed roof line which would eliminate a current slope.

Commissioner Guthrie moved a resolution urging the Historic Preservation Review Board to deny the application for the proposed renovation or require that the rear façade be modified to reduce the size of the proposed extension, and change the windows to reflect the rhythm, scale, massing, and materials of other historic properties in that row. Commissioner Zottoli seconded the motion.

Commissioners discussed what HPRB is likely to do if ANC 1C objects to the proposal. Commissioner Bowles moved a substitute resolution stating approval of the proposal. There was no second to this motion.

One neighbor disagreed with the resolution's characterization of the windows as "factory windows" and noted that the front is consistent with the historic character of that row.

Commissioners voted on Commissioner Guthrie's resolution in opposition to the application. The resolution failed by a roll call vote of 2 to 3 with Commissioners Guthrie and Zottoli voting yes; and Commissioners Bowles, Dendi, and Irani voting no.

Commissioner Bowles said he found the proposal in keeping with the historic district and moved a resolution in support of the application. Commissioner Irani seconded the motion. This resolution passed by a roll call vote of 3 to 2 with Commissioners Bowles, Dendi, and Irani voting yes; and Commissioners Guthrie and Zottoli voting no.

2. Respond to application to occupy public space at 1815 Columbia Rd NW

Commissioner Guthrie provided background on an application submitted to the District Department of Transportation for a public space permit to use the sidewalk and parking space in front 1815 Columbia Road for a year for a renovation and addition. Commissioner Guthrie explained that the owner had proposed erecting a 6-floor building there several years ago, but the plans were not approved by HPRB. The owner has now submitted an application for use of public space for the renovation and vertical addition to the property.

Commissioner Guthrie further explained that if this application is granted, the sidewalk will be fenced-off even though there are no permits to do work on the building, and properties on either side which currently have approved public space permits for sidewalk cafes will be blocked. He

moved a resolution asking that the application be denied as untimely and of no benefit to the public until there is a proposal for the building approved by HPRB. Commissioner Irani seconded the motion.

Neighbors spoke the fact that it has remained vacant for years despite offers to rent or buy it and that the owner previously attempted to dig a foundation affecting the walls of neighboring buildings.

Commissioners passed by the resolution by a vote of 5 to 0.

3. Review the AdMo Heights (1777 Columbia Rd NW) [application](#) to BZA for special exception from parking requirements

Matt Wexler asked for ANC 1C support for a special exception from parking requirements for the second phase of the ADMO Heights building at 1777 Columbia Road. He explained that the parking they have already provided is not being fully utilized and they would like to proceed without adding more parking spaces.

The development team described the plans for an addition of a 6-story building of about 40 residential units with retail on the ground floor. Mr. Wexler noted that they preserved the facades of the buildings; are helping to endow the Friends of Unity Park; and will continue working with Lanier Heights neighbors to maintain the alley in good condition.

Commissioners asked about the designs; the number of parking spaces the relief would cover; the criteria that must be met for the special exception - including market need and proximity to public transportation; parking problems in the wider neighborhood; and the impediments to adding parking underneath the building. Neighbors asked about the feasibility of leasing parking spots in the new building, and the cost of leasing spots in existing buildings.

Commissioner Guthrie moved that ANC 1C support the application for special exception. Commissioner Bowles seconded the motion that then passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

4. [Resolution](#) in Favor of Emergency Legislation to Complete the 9th Street NW Protected Bike Lane

Commissioner Bowles moved a resolution to request that Councilmember Nadeau re-introduce emergency legislation to complete the 9th Street NW protected bike lane between Florida Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue NW.

Commissioners discussed adding the names of other Councilmembers and amending the clause that mentions the number of injuries that occurred in the past three years along that stretch.

This resolution had been approved in Committee and so did not need a second. Commissioners voted 5 to 0 to pass the resolution as amended.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm.