



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 20th, 2022; 7:00 p.m.

Online via Zoom

Call to Order

Chair Joel Causey (02) called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Commissioners Yannik Omictin (01), Trupti Patel (03), Donna Barbisch (04), Evelyn Hudson (05), Jeri Epstein (06), and Adam Friend (07) were present.

Adoption of the Agenda

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt the ANC’s meeting agenda. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0-0).

Commissioner Omictin made a motion to add consideration of a resolution regarding the incident at 21st Street and I Street NW on July 20, 2022 to the ANC’s meeting agenda. Commissioner Patel seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0-0).

Adoption of Past Meeting Minutes

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt the ANC’s regular June 2022 meeting minutes. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0-0).

Community Forum

Report from the Metropolitan Police Department’s PSA 207

Assistant Chief Morgan Kane, the Assistant Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department’s (MPD) Patrol Services North, and Lieutenant McHauley Murphy, a representative for MPD’s Second District, gave an overview of the recent crime statistics for the neighborhood.

Report from the Executive Office of the Mayor

Julius Terry, a Ward 2 representative for the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS), gave updates from the Mayor’s Office.

Report from the Office of Ward 2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto

Pablo Velasco Rodriguez, the Constituent Services Coordinator for Councilmember Brooke Pinto’s Office, gave updates from the Councilmember’s Office.

Announcements and Public Comments

A local resident gave announcements and public comments.

Commissioner Updates

Chair Causey and Commissioners Omictin, Patel, Barbisch, Hudson, Epstein, and Friend gave commissioner updates.

Matters Before the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration

Astoria's kitchen By 54 LLC – Application for a New Retailer’s Class “C” Restaurant License at 2121 K Street NW

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Hudson seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

ANC 2A protests Astoria's kitchen By 54 LLC’s application for a new Retailer’s Class “C” Restaurant license at 2121 K Street NW based on the adverse impact on the peace, order, and quiet of the neighborhood.

Consideration of a Proposed Settlement Agreement as Part of the ANC’s Protest of the Watergate Hotel's Application for Renewal of the Establishment’s Retailer’s Class “C” Hotel License at 2650 Virginia Avenue NW

Commissioner Barbisch made a motion to approve the proposed settlement agreement for the Watergate Hotel. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 6-0-1).

Consideration of Several Alcoholic Beverage License Renewal Applications for Restaurants, Hotels, Multipurpose Facilities, Clubs, Marine Vessels, Arenas, and Caterers

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding Chef Geoff's West End's alcoholic beverage license renewal application. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 5-2-0). The resolution reads as follows:

ANC 2A supports Chef Geoff's West End’s application for renewal of the establishment’s Retailer’s Class “C” Hotel license at 2201 M Street NW.

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding Park Hyatt’s alcoholic beverage license renewal application. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0).

General Agenda

Update and Consideration of a Resolution Regarding District Department of Transportation Projects in the Neighborhood

Commissioner Barbisch made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Omicini seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

The Virginia Avenue NW Protected Bike Lane Project is on track to significantly improve cyclists' experience navigating between the National Mall, Foggy Bottom, Rock Creek Park, and Georgetown. ANC 2A welcomes the investment being made in our community toward safer infrastructure.

ANC 2A remains deeply concerned, however, that the pedestrian experience has not been properly addressed, despite several attempts to bring our concerns to the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) attention. Elimination of a pedestrian refuge in the median, coupled with a relatively short crossing time and confusing signage and signaling, results in a dangerous pedestrian crossing at several points along Virginia Avenue NW. Individuals with mobility challenges, in particular many of our seniors living along this avenue, are unable to comfortably cross and must either cross extremely quickly or risk getting caught in oncoming traffic. Additionally, delays in the implementation of critical safety infrastructure are prolonging the existence of dangerous conditions along the avenue. The ANC understands that supply chain issues are contributing to the delay for the new traffic signals, but DDOT disabled the flashing pedestrian crosswalk lights some time ago. When the ANC has asked DDOT representatives about the progress of traffic signals at that location, we have not been given a firm timeline, only that the signalization will take a few months. Those few months have since passed with no update.

ANC 2A writes to formally and urgently request the following, at a minimum:

- 1) An updated and expedited timeline for the completion of the Virginia Avenue NW project, especially for the signalization of the G Street NW intersection,
- 2) Lengthening the crosswalk times at the New Hampshire Avenue NW, 25th Street NW, and 27th Street NW intersections, and
- 3) The initiation of a traffic safety investigation, or some similar DDOT analysis, of the pedestrian conditions of Virginia Avenue NW, with a view toward installing pedestrian refuge islands at wide intersections.

ANC 2A strongly believes that in its current condition, Virginia Avenue NW is still unsafe for pedestrians and the confusion in auto traffic signaling puts cyclists at risk. We must continue to collaborate and move forward quickly on plans to address these safety deficits so that our neighbors no longer have to worry about safely crossing the street that they live on.

Matters Before the Mayor's Special Event Task Group

Special Event Application for the DC Bike Ride on Saturday, September 10th, 2022

Chair Causey made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

ANC 2A supports the special event application for the DC Bike Ride on Saturday, September 10th, 2022.

Matters Before the DC Council

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the DC Council Committee on Business and Economic Development's Public Oversight Roundtable on DC's Sports Wagering Program

Commissioner Patel made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Friend seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

Earlier this year ANC 2A had to craft a settlement agreement for a new establishment. The ANC flags this specifically as this settlement agreement was the first one for a combined alcoholic beverage license and sports wagering license.

The ANC wanted to share for the record how incredibly time consuming and difficult this settlement agreement process was. It was difficult as all parties and agencies involved were stumbling in the dark. This is unfair to the operator and the ANC commissioners as each party has the expectation of "expert" knowledge with regards to rules and regulations around sports wagering.

The ANC was expected to craft an agreement that would meet the following criteria:

1. To not seem so onerous to the operator that it would emit an anti-investment aura, and
2. To provide clarity and transparency to residents on operations and safety protocols.

One thing was clear in the process: both sides felt rushed and pressured to enter an agreement. This could cause peril as any delay would have cost the operator their license and put their establishment in jeopardy.

Many ANCs are starting to experience this same situation and have zero guidance and information and residents are making their thoughts known with regards to how the entire process does not seem to be transparent.

ANC 2A has the following recommendations:

1. Kiosks must have a beginning time and end time inside of establishments,
2. Geofencing, if possible, should be mandatory around the establishments,
3. Set limit on cash payouts,
4. Have cash payouts done during daytime hours,

5. Do not allow cages in residential areas,
6. Require a sixty to ninety day review on all licenses issued to establishments,
7. Require that safety and protocol guidelines be presented to the community, and
8. The initial settlement agreement is to remain in the case of a license transfer to a new establishment.

These recommendations outlined above are not exhaustive but ANC 2A urges you to consider the recommendations put forward with regards to sports wagering in order to better serve the residents of DC.

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding DC Council Bill B24-0300 – the “Local Resident Voting Rights Act of 2021”

Commissioner Patel made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Chair Causey seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, one in seven DC residents is an immigrant, about one in nine residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent, one in six DC workers is an immigrant, and they contribute more than a billion dollars in taxes,

WHEREAS, immigrants account for one in six of all self-employed DC residents, immigrants generate more than a \$140 million in DC business income each year, and DC residents in immigrant-led households have more than \$3 billion in spending power,

WHEREAS, in 2018, DC was home to 50,612 women, 40,673 men, and 6,561 children who were immigrants. The top countries of origin for immigrants were El Salvador (eleven percent of immigrants), Ethiopia (seven percent), Mexico (three percent), Trinidad & Tobago (three percent), and China (three percent),

WHEREAS, it is unclear exactly how many DC residents are green card holders, however based on data from the Migration Policy Institute, out of 85,333 immigrants in DC in 2019, 51.3% or 43,781 were “noncitizens.” To add on, 10% of the city’s population is foreign-born, and as of 2018, immigrants accounted for 17% of the DC labor force, and

WHEREAS, many of those immigrants and many green card holders have been lawful residents for a significant time. As of 2018, almost 20% of the immigrants living in DC were eligible for naturalization.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2A urges the passage and implementation of DC Council Bill B24-0300 – the “Local Resident Voting Rights Act of 2021.”

Matters Before the District Department of Transportation

Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Incident at 21st Street and I Street NW on July 20, 2022

Commissioner Omictin made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Hudson seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

ANC 2A approved this letter in response to an incident during the morning of July 20, 2022, when a bicyclist was struck and killed by a dump truck at the intersection of 21st Street and I Street NW. While the exact circumstances of the crash are unknown to the Commission at this time, over the last several years, ANC 2A has advocated fervently to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) for pedestrian and bicycle safety infrastructure improvements to the intersection of 21st and I Street NW. These proposed interventions have included a bicycle lane (which now runs on 20th Street NW), a four-way stop sign, and traffic signals. After many years, traffic signals have been installed, but are not operating beyond flashing yellow lights. There has never been a permanent stop sign in the southbound direction on 21st Street NW.

In the opinion of ANC 2A, had the traffic signals at the intersection of 21st Street and I Street NW been fully operational, it is highly likely that this morning's crash would not have occurred.

With this context, ANC 2A requests answers to the following questions:

1. What caused the delay in installing and illuminating the 21st Street and I Street NW traffic signal?
2. Why were other interventions not installed earlier at this intersection, including a 4-way stop sign, curb extensions, or other traffic calming devices?
3. When will the 21st Street and I Street NW traffic lights be fully operational?

ANC 2A wrote this letter quickly because so long as the intersection remains insufficiently signaled, the risk of further injury and death to pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicle drivers remains high. The ANC also knows that there are many other intersections whose safety interventions are still being constructed, including at Virginia Avenue and G Street NW in ANC 2A.

Matters Before the Department of Human Services

Consideration of a Letter Regarding the Slow Process for Distributing Housing Vouchers

Commissioner Omictin made a motion to adopt a proposed resolution regarding the matter. Commissioner Patel seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0). The resolution reads as follows:

The Mayor and DC Council approved a historic \$96 million investment in permanent supportive housing vouchers for FY 2022, or around 2,300 vouchers for single individuals experiencing homelessness. In the same budget, the Department of Human Services (DHS) received a moderate increase in full-time equivalents (FTEs) to accommodate the added resources. Despite these extremely positive developments,

public numbers as of April 2022 show that residents have only been able to use 5% of the available vouchers, meaning 157 individuals have used these vouchers to move into housing. The Way Home Campaign estimates that at the current lease-up rate, it would take ten years to spend the FY 2022 voucher allocation.

Meanwhile, ANCs, community members, and even unhoused folks themselves are unfamiliar with the process by which unhoused people receive and use vouchers. Neighbors have blamed government agencies like DHS and the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA), as well as trusted community partners like Miriam's Kitchen and Pathways to Housing, for taking years to connect folks to housing, a sentiment echoed by encampment residents as well. ANC 2A believes that with more information about the voucher distribution process, which the ANC knows is lengthy and difficult, we can try to assuage their trepidations. At the same time, the ANC is very concerned at the particularly slow disbursement of vouchers. The ANC continues to have one of the highest concentrations of unhoused people and encampments in the city, and helping these neighbors move into homes quickly has been one of the most pressing goals of this ANC. Many have found housing thanks to the combined efforts of service providers, DC agencies, and fellow neighbors, and the ANC wants to make sure that progress is continued and expedited. Summer is a dangerous season to be living on the streets and individuals have passed away in their tents from heat-related conditions in our neighborhood.

ANC 2A writes this letter to request three pieces of information from your agencies:

1. A detailed explanation of the process by which individuals are selected for and use vouchers so that this process may be made transparent to the community,
2. Regularly published data regarding the disbursement of vouchers to help us understand progress on housing the homeless in real time,
3. A summary of the causes of the slowdown in voucher usage, identifying any barriers that your agencies will clear away to speed up the voucher process, and
4. A timeline for when your agencies believe they will use all the allocated vouchers in FY 2022.

ANC 2A would also welcome representatives from DHS, DCHA, and/or the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS) to one of the ANC's future public meetings to discuss this topic with our community. We all approach this work from a place of compassion for those with the least among us and hope that we can effectively mobilize resources to bring the unhoused back into stable housing. Thank you for your leadership and work toward ending homelessness, and the ANC looks forward to hearing your response and our future collaboration.

Administrative Matters

Approval of the ANC's FY 2022 Quarter 3 Financial Report

Commissioner Patel made a motion to approve the ANC's FY 2022 Quarter 3 financial report. Commissioner Epstein seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0).

Approval of Expenditures for Office Supplies

Chair Causey made a motion to approve expenditures up to \$50 for the purchase of an ANC banner for outreach tabling. Commissioner Friend seconded the motion, which was voted on and passed (VOTES: 7-0-0).

Update Regarding the ANC's Grantmaking Efforts

The Commission did not take any action regarding this matter.

Adjournment

Chair Causey adjourned the meeting at 9:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yannik Omictin', written over a light blue grid background.

Yannik Omictin
Secretary, ANC 2A01