



Government of the District of Columbia

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C

February 2021 Meeting Minutes

DATE: 9 Feb 2021

ANC-2C COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Michael Shankle, Gigi Nelson, Ellie Miske

PRESENT: Commissioner Michael Shankle, Commissioner Gigi Nelson, Commissioner Ellie Miske, Lamonté Pryor, Howard Marks, Capt. Jonathan Dorrough, Thomas Lee, Suzanne Sofge, Joseph Florio, Eric Phillips, Joanne Neuhaus, Stephen O'Brien, Harold Closter, Reginald Black, Theresa DuBois, Yohannes Bennehoff, Borzou Biabari, Shane Dettman, Al Sofge, Christine Shiker, Ann Tedford

ABSENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS /

QUOROM: Shankle introduced Commissioners Ellie Miske and Gigi Nelson and noted 3 of 3 Commissioners were present for a quorum.

2. OPENING REMARKS / APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Shankle noted the agenda is available on the website (www.anc2c.us). No changes requested. Shankle made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Nelson. (Vote 3-0-0)

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Nelson made a motion to approve the January 2021 Minutes, seconded by Miske. (Vote 3-0-0)

4. TREASURER'S REPORT: Nelson provided the January Treasurer's Report. The balance at the beginning of December was \$57,419.09. There were no transactions. Ending balance \$57,419.09.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Ward 2 Mayor's Liaison – Joe Florio, Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services, Ward 2 Liaison, 202.805.7122, Joseph.Florio@dc.gov: Florio noted budget engagement forums are starting, can find more info at <https://mayor.dc.gov/page/fy2022-fairshot-budget-%E2%80%93-mayor-bowser%E2%80%99s-commitment-give-every-washingtonian-fair-shot>

Continuing with vaccination, priority zip codes on Thursday, Friday vaccines open to entire city.

Florio noted that there is an ANC walk coming up in the next couple weeks. He has received a series of issues re: one alleyway from Shankle, is working on solving those issues. Looking for agencies to join them for the walk.

Closter asked what the mayor's office is doing to get security fencing around the Capitol removed. Florio stated that he cannot provide a specific date. There may be additional events coming up that require the fencing. Hopefully after these events happen then the fencing can come down and National Guard will be reassigned.

Marks noted additional fencing around other executive branch branches is overkill west of 395.

2. Ward 2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto Update - Brooke Pinto Councilmember, Ward 2, bpinto@dccouncil.us, or Lamonté T. Pryor, Scheduler/Executive

Assistant, lprior@dccouncil.us: Pryor noted Councilmember Pinto will be on the March meeting to discuss performance and budget oversight process and her legislative and community priorities. He also noted she will be holding a community meeting regarding the budget February 25 at 630p, can sign up at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjzrOi0vNfS5xJBOv4u-QVKo3bWvVSBW1pGvZY6COnvg2p4w/viewform>

Any seniors having any issues with vaccinations should contact Brian Romanowski at bromanowski@dccouncil.us.

Marks stated Director of Transportation has left his position, inquired about replacement for him. Marks noted that Councilmember Pinto is no longer on the Transportation and Environment Committee but wants to make sure that constituents can weigh in during the confirmation process to ask questions of the nominee during the selection process. Pryor noted that is not an issue and to go ahead and send him questions if there are any, and that he is sure Councilmember Pinto will have no issue addressing any concerns that residents may have. Marks requested info about when the hearing will take place, Pryor agreed to share info once he has it.

Black asked if there were any conversations about getting vaccines to the unhoused.

Pryor stated there was a conversation, and that they were planning community

outreach to ensure the unhoused were on the priority list. Pryor will revisit with Councilmember Pinto. Black stated New York Avenue Presbyterian is available to use to disperse the vaccinations. Shankle stated that DHS is planning with the Department of Health for vaccinations to happen at the new site for Pat Handy in early March. Shankle will email Black once he gets information on the dates.

- 3. MPD 1st District Crime and Community Awareness, Captain Jonathan Dorrrough, Jonathan.Dorrrough@dc.gov, 202.729.2179:** Dorrrough stated for 30 prior days crime numbers are looking good – 3 violent crimes, 6 property crimes (49 last year, 88% decrease). Still seeing decreased activity. Numbers are significantly lower. There is still some disorder on the street, keeping an eye on alley issue. Regarding aggressive quality of life crimes, must look at underlying social, economic, and environmental reasons some areas are getting hit harder than others. Had one stabbing and one shooting back-to-back in Chinatown, neither victim cooperative, guessing that it was related to low level narcotics activity.

Marks requested more information on the stabbing and shooting. Dorrrough stated the stabbing occurred January 11, the shooting January 12, both on the 600 block of H ST. Not much information on the stabbing, MPD found the guy but he's not cooperative. Officers were in the area for the shooting heard the shots and responded immediately. No suspect identified, did find shell casings from a semi-automatic handgun. Cases remain open. City has seen a lot of gun play in the last 6-8 months.

Lee stated they have an individual who sits next to Carmichael's restaurant who is unhoused, verbally abuses passers-by, not nice to have around. Another individual in same area they have no issue with, but this one even chased a resident down the street last week. Dorrrough stated that this unfortunately is mostly not criminal activity, so not really their priority right now. Recommended they reach out to the Department of Human Services or Behavioral Health, noting that it is voluntary. If they don't want housing, they won't get it, if they don't want mental health services, they won't get it. Can't lock them up, it's not the solution. The Community Response Team should be accessible to them.

Shankle stated that Joe from the Mayor's Office contacted DHS, and workers were scheduled to go out and meet with this individual. They have been trying to engage

him in services. Dorrrough stated to absolutely call the police if anyone is being chased. Black stated what Dorrrough said was correct, call Community Response Team (CRT), be in touch with DHS and DBH. Black recommended that neighbors go on <https://ich.dc.gov/> and look at the strategic plan and discuss what is there so they can see which strategy might be best played out. Black wants neighbors to be versed on what is there and understand unhoused neighbors. Neighbors can also see what DHS is doing for unhoused persons regarding COVID etc. For more info can call DHS at 202.399.7093, DBH 888.793.4357 (connects to CRT).

- 4. MPD 2nd District Crime and Community Awareness, Lieutenant Michael Hamelin, michael.hamelin@dc.gov:** Hamelin stated crime is also down and in PSA 209. A lot of businesses are still closed, but crime is down across the board. Biggest issue city wide is armed and unarmed car jackings, and auto theft, and those vehicles being used in more serious crimes. A lot of the cars being stolen have keys left in the ignition. Requests people remind friends and family to take their keys when they run in to pick up food. PSA 209 hasn't had any serious violent felonies, mostly dealing with property crime, mostly around F ST and City Center, primarily thefts.
- 5. DDOT Notice of Intent for Bus Lane:** Shankle made a motion to add this line item to the agenda, seconded by Miske. (Vote 3-0-0) **Yohannes Bennehoff, Project Manager for H&I Bus Lane Improvement, Yohannes.Bennehoff@dc.gov:** Bennehoff stated Notice of Intent was released last week, plan is to go final design shortly after the completion of input period (mid-April) with construction shortly after that. Bennehoff presented PowerPoint laying out the improvement. Not expanding what currently exists.

I ST will go to a double bus width from 13th to 14th ST. Allows better operational ability. Will introduce an offset bus lane on blocks with heavy right turn lane volume. The bus lane will be in the second lane to prevent blockage of bus traffic. Some blocks will have full time bus service (some full-time parking, some full time loading). Moving one stop from near side 18th St to far side.

Shankle asked if this is a permanent set, not based on time of day, Bennehoff confirmed that to be accurate.

H ST will show the similar set of changes with double bus lane, off set bus lanes and full-time curbside access on most blocks.

Project schedule: 30% Design Spring 2020 > Final Design Winter 2020/2021 > Construction 2021.

Shankle asked how traffic works with the two bus lanes. All vehicles in the right lane must turn right. The interior lane after going through the intersection goes back to curbside running lane.

Shankle asked how the transition was going with ride share services stopping in the running lanes. Bennehoff stated with increased communications it has decreased, it's not perfect, hoping to get automated enforcement from the buses. With cameras on buses to deter it, they think that will reduce issues. DDOT is still working on how exactly that is going to work.

Shankle requested how long the comment period is open for the Notice of Intent – Bennehoff stated until April 20, residents can comment here:

<https://wiki.ddot.dc.gov/display/NOI/NOI-21-42-TDD>

Miske requested the PowerPoint so she can share.

Marks requested more information about how passengers are exiting busses in the double bus lanes. Bennehoff stated bus islands will be constructed. Passengers will be discharged there. All bus operations have been worked out to have enough space. The island will connect directly to the sidewalk, it's basically an extension of the sidewalk. Separate sections for Circulator busses and Metro busses.

Marks asked where cameras would be. Bennehoff stated on both Circulator and Metro busses, like New York's program. Program still being investigated. Camera would capture the license plate of the vehicle.

Black asked how much of the project is intended to be improvements to the Franklin Park restoration, what's the conversation about restructuring that lane. Bennehoff said they have had conversations with both BIDs and curb line is not being moved out into the street. Stated that they are already under construction, so DDOT is not interfering with their plans.

Black requested what kind of communication is going out to local businesses who need delivery service. What does this do to traffic stops? Bennehoff stated that DPW and MPD have been engaged in the conversations about the project. The automated

enforcement program is a joint program DDOT and MPD. Engaging with businesses to find alternative locations for deliveries.

LOCAL EVENTS THAT IMPACT THE COMMUNITY

None

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSING (ABRA)

- 1. Smashburger Acquisition-DC, LLC, Smashburger #1738, 804 7th St. NW – (ABRA – 117669). New Retailer’s Class “D” Restaurant. Stephen J. O’Brien, Esq., Mallios & O’Brien PLLC, sobrien@malliosobrien.com, 202.627.7700.** O’Brien states it is part of the space that used to be Fado. Relatively small, seats 50, total capacity of 75. Smashburger is a gourmet burger chain, over 370 nationwide. Beer and wine only, typically sales are about 1% of gross revenues. No live entertainment, no outdoor seating. Business closes every night by 1030p. Miske questioned other location COVID protocols, O’Brien is not aware of that, but says that the Health Department has a whole set of protocols.

Marks requested when they are expected to open, and percentage of space used.

O’Brien stated April/May and is not certain the percentage.

Shankle made a motion to send a letter of support for the license, seconded by Miske.
(Vote 3-0-0)

- 2. Equity H, LLC, Bulldog, 713 H ST NW – (ABRA – 117308). New Retailer’s Class “C” Nightclub. Danielle Balmelle, Agent, DanielleBalmelle@gmail.com, 202.714.2976.** Biabani is representing and provided a PowerPoint presentation. Biabani stated the old Matchbox space will be opened as a local sports bar. It used to be a lot bigger. They are only taking about half the space as was previously used, about 2200 square feet. The entrance level will be a neighborhood bar with a specialty pizza oven, and they will put in a kitchen on the second floor. Hoping to open by April 1. Buildout about 75% complete. Had a local design company help with that, using local construction company to build it. Specializing in gourmet pizzas, local beers, regular bar, dishes they can make in the special oven. Eventually they want to have contests and donations with dog theme. Quirky theme, non-pretentious, cozy.

Shankle noted concern was over hours of operation for the sidewalk space. Hours of Operation Sunday-Thursday 8a-3a, Friday-Saturday 8a-4a. Sidewalk Café Hours of Operation Sunday-Thursday 8a-2a, Friday-Saturday 8a-3a. Hours of Alcoholic Beverage Sales, Service and Consumption Sunday-Thursday 8a-2a, Friday-Saturday 8a-3a. Shankle noted it is customary in the neighborhood to end outdoor service at 11p Sunday-Thursday, and midnight on Friday and Saturday. Biabani stated that they are not sure if they can even fit two 2 tops in the outdoor space. They wanted to have a couple small tables out there to say 'hey, we're open.'" They did not intend to have anything of significance going on out there. They do not have issue with the time change suggested by Shankle. Biabani offered to speak to the legal team to make an amendment to the outdoor time change. Shankle asked why they asked for Class "C" Nightclub. Biabani stated that they have always applied for a Class "C" license to eliminate concern about balancing the percentages with food and beverage.

Miske questioned hours on the inside of the establishment, asked if 4a was consistent. Shankle stated they haven't previously regulated that unless it was in a residential building.

Marks questioned indoor hours regarding people lingering outside with late hours. Requested that they work with the residents of Gallery Place to ensure good relations. Black referred to the Class "C" license, and asked if the Office of Nightlife and Culture was one of the agencies they worked with, if they are going to contribute to protect preserve and archive the music of the District of Columbia? Biabani reiterates that they are local. They promote local artists, foods, and vendors in many of their locations. Shankle requested that Biabani send the modification of hours, then he would put forward a letter of support. Biabani is amenable to this. Shankle made a motion to withdraw the letter of protest based on hours of operation and proximity to residences, and to send a letter of support once the hours are modified, seconded by Nelson.

(Vote 3-0-0)

TRANSPORTATION / PUBLIC SPACE

- 1. 601 D ST NW, Streetscape Site Improvements (DDOT - #366315). Shane Dettman, Director of Planning Services, Holland & Knight, LLP,**

Shane.Dettman@hklaw.com, 202.955.5564. Dettman states he has colleague, owners of the space, and design and construction team members on the call. The office building is the Patrick Henry Building. There is a full interior restoration going on. DC Office of Attorney General already using a portion of the building. The Department of Justice will take the remaining space. Two permits out with DCRA as of now for improvements to be made.

They will be seeking an after hours permit for interior work only to finish on time for DOJ timeline.

Dettman outlined public space improvements: New bench seating, bike racks, and new trees will be brought in, tree boxes will be enlarged to exceed DDOT standard, and bollards will be placed by parking. They want bollards to not impede pedestrian traffic. Healthy trees will be protected, tree boxes will still be enlarged. Plants selected will be under DDOT UFA recommendations.

Nelson requested addressing the after-hours work. Dettman stated all materials for after hours work will be brought onsite during regular delivery hours. Workers will be arriving through the garage, parking in the garage, and taking their breaks in the garage. Phillips stated that they are prioritizing 'noisy' work during business hours and other work after hours. If there are complaints, they are more than happy to work with them to rectify. Shiker stated a contact will be provided so if there are issues, they have that contact. Shiker also stated permits are for 30 days so if there are issues, the ANC has recourse.

Neuhaus questioned if the benches are long enough to sleep on, requested if they have center arm bars to prevent people from sleeping on them. Dettman stated that the specific model of the bench is still under consideration. He will pass comment on to the design team. Miske stated that she's not a fan of this type of architecture that's unfriendly to the unhoused. Shiker states that DDOT has a specific type of bench in their regulations.

Sofge (AI) stated that they've seen an increase in homelessness and aggressiveness in the homeless and does not want benches configured that allow for the homeless to sleep on them.

Black stated that there are concerns about unhoused neighbors but does not think this is the approach. We need to look at why we have people out there sleeping in the first

place. He is very much against adding anything. If you have an issue with homeless people, find them, build a relationship, and help them find housing.

Nelson stated there are standards already that they must abide by. It's a complicated issue and everyone's opinion is valid, but for the permitting purpose, she moved to send a letter of support, seconded by Shankle. (Vote 3-0-0)

Neuhaus stated she thinks DC needs to mirror San Diego's programs and get it started. DC has not done anything to really address the homeless problem.

Shankle stated that once the building permit is filed, Nelson can issue the permit for the after-hours support.

Tedford requested information about the loading dock changes. Dettman stated that the loading dock is entirely open air, and a small part of it will be enclosed. None of this will happen after hours.

2. The Best Sandwich Place, 1300 I ST NW (DDOT – 10837152). New Sidewalk Café Un-Enclosed. Jess Tarr, info@citypermit.us, 202.769.1958. Not Present.

PLANNING, ZONING, ENVIRONMENT, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

None

OTHER

Black stated he believes in housing being a human right.

ADJOURNMENT Nelson made motion to adjourn, seconded by Shankle. (Vote 3-0-0)

Minutes Submitted by: Gayle Gardner

Minutes Approved by: March 9, 2021

Next Meeting: March 9, 2021, 6p