

Government of the District of Columbia

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C

February 2023 Meeting Minutes

DATE: February 14, 2023

ANC-2C COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Michael Shankle, Rebecca Strauss, Kristin Roe, Thomas Lee

- 0. CALL TO ORDER:** Shankle called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm over Zoom (available at HYPERLINK "<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zOt32XE77Y>" [2023 February 14 ANC 2C Community Meeting](#) - YouTube).
- 2. INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS:** Commissioner Shankle and Commissioners Strauss, Lee, and Roe introduced themselves.
- 3. QUORUM:** A quorum of four commissioners was present.
- 4. OPENING REMARKS / APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Shankle reviewed the revised agenda from what was published online (available at www.anc2c.us).

MOTION: Roe made a motion to accept the February 2023 agenda as posted. Seconded by Strauss. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

- 5. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2022 and January 2023 MINUTES:** Postponed until the next meeting.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1. McPherson Square Encampment Closure:** Commissioner Strauss reported that the encampment would be closed as of tomorrow at 10:00 am. Councilmember Pinto's office provided figures on the encampment:
 - 56 individuals are encamped at the square.
 - 20 of these individuals are not responding to social service providers.
 - 36 have applied for housing, but only 20 are eligible.
 - Of the 20 eligible, two are in immediate housing, and the remaining 18 will be placed into bridge housing until their vouchers come through.

Roe read the most recent ANC 2C resolution regarding the encampment.

Shankle acknowledged the social service organizations that have engaged with individuals from the encampment for several months. He stated that monitoring would be ongoing within other parks. Shankle underscored that social services had expressed their wishes that no demonstrations occur tomorrow while closing the

encampment to ensure that the health, housing, and other professionals can do their jobs.

MOTION: Shankle made a motion to formally distribute the ANC 2C resolution regarding the McPherson encampment. Seconded by Roe. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

1. **MPD 2nd District Crime and Community Awareness:** Lt. Garvin stated that robbery reports are up, burglaries are down, and motor vehicle thefts are up. He spoke of a case in the 500 block of 13th Street NW on January 28 and subsequent arrests, the following day, of three juvenile males concerning armed motor vehicle thefts and robbery. Lt. Garvin spoke of a flash mob in which \$200,000 or more in merchandise was stolen. He also addressed an early morning burglary that is being investigated.

Roe inquired as to possible commissioner assistance regarding the flash mob attack. Lt. Garvin spoke of a blind spot that makes the business vulnerable and underscored that if individuals see something, then say something.

Strauss inquired about juvenile crime and the DC criminal code, making prosecuting difficult.

3. **MPD 1st District Crime and Community Awareness:** Lt. Kniseley reported that there had been an uptick in violent crime over the past 30 days. Robberies are the primary driver of this increase, especially around Capital One Arena, involving delivery drivers and their trucks. He stated that property crime is down, and crime overall is down two percent. Capt. Kniseley spoke of two armed robberies along 7th and H Street that resulted in an arrest the following day. He reported an increased MPD and Metro Transit Police presence at Gallery Place Metro.

Strauss spoke of receiving a constituent email writing of car break-ins. Lt. Kniseley emphasized that when people call, providing as much information as possible is crucial.

Shankle opened the floor to area residents, who inquired about the depth of the police presence at 7th and H Streets and Gallery Place Metro. Another questioner asked about officers being out on foot or bike instead of sitting in their cars.

4. **Ward 2 Mayor's Liaison:** Chris Reeder and Christopher Powell reported that the mayor is presenting the Get Ready DC kickoff event tomorrow at the Department of Housing and Community Development. Ms. Reeder underscored the objective of Get Ready DC in increasing African American home ownership in the District. Reeder spoke of the mayor and Kathleen Kennedy opening the Ethel, which houses tenant services in Ward 7 to help residents transition out of homelessness. The Ethel is part of a larger vision to create an RFK campus in the surrounding neighborhood. Reeder

asked commissioners to share their top three priorities regarding the budget. She spoke of \$3 million in grants via DPR to help organizations providing youth services work in the District.

A resident raised a question regarding the mayor's reaction to the U.S. House of Representatives' vote on the District's criminal code. Commissioner Lee inquired about the mayor's response to the 95 percent of this action that was agreed upon. Reeder stated that she had no information about the mayor's plans in this regard.

Shankle encouraged DC government agencies to remember that most ANC commissioners and the public are full-time employees and to adjust any open houses or events accordingly. Shankle also noted that messages from the mayor's office/DC government often arrive a mere hour or two before events.

5. **Ward 2 Councilmember Pinto update:** Brian Romanowski of Councilmember Pinto's office reported on the councilmember and her team visiting the McPherson encampment multiple times a day, stating that their focus over the past year has been getting individuals in contact with housing providers. Romanowski stated that the councilmember would visit the Pat Handy Shelter in the coming weeks. He reported that the councilmember would be hosting roundtables on gun violence reduction. Romanowski spoke of ongoing oversight hearings on the entirety of the District government. He announced that Councilmember Pinto had released her budget priorities, with public safety and ending gun violence being her number one priority.

Legislatively, Councilmember Pinto has proposed the Expanding Access to Public Restrooms Act, increasing the number of public restrooms across all eight wards. She also is pursuing a noise camera pilot program to help reduce vehicular noise. This legislation also looks at long-term infrastructure plans to help reduce vehicular noise.

Shankle inquired if Councilmember Pinto had a response to a bill to do away with vendor licenses. Shankle stated that not having vendor licenses would only add to the problems downtown. He referenced the importance of having accountability and the collection of sales taxes. He spoke of noise issues going unaddressed for years.

Roe inquired about Councilmember Pinto's visit to the Pat Handy facility and being kept in the loop. Lee spoke of the deterioration of the brick sidewalks in Chinatown and around the arena.

A resident asked Romanowski about drug dealing, what was driving this problem, and what could be done. The resident spoke of the crime bill making it impossible to address shoplifting, which will lead to area stores closing.

Another resident spoke of the DC Council providing nothing but lip service when addressing noise issues.

Another resident reiterated what Shankle said concerning the lack of accountability in moving people into the Pat Handy Shelter.

Another resident inquired about keeping the community updated on the Pat Handy Shelter. Romanowski underscored the importance of the community maintaining a line of communication with ANC commissioners. The resident asked about the closure of the Chinatown movie theater. The resident spoke of individuals sleeping in alleyways and the importance of increasing police patrols to ensure the safety of individuals in alleyways, citing the dangers of being run over by service and other vehicles.

LOCAL EVENTS THAT IMPACT THE COMMUNITY

1. **Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run:** George Banker reported on the Saturday, April 1, Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run, which is the 50th anniversary of the event that raises funds for the Children's Miracle Day Network. The event, which takes place around the National Building Museum, will host approximately 500 participants/ 120 volunteers.

MOTION: Shankle made a motion to approve a letter of support for the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run. Seconded by Roe. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

2. **Marine Corps Marathon:** Katie Marchek reported on the Sunday, October 29 Marine Corps Marathon, seeking approval for the proposed foot and traffic pattern. Marchek stated that up to 32,500 participants are expected. Instead of a map, Marchek read an overview of the route and its impact upon ANC 2C, amounting to approximately one mile of the overall marathon course. She underscored that the major roadway tunnels would remain open during the race. She underscored that the major roadway tunnels would remain open during the race.

MOTION: Shankle made a motion to approve a letter of support for the Marine Corps Marathon proposed foot and traffic pattern. Seconded by Strauss. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

3. **Her Story 5k Run and Walk:** Julie Hanson reported on the Saturday, March 4, Her Story 5k Run and Walk, and provided an overview of the route and impact upon ANC 2C. Hanson stated that there are approximately 3000 registered participants and that the streets should reopen around noon.

MOTION: Roe made a motion to approve a letter of support for the March 4, Her Story 5k Run and Walk proposed foot and traffic pattern. Seconded by Strauss. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

- 4. Scope it Out 5k:** Julie Hanson reported on the March 26 Scope it Out 5k, raising funds to fight colon cancer. She stated the event would host approximately 2,000 participants.

MOTION: Strauss made a motion to approve a letter of support for the March 26, Scope it Out 5k proposed foot and traffic pattern. Seconded by Shankle. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

- 5. Purple Stride 5k Walk-Run:** Jeff Ruday reported on the April 28, 14th Annual Pancreatic Cancer Action Network Purple Stride 5k Walk-Run stating that it mirrors the Scope it Out course.

MOTION: Shankle made a motion to approve a letter of support for the April 28, 14th Annual Pancreatic Cancer Action Network Purple Stride 5k Walk-Run proposed foot and traffic pattern. Seconded by Strauss. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSING

Sushi Snob: Javkhan Enkhtaivan, the owner of Sushi Snob, 1730 Rhode Island Avenue NW, introduced the restaurant manager, Zolzaya Mashbat, who addressed their request for extended hours on alcohol sales at the restaurant from the current end time of 8:00 pm to midnight. Request for extended hours on alcohol sales at the restaurant, from the current end time of 8:00 pm to midnight.

Strauss stated that more restaurants of this sort are needed, especially those open until later in the evening. Lee offered to send information to Mashbat on available city grants to assist with such businesses.

MOTION: Stauss made a motion to approve a letter of support for extended liquor service hours (until midnight) at Sushi Snob restaurant. Seconded by Roe. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

MOTION: Shankle made a motion to approve a letter of support for a stipulated license for extended liquor service hours at Sushi Snob restaurant. Seconded by Roe. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SPACE

Pedestrian Safety and Experience Study Update

Maria Espinoza, planning manager with DDC BID, outlined a study being conducted to improve pedestrian safety and experience. She introduced Jim Sebastian of Toole Design, who addressed the overall schedule and the study as it relates to other ongoing projects. Sebastian outlined efforts such as:

- Enhanced crosswalks
- Curb extensions
- Pedestrian plazas
- Traffic calming
- Planters

Sebastian spoke of public input meetings, online meetings, committee meetings, surveys, and pop-up events. He identified various streets and intersections that surveys show are particularly disliked by pedestrians. Finally, Sebastian outlined various long-term and quick-win opportunities to improve the experience.

Shankle asked as to the next steps. Sebastian stated several questions for the ANC, such as has the study identified suitable locations and what are its thoughts on the designs? Shankle commented that he has never liked the plastic planters on 7th Street used in trying to calm traffic, saying they were not effective in their implementation. Instead, Shankle likes crosswalk paintings and the opportunity to engage local artists in their design and creation. Shankle also likes the idea of creating additional parks, though he says it is essential to first confer with area residents.

Lee asked if changes to the 7th and F Streets intersection could be extended to include the southern section of the intersection, as it is pretty confusing. Lee also asked about skateboarders and providing space for them away from pedestrian traffic. He questioned, too, about repositioning planters that have become displaced. Espinoza stated that she would bring this subject up.

Roe expressed her hope that this pedestrian-friendly effort will bring more significant foot traffic into local restaurants. Strauss asked about the approval process and how long it takes. Sebastian stated that it depends upon the extent of the changes, as in calming versus sealing off roadways to traffic altogether.

A resident noted that the plan would further reduce parking and lead to the loss of service vehicles and deliveries. He also said that e-scooters would present a danger to pedestrians and asked if these were factored into the planning.

7th Street NW Bus Priority Project

Zack Gambetti-Mendez, the transportation planner, stated the primary question during this meeting was whether to begin engaging the community so that it better understands the needs and desires for the corridor. The Bus Priority Project has just now commenced. He said there are 51 projects to improve bus service and bus access.

He stated that projects are 1-2 miles in length instead of entire corridors, allowing DDOT to make improvements more quickly.

Gambetti-Mendez talked about Bus Priority's value: it will reduce wait times for riders, allowing them to travel farther and reach more destinations. He addressed some concerns that bus lanes impede emergency vehicles, stating that these lanes clear paths instead of creating bottlenecks.

The project location, said Gambetti-Mendez, is 0.6 miles long, from Pennsylvania Avenue NW to Massachusetts Avenue NW. He stated that the project is important because the 70 and 79 line is the busiest in the city, and the lines often confront slow travel speeds.

Gambetti-Mendez spoke of the project considerations:

- DDC BID outreach
- 2020 Car Free Lanes Input
- 2023 needs and public input
- Bus priority and safety needs assessment
- Bus Priority Plan & moveDC
- DC Comeback Plan
- Data

Shankle thanked Gambetti-Mendez for coming forward early in this process and garnering feedback. Shankle spoke of significant concerns, such as businesses that cannot use the alleyways for deliveries and services but must rely on the corridor. He asked how many seconds this project would shave off of ride times as a question that needs to be answered.

Strauss noted the existing painted bus lanes and if they were deemed a success and will remain in place. Gambetti-Mendez said he would get back to her about these rapidly placed paintings.

A resident asked why DDOT continually tries to cut off his condominium and stated this project would face a fight.

Tatte Bakery patio

Debra Moye, project director of Restaurant Consultants, outlined the Tatte Bakery patio plan, stating it is for seven tables bordered by planters, with operating hours from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. Kevin Vargas of Tatte briefed on the Boston headquartered chain. The Public Space meeting is on March 23.

MOTION: Stauss made a motion to approve a letter of support on the application of a patio for Tatte Bakery. Seconded by Roe. The motion carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

707 G Street NW public space application

Removed from agenda.

ADJOURNMENT: Strauss made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 pm. Seconded by Roe. The motion to adjourn carried. (Vote 4-0-0)

Minutes Submitted by: Minutes Services

Minutes Approved by: 03.14.2023

Next Meeting: March 14, 2023, 6:00 pm

ANC Commissioners and Website

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Meetings are scheduled for the Second Tuesday of each month.