

ANC 6A ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday July 19, 2009 7-9:00 p.m.
Sherwood Recreation Center (640 10th St. NE)
2nd floor Community Room

Commissioners: Drew Ronneberg (6A02)—Committee Chairperson; David Holmes (6A03), Raphael Marshall (6A01).

Committee Members: Barbara Halleck, Sharee Lawler, Arkan Haile, Charmaine Josiah

Call to order: 7:00pm by Chairperson, Drew Ronneberg

Community comments: None

Ongoing Status Reports

1. H Street Connection Redevelopment (Drew Ronneberg). Had zoning commission hearing on Monday to decide if this project goes forward. There was a last minute reconfiguration of the entrance to the garage from the street to the alley—at the request of DDOT. Traffic will impact the nearest neighbor. Another hearing will be held in September. Overall, the zoning commission thinks it's a worthwhile project although one commissioner noted that he thought the amenities package was light. Issue of 100 extra parking spaces—one of two opportunities to have public parking spaces on H Street; this was supported by the ANC. We have asked that the developer give additional consideration to add parking spaces if the city pays for the construction.
2. Vacant Properties: No update.

New Business

1. **BZA #18106 (243 8th St NE).** The owner/applicant requests a special exception under Section 223 of the DC Zoning Code to construct a third floor addition with a roof deck. The existing structure exceeds 60% lot occupancy and requires a special exception to expand the building's envelope. We will also be considering any historic preservation for HPRB.

Mike Fowler/architect--infill a nonconforming dogleg and add a third story. HPRB's main concern is that the addition not be visible from the street. They have built a mock-up and are working with the contractor to make the addition completely non-visible from the street. Addition is a bedroom and a den to the rear of the house, and a bathroom. The addition would be set back 20'. The applicant might have to lower the roofline somewhat so it is not visible. HPRB requested the owner differentiate between the old materials and new.

Retaining a rear entrance to the basement.

Drew Ronneberg said that he believes this meets the standard for a special exception and that the addition was consistent with the HPO standards.

Motion Halleck/Ronneberg: support the special exception for BZA case 18106 and support the HPRB applicant if the project meets the "flag test". Passed unanimously.

2. Bonome/203 12th St NE: Mr. Bonome co-owns the property with his parents, who will be moving in to the ground floor in-law suite. The parents have problems traversing stairs and the applicant want to provide access (from the sidewalk) to the in law suite and keep the existing stairs by cutting a flat path into the basement from the street. The current stairs will remain. In addition, the applicant wants to “sink” part of the front yard in order to allow access to the windows and more light into the in-law suite.

Building is a “non contributing building” in the historic district so has a lesser standard for meeting HPRB requirements..

Will be mirroring the same look and feel, using the same materials as currently in use.

Motion Holmes/Lawler: move that we approve plans as submitted and expanded upon by Mr. Bonome. Passed unanimously.

3. DC’s switch to new electric meters.

Meter boxes are getting bigger and are often sited on public space. This is probably a problem regarding permits being issued without public space permits. Front yards are public space—belonging to the city.

PEPCO doesn’t do anything that the district doesn’t approve. Generally if PEPCO knows the siting is on public space, they try to notify the owner to get a permit. PEPCO doesn’t generally follow up to see if the permit was obtained.

Holmes: The house may have a valid electric permit but that doesn’t also include a public space permit.

Ronneberg: PEPCO should not site equipment without a public space permit; however, DC will not issue a public space permit for siting equipment on public space. This means, in the end, that meter boxes should never be installed on public space.

Smart meters: does that mean everyone is moving from a small electrical box to larger boxes to accommodate the new meters?

Gary Neckorcuk (PEPCO): small sockets we show in our pictures (from Drew) went away years ago when power needs were much lower. Demand for current has increased, also codes have changed. The size of the meter box is determined by UL, ASTM, NEMA, etc.—based on standards and current operating requirements. Larger boxes allow more clearance. The new boxes have a disconnect within the stack, then meter sockets on the other side. Tap section is also included—allows for larger cables. Also cable is much larger and heavier—it cannot bend/transition in small spaces. As far as permitting, he can bring back to his division the need to stress with customers that they cannot site the meter boxes on public space without permits. Boxes can be placed inside as well; it is not 100% required to be outside but this requires fire department permission/meet fire standards. Denise Johnson (HPRB?) has been engaged by the district to develop standards for placement of electric boxes.

Drew: are there smaller boxes that could be used?

Gary: the boxes in use were selected based on standards and safety requirements. Often the larger boxes are used on houses that are being divided into multiple units. On single family homes, the boxes are probably smaller.

Marcus Beal: project manager for smart meters. Allows wireless two way communication between the meter and the substations. Allows PEPCO to get detailed information about usage and also monitor outages. They get

“last gasp” from the meters, meter is out. Also developing online portals so customers can see detailed information on their own usage. May also be used for time of day pricing.

New devices will replace existing sockets. Partnering with Silver Spring Networks. For urban environments, access points and repeaters will be attached to streetlights.

Holmes: with time of day charges, do you have to sign up for it, or can you stay on the old system. Elderly tend to be at home during the day; and need air conditioning all the time and will be using more electricity during the day. Marcus Beal: Altering usage somewhat could help.

Gary: You could request that it can be moved but that depends on the available space, clearance, etc. Lots of buildings have limited space to hang the box due to doors and windows. Contractor buys and installs the box; then PEPCO brings the service into the box. PEPCO will advise the contractor regarding the siting, if there is a code violation. PEPCO’s concerns are primarily functionality and access.

4. Discussion of the framework for the ED&Z committee should use in considering zoning and HPRB cases. This item was not discussed and will be brought up at a future meeting.