

ANC6a Public Safety Committee Meeting
NOTES
Sherwood Recreation Center
Wednesday May 16, 2007

Committee Members: Stephanie Nixon (Chair, Commissioner 6A08), Joe Bellino, Annie Earley

Committee Members absent: Laura Brown, Daniel Wolff, Mark Laisch

Commissioners: Nick Alberti (6A04) and David Holmes (6A03)

Community Members: 1

Government: Carolyn Crank (US Attorneys Office)

Ms. Nixon called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM

Action items:

1. Submit a letter of support (with suggestions) for Councilmember Graham's proposed amendment to the Hot Spot No Loitering Zone Amendment Act of 2007 (amending D.C. 21Law 11-270; D.C. Official Code § 48-1001) to the Council Committee on Public Safety and Judiciary
2. Submit a letter to the ANC 6A at large to request that MPD continue with the bike program on a district-wide level at the Commander's discretion during warmer months.
3. Submit a letter to Chief Lanier in response to her May letter regarding denial of a police substation and additional police officers in PSA 102 and 103.
4. Letters regarding drug and crime related concerns to owners the following properties: 112 15th Street NE, 101 15th St NE (1504 A St NE) Unit A, 1536 A St NE, 1518 A St NE.

Office of Unified Communications

Unable to attend. We hope to have them at a future meeting.

Office of the Attorney General – Court Reports Request

Committee member Joe Bellino mentioned the need to have Court Reports, like those released by the U.S. Attorney's office, from the Office of the Attorney General. Corporation Counsel within the Office of the Attorney General prosecutes juveniles crime as well as small misdemeanor crimes. A papering section for the reports would be helpful to any community group who would like to examine the full breadth of crime occurring in a given area. This is particularly necessary because of the number of different law enforcement agencies operating in the District of Columbia.

Ms. Crank from the U.S. Attorney's Office explained that the USAO court reports are something that they do as a press release in addition to the "papered" cases list. However, many of the cases that go before the OAG are bondable citations in lieu of arrest.

The committee decided to continue this topic until the next meeting with the understanding that Mr. Bellino would investigate further the status of OAG producing court reports.

Hot-spot No Loitering Zone Text Amendment

Note: Since the meeting, it has been determined that the Hot-Spot No Loitering Amendment Act of 2007 has been referred to the Council Public Safety and Judiciary Committee.

DC currently has no loitering legislation. Commissioner Nixon asked for support of a motion for public comment on the amendment. Ms. Nixon also discussed her concern for the lack of attention paid to “warm spots” (e.g., Rosedale, 15th and A NE, etc.). Given that these are areas with significant drug action, perhaps they should be included in some manner in the legislation to allow for “drug-free zones”. Using the Baltimore anti-loitering laws as a jumping point for the creation of similar laws in DC, Ms. Nixon suggested that the proposed amendment also include schools, recreation centers, liquor stores and convenience stores as permanent “no loitering” areas.

Commissioner Alberti noted that there are two different points to be addressed: first, the issue of the proposed amendment at hand. And second, a more long-term dialogue is necessary to approach altering the existing codes to include legislation concerning loitering. Additionally, Mr. Alberti requested clarification on the definition of a “hot spot” and “warm spot.” Ms. Nixon noted that no definition within the DC code currently exists. Committee member Annie Earley volunteered to contact Councilmember Graham’s office to clarify the situation.

Commissioner Nixon again returned to the Baltimore anti-loitering code stating that a drug-free zone is the equivalent of a “hot spot/anti-loitering zone”. Such areas in Baltimore designated by the Chief of Police [Commissioner] are reviewed for renewal as such an area every three months. Additionally, this designation can be terminated at any time. This is something that should be considered if this legislation is adopted.

Members of the Public Safety Committee agreed that this proposed amendment will assist in the short-term, but the issue of creating anti-loitering legislation within DC is imperative to address issues in areas not necessarily deemed “hot spots”.

Motion. In a vote of 3-0 the committee supported the proposed amendment and agreed to submit a letter to Councilmember Gray, copying Councilmembers Graham, Wells, Mendelson, Brown and other at-large members as well as Chief Lanier with the following recommendations. In addition, Commissioners Alberti and Holmes were in agreement.

1. The ANC 6A Public Safety Committee moves that the City Council offers this amendment for public opinion
2. Terms such as “hot spot” and “warm spot” should be defined in code.
3. Amend the language to read three months with option to recertify an area via a review versus leaving designation solely to the discretion of the Chief of Police.

Also, the committee moved to suggest that if the proposed legislation is passed, MPD utilizes citation with release as appropriate. Once the amendment is made, the ANC may vote to send a letter to MPD requesting that officers consider citation with release as an option when dealing with loitering “hot spot”/drug-free zones.

Bike officers in Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103

The committee discussed the pros and cons of bike police in ANC6A

Pros:

- Officers are better able to access areas otherwise inaccessible to automobiles
- Officers can easily shift patrol areas
- Officers can be more stealthy

- Stronger public presence
- Cons:
- Officers are likely slower to reach crime scenes
 - Reduce number of police in squad cars

Commissioner Nixon offered the option of instead of pulling police from Patrol Service Areas (PSAs), perhaps the District should create a bike unit (similar to the DC undercover unit). Further, Commissioner Alberti questioned whether we can request bike officers in PSAs, and if so, where will they come from in MPD?

The committee recommended that it continue to examine the efficiency of bike patrols in certain situations (e.g., seasons) to better focus ANC requests. However, in the interim, the committee views bicycle officers as an integral component of a proactive police presence. Thus, the committee recommends that the community use said police in a strategic sense so as to maximize their efficacy in targeted areas.

Motion. Submit a letter to the ANC 6A at large to request that MPD continue and consider increasing the bicycle program on a 1st District level with units dispersed at the Commander's discretion during warmer months.

Checkers Business License Request

A request was received to submit a letter to the franchise owner of Checkers for a copy of his operating license. Commissioner Alberti suggested that a Public Safety committee member work with DCRA to retrieve all relevant documents regarding Checker's permits/licenses vs. approaching Checker's for the information. Committee member Annie Earley volunteered to obtain a copy of Checker's business license, Certificate of Occupancy and any other documents that could be pulled regarding the restaurant's licenses and permits. Additionally, it was agreed upon that any findings would be reported to both the Public Safety and Economic Development and Zoning Committees for ANC 6a.

Since the meeting, Mrs. Earley has been researching these items using resources at DCRA. It turns out that Checkers is zoned C-2-B and did not require exceptions for the location. We are still looking for the Certificate of Occupancy on-line.

Chief Lanier letter RE: PSA Substation and Staffing

Substation

The committee discussed Chief Lanier's letter regarding ANC6a's request for a police substation in Northeast DC. In Chief Lanier's response to the ANC6A request for either the main station or the substation to be positioned in NE DC, she stated that she is "not contemplating expanding the number of substations in the First District at this time". Chief Lanier expressed concerns about the overhead cost of an additional substation. (Please see Chief Lanier's letter at the end of these minutes.)

Commissioner Nixon stressed the need for a response to Chief Lanier's letter. In particular, the NE quadrant of the District lacks a tactical response unit. In addition, Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103 need to be housed in the same sector in order to be able to proactively collaborate with regards to a nice flow between concerns that will definitely arise with regards to the Benning Rd/H St NE Corridor. Although the Lieutenants from both PSAs 102 and 103 take great lengths to coordinate meeting times, meetings would be much more feasible if they were in the same

station and sector. Options might include a cross PSA tactical task force assigned to the Benning Rd/H St corridor.

Furthermore, the committee, in general, agreed that we have no concerns that the command staff and officers will cope no matter where they are placed, but it is necessary to house some piece of the 1st District in Northeast DC. Committee Member Joe Bellino noted that in the past the 1st District did not run as far North and East. In fact, PSAs 102 and 103 were predominantly part of the 5th District. It is hoped that consideration will be given to housing the a tactical response unit in Northeast DC to acknowledge the expansion of the 1st District boundaries and to place some piece of the 1st District in Northeast DC. ANC6a has been consistent in this request for a police station for several years.

Staffing

With regards to the staffing portion of Chief Lanier's letter, the committee appreciates the use of a formula using 2004 and 2006 statistics. The committee discussed the need to see this formula include a projection for the increase in residents, visitors, and tourists in both Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103. It seems that PSAs 102 and 103 are perfectly staffed according to the calculations. This should allow the officers to be *proactive* versus *reactive* to crime.

With new residents in both PSAs there are likely to be higher expectations, particularly with regards to quality of life. Therefore, calls for service will most likely increase for a time period until everything settles. PSAs 102 and 103 have large housing communities (e.g., condominiums) and apartment buildings that are currently empty, but are being renovated for sale and rental. It is important to account for these impending increases when considering officer allocation. The committee was concerned that projections be used for potential future crime versus just past data and would like such projections to include ongoing land development in the way of entertainment and housing, both of which bring more people into the PSAs who need access to police.

Motion: Submit a letter to Chief Lanier in response to her May letter regarding denial of a police substation in and additional police officers in PSA 102 and 103.

We also discussed inviting Chief Lanier to either the ANC6a Public Safety Committee Meeting or an ANC6A meeting.

Nuisance Property Letters

Commissioner Nixon made a motion that ANC6A send letters to several property owners (addresses below) requesting that they work with neighbors regarding concerns with their properties. Police officers have even noted unusual activity at the properties listed in the motion. It is important to note that per the tax records, only the owners of 1536 A St NE and 1518 A St NE appear to reside on the property as they are both receiving the Senior Homestead Deduction. However, community members are concerned that 1518 A St NE may be vacant.

There had been community concern regarding a property on 14th St NE near Emerald St NE. However, the ANC6A Public Safety Committee would like to have something in writing or in person from several residents before submitting letters as were written for properties.

Commissioner Nixon stressed that it was important to have input on such letters from multiple sources over a period of time and that there must be a strong case. If ANC6A were to send such letters without checking facts, then the importance of these situations could be diluted.

Motion: Letters regarding drug and crime related concerns to owners the following properties: 112 15th Street NE, 101 15th St NE (1504 A St NE) Unit A, 1536 A St NE, 1518 A St NE. These properties have been identified as concerns to neighbors for residents that have been appear to be involved in illegal drugs, harassing neighbors, and more.

Teen Summit Live

Teen Summit Live, held on May 5, 2007 was a success. Forty teens participated, along with over 15 officers from the first district. The group was greeted by Mayor Anthony Williams, Councilman Tommy Wells, and WPGC's Justine Love. Following lunch, the teens broke out into discussion groups to talk about violence in their own lives as well as questions they had for police officers present. Both the teens and the police officers felt this was a mutually beneficial exercise to increase dialogue about serious issue facing teens in the first district. The teens also created t-shirts depicting how violence has affected them on a primary and/or secondary level; these t-shirts will be on display in the 1D main station as well as the Mayor's office. This was the first even of many to kick off the 2007 "Summer of Safety".

Guide to DC with Other Committees

Commissioner Nixon noted that this was something the committee would continue evaluating. Committee Member Daniel Wolff had mentioned a type of open source document on the web. The committee is interested in such an idea. In addition, Commissioner Nixon had spoken with Commissioner Ron McBee from ANC6D who has been working on something similar.

Ms. Nixon asked if perhaps using Yahoo Groups (moderated) or Google Groups (moderated) might be a good way to start. Another idea would be using a blog type website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

[INSERT DATE HERE]

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Council Chair
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Ste 402
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Councilmember Gray:

At its regularly scheduled meeting on May 14, 2007 with a quorum present, our Commission voted [INSERT VOTE HERE] to respectfully to support the Council's proposed text amendment concerning the "Hot-spot No Loitering Zone Act Amendment of 2007" with the following suggestions.

First, we respectfully request that the proposed text amendment is offered for public opinion.

Second, the Commission requests that terms such as "hot spot" and "warm spot" are explicitly defined in DC code so as to avoid any potential future misunderstandings in enforcing the legislation.

And lastly, we suggest that the Council alter the proposed text amendment lines 30-34 to indicate that the "Hot Spot No Loitering Zone" may be in effect for a maximum three months, whereby it will then be reviewed by the Chief of Police and either extended or terminated. This suggestion is based upon Baltimore's existing anti-loitering legislation to promote a more objective review of "hot-spot zones".

We respectfully request that you consider the above suggestions from the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A.

On behalf of the commission,

Joseph Fengler

Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

CC: Councilmember Tommy Wells, Ward 6
Councilmember Phil Mendelson, At-Large
Councilmember Kwame R. Brown, At-Large
Chief Cathy Lanier, Metropolitan Police Department
Commander Diane Groomes, 1st District

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Chief Cathy Lanier
Metropolitan Police Department
300 Indiana Avenue NW
Washington DC 20011

Dear Chief Lanier:

At its regularly scheduled meeting on June 14, 2007 with a quorum present, our Commission voted **[INSERT HERE]** to request that the Metropolitan Police Department renew utilization and involvement in bicycle patrol for officers within the 1st District.

Bicycle patrol is important and effective in community policing. Bicycle patrol allows patrol officers, in full uniform, to more effectively engage in detection and surveillance of the criminal element while still presenting an approachable and engaged appearance to the general public. For these reasons, we are requesting that MPD train and assign officers to work in bicycle patrol, at the Commander's discretion, in communities throughout the 1st District during the warmer months.

We look forward to your response.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

CC: 1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember
[Insert At-large councilmembers]

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Chief Cathy Lanier
Metropolitan Police Dept.
Government of the District of Columbia
300 Indiana Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chief Cathy Lanier:

At its regularly scheduled meeting on June 14, 2007 with a quorum present, our Commission voted **[INSERT HERE]** to respectfully respond to your letter regarding locating a station for the First District in Northeast DC and staffing for Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103.

We appreciate your response and understand that there are limits to every budget and the explanation of the formula planned for determining officer allocation. We again respectfully request that either the main First District station be moved to Northeast DC or that Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103 be provided a substation in Northeast DC. We feel that the benefits to public safety far outweigh the costs. Most, if not all, of PSAs 102 and 103 was originally part of the Fifth District that has a nearby station. When this territory in Northeast DC was transferred to the First District, it expanded the space and residents that officers in the First District cover.

When the plans to move the First District Station were created that involved moving the station to Virginia Ave, SW, it further emphasized the distance placed between our police officers and the community of Northeast DC. We would appreciate you reconsidering the location of the First District Main Station. At minimum, we need a way that Patrol Service Area 102 and 103 can be housed in the same station to facilitate a smooth and safe transition for the Benning Rd NE/H St NE Corridor. This is of utmost importance as these two PSAs share three borders, 9th Street Northeast, Maryland Ave Northeast, and Benning Rd Northeast.

We appreciate the calculations you and your staff have completed with regards to staffing. We want to ensure that Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103, along with the rest of the First District, will have enough officers to remain *proactive* rather than *reactive*. We are concerned that 2004 and 2006 calls for service and crime numbers will not accurately predict future criminal activity in an area. First District Commander Diane Groomes is terrific at ensuring that areas are staffed; however, it is important that our officers do not have to move to a *reactive* position.

Please ensure that any calculations include the projected increase in residents, visitors, and tourists to both PSA 102 and 103. In both PSAs there are many vacant commercial and non-commercial properties that are being developed for housing and entertainment. Over the next few years, we anticipate that there will be a significant increase in new residents to both PSAs as well as more visitors/tourists seeking the Benning Rd NE/H St NE Corridor. Both items should increase calls for service in these PSAs and criminal activity.

As your statistics indicate, Patrol Service Areas 103 had the second highest number of homicides in 2006. Crime is most likely to increase before it decreases again. We strongly request that any officer detailed from a PSA to a tactical unit no longer be counted as among the officers available to the PSA. Both PSAs have significant ongoing drug activity despite the efforts of MPD. This activity leads to violence. It is of utmost importance that PSAs 102 and 103 have ample staff to handle the increased demands of the neighborhoods and the Benning Rd/H Street Corridor.

Again, we appreciate your response and your honesty. We appreciate the work of First District Commander Diane Groomes. We would appreciate a commitment to at minimum maintain the officers allocated to these Patrol Service Areas, to consider placing either the Main First District Station in Northeast DC, and to consider the need to house Patrol Service Areas 102 and 103 under the same roof.

We look forward to your response.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

CC: 1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember
[Insert At-large councilmembers]

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Mrs. Thelma Best
3906 17th Place, NE
Washington, DC 20018

Dear Mrs. Thelma Best,

We would like to work with you and residents of your property at 112 15th St NE to increase the safety of the neighborhood.

Concerns have been expressed about public safety at and around 112 15th St NE by community members as well as police. Concerns include drug activity and noise, among other issues, at and around the property by individuals who appear to reside at the property.

There are several ways you can work with the community to enhance public safety including, working with the Metropolitan Police Department (Patrol Service Area 103), your Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, and establishing a point of contact with your immediate neighbors.

To facilitate communication, we have included contact information for your Patrol Service Area 103 and Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, along with meeting dates below:

Patrol Service Area 103, A/Lieutenant Mark Saunders (Mark.Saunders@dc.gov) 698-0068, Volunteer Co-Community Coordinator Brenda Artis (bfartis14@yahoo.com) and Stephanie Nixon (smnixon6a@prodigy.net)

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, 202 543-3512
alberti6a04@yahoo.com

Ward 6 Neighborhood Services Coordinator Hiram Brewton, 202-727-7975
(Hiram.Brewton@dc.gov)

We look forward to working with you.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

enc: ANC6A flier, PSA boundaries handout

CC: Hiram Brewton, NSC Ward 6
1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Acting Lt (Sgt) Mark Saunders
Kenneth Behle, US Attorney's Office
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Mrs. Susanna Casu
101 15th St, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mrs. Susanna Casu,

We would like to work with you and residents of your property at 101 15th St NE (also 1504 A St NE and specifically Unit A) to increase the safety of the neighborhood.

Concerns have been expressed about public safety at and around 101 15th St NE (Unit A) by community members as well as police. Concerns include drug activity and noise, among other issues, at and around the property by individuals who appear to reside at the property. At least one drug-related arrest from this Unit supports these concerns and occurred within the past three months.

There are several ways you can work with the community to enhance public safety including, working with the Metropolitan Police Department (Patrol Service Area 103), your Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, and establishing a point of contact with your immediate neighbors.

To facilitate communication, we have included contact information for your Patrol Service Area 103 and Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, along with meeting dates below:

Patrol Service Area 103, A/Lieutenant Mark Saunders (Mark.Saunders@dc.gov) 698-0068, Volunteer Co-Community Coordinator Brenda Artis (bfartis14@yahoo.com) and Stephanie Nixon (smnixon6a@prodigy.net)

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, 202 543-3512
alberti6a04@yahoo.com

Ward 6 Neighborhood Services Coordinator Hiram Brewton, 202-727-7975
(Hiram.Brewton@dc.gov)

We look forward to working with you.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

enc: ANC6A flier, PSA boundaries handout

CC: Hiram Brewton, NSC Ward 6
1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Acting Lt (Sgt) Mark Saunders
Kenneth Behle, US Attorney's Office
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Mr. A. D. Ashton
1536 A Sreet, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Ashton,

We would like to work with you and residents of your property at 1536 A St NE to increase the safety of the neighborhood.

Concerns have been expressed about public safety at and around 1536 A St NE by community members as well as police. Concerns include drug activity and noise, among other issues, at and around the property by individuals who appear to reside at the property.

There are several ways you can work with the community to enhance public safety including, working with the Metropolitan Police Department (Patrol Service Area 103), your Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, and establishing a point of contact with your immediate neighbors.

To facilitate communication, we have included contact information for your Patrol Service Area 103 and Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, along with meeting dates below:

Patrol Service Area 103, A/Lieutenant Mark Saunders (Mark.Saunders@dc.gov) 698-0068, Volunteer Co-Community Coordinator Brenda Artis (bfartis14@yahoo.com) and Stephanie Nixon (smnixon6a@prodigy.net)

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, 202 543-3512
alberti6a04@yahoo.com

Ward 6 Neighborhood Services Coordinator Hiram Brewton, 202-727-7975
(Hiram.Brewton@dc.gov)

We look forward to working with you.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

enc: ANC6A flier, PSA boundaries handout

CC: Hiram Brewton, NSC Ward 6
1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Acting Lt (Sgt) Mark Saunders
Kenneth Behle, US Attorney's Office
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember

[INSERT DATE HERE]

Mrs. Deborah Davis
1518 A St, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mrs. Deborah Davis,

We would like to work with you and residents of your property at 1518 A St NE to increase the safety of the neighborhood.

Concerns have been expressed about public safety at and around 1518 A St NE by community members as well as police. Concerns include drug activity, noise, loitering, litter, and illegal dumping, among other issues, at and around the property by individuals who do not appear to reside at the property. In fact, there are questions about whether or not the property is occupied.

There are several ways you can work with the community to enhance public safety including, working with the Metropolitan Police Department (Patrol Service Area 103), your Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, and establishing a point of contact with your immediate neighbors.

To facilitate communication, we have included contact information for your Patrol Service Area 103 and Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, along with meeting dates below:

Patrol Service Area 103, A/Lieutenant Mark Saunders (Mark.Saunders@dc.gov) 698-0068, Volunteer Co-Community Coordinator Brenda Artis (bfartis14@yahoo.com) and Stephanie Nixon (smnixon6a@prodigy.net)

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 6A04 Nicholas Alberti, 202 543-3512
alberti6a04@yahoo.com

Ward 6 Neighborhood Services Coordinator Hiram Brewton, 202-727-7975
(Hiram.Brewton@dc.gov)

We look forward to working with you.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

enc: ANC6A flier, PSA boundaries handout

CC: Hiram Brewton, NSC Ward 6
1st District Commander Diane Groomes
Acting Lt (Sgt) Mark Saunders
Kenneth Behle, US Attorney's Office
Tommy Wells, Ward 6 Councilmember