

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C
Adams Morgan
Minutes of June 3, 2020

I. Call to Order and Introduction of the Commissioners

A meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C was held electronically on June 3, 2020. Commissioner Irani called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. About 60 members of the public joined electronically. In attendance were Commissioners Amir Irani (1C01), Ted Guthrie (1C03), John Zottoli (1C04), Damiana Dendi (1C05), Michaela Wright (1C06), Japer Bowles (1C07), and Chris Jackson (1C08).

II. Officers' Reports

A. Chair's Report

Commissioner Irani commented on the important message of the current protests and stressed that Democracy requires feedback, sometimes in the form of protest, for meaningful reform; and that law and order can't be achieved through excessive force.

He also reminded everyone of face coverings requirements, and that we all need to dispose of PPE in trash cans because it is hazardous to our fellow residents and street cleaners.

Finally, Commissioner Irani announced that the Planning, Zoning, and Transportation Committee would be meeting by Zoom on June 17 to hear comments, issues, and concerns with the potential expansion of public space for pedestrians on 18th Street.

B. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Bowles gave an update on ANC 1C finances and said that the next quarterly report would be given at the July meeting. He added that two COVID-related grants would be considered later in the meeting.

Commissioner Bowles also noted that June is Pride Month. He urged everyone to celebrate the LGBTQ members of their families and noted similarities in the current protests and Pride movement protests. He opposed the use of federal forces deployed in the protests and said we need to push our leaders for real reform of policing and prioritizing spending in the community.

C. Secretary's Report

Commissioner Wright also expressed support for the protesters and the movement and said she hopes we can come together as a community at this time.

She reported that draft minutes from the May meeting had been circulated and posted on the website, one small edit had been made, and the revised minutes would be included as part of the consent agenda.

Commissioner Wright also announced that the Jubilee Seniors Book Club is going to read *Becoming* by Michelle Obama and they had a goal of getting donations of 30 copies of this book. She provided details in the chat on how to donate a book to the book club through Amazon.

III. Commissioner Announcements/Comments

- Commissioner Dendi echoed the previous comments in support of the Black Lives Matter protests and protesters, adding that she is one of them. She criticized tactics being taken by the police and Mayor adding that she herself was hit by a canister of pepper spray.

- Commissioner Zottoli thanked all for participating in the ANC virtual meetings and for making comments on the agenda items.

IV. Public Announcements / Comments

- Allie Bobak from Councilmember Nadeau's office provided her contact information (phone: 202-531-5186; email abobak@dccouncil.us). She thanked the Commissioners for their comments on the current protests. She echoed those sentiments personally, and said Councilmember Nadeau has issued social media statements on the murder of George Floyd and about police engagement during the protests. Ms. Bobak said that schedules for budget hearings could be found at dccouncilbudget.com along with ways to submit testimony.
- Nick Roland reported that the Reed-Cooke Neighborhood Association stands with the protesters and against the way they are being treated, and has called on the Mayor to change budget priorities with respect to police funding. He also announced that RCNA is setting up a neighborhood relief fund for residents affected by COVID-19 and will be applying for a grant from ANC 1C for this fund in July. Mr. Roland said information about donating or applying for relief can be found on their website at reedcooke-dc.org. Commissioner Irani encouraged individuals and businesses to contribute to this fund.
- Travoris Culpepper from Pepco gave an update on the Capital Grid Project which includes the Champlain Substation and the laying of 10 miles of transmission line through DC. He said work on the transmission line will begin at the end of June along the 2100 block of 16th Street near W Street. He added that a virtual community meeting on the Capital Grid Project is planned for June 16 and he would send information on this to ANC Commissioners. Mr. Culpepper said a separate Reliability Project starting in late July in ANC 1C05 involves upgrading cable along 18th Street, Summit Place, and Columbia Road. He said he will present more information on this at the next ANC meeting and Pepco will be sending letters to impacted neighbors.
- Brian Barrie from the Adams Morgan Partnership BID announced that businesses that registered for free PPE from the Mayor's office need to pick that up now, and if they cannot, the BID could do that for them. He also added on a sad note that Iraj Askarinam, business owner in Adams Morgan for decades, including the former Spaghetti Garden, had passed away and will be missed.
- Matt Wexler said that the Adams Morgan Commercial Development Coalition is open to all community members not just businesses, and that the coalition has made it a priority to partially close 18th Street to vehicles for public health as well economic reasons. He said he hopes everyone can continue to collaborate on this initiative and said more information is on the coalition's website at: imagineadmo.org.
- Valca Valentine from the Office of the People's Counsel provided information about OPC resources to assist residents with utility payments and said more information can be found at opc.dc.gov or by calling 202-727-3071. Ms. Valentine also announced that DCWater will be holding its ratemaking town meetings virtually this summer.

V. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Irani moved for adoption of the consent agenda which consisted of the minutes from the May 2020 ANC meeting, and adding Chris Jackson as a member of the Planning, Zoning, and Transportation Committee. The consent agenda was adopted by a vote of 7 to 0.

VI. Regular Agenda

A. Public Services and the Environment Committee

1. Consider grant request from LightHouse

Commissioner Irani recused himself from consideration of this grant because of his work with [LightHouse](#). Commissioner Bowles reviewed the ANC's previous consideration and refinement of the LightHouse [grant request](#) for \$4000 to purchase 75 packs of protective masks (50 masks per pack), and 64 grocery cards of \$25 each to be distributed with LightHouse partners, Jubilee Housing and Joseph's House.

Commissioners suggested the masks and grocery cards be purchased at local stores. Jing Wen from LightHouse said they were open to buying the masks at the local Ace Hardware and including Safeway as a source of the grocery cards. Commissioner Bowles then moved to approve the grant request with these changes. Commissioners voted to approve the grant by a vote of 6 to 0 to 1 (with Commissioner Irani abstaining).

2. Consider grant request from Adams Morgan BID

Commissioner Bowles reported that the Adams Morgan BID had submitted a [grant request](#) for \$4000 to purchase and install four outdoor hand sanitizer dispensers in Adams Morgan. Brian Barrie of the BID provided information the type of dispensers and possible locations.

Commissioners discussed the proposed locations and the BID's role in ongoing maintenance and filling of the dispensers. Kristen Barden of the BID said the goal is to place the dispensers in strategic places with high foot traffic. Commissioners and members of the public discussed adding more dispensers in the future if these stations work well.

Commissioner Irani made a procedural motion to add this item to the agenda without the usual 10 days' notice on the basis that it is in the community interest. Commissioners passed the procedural motion by a vote of 7 to 0. Commissioner Irani moved to approve the grant which passed by a vote of 7 to 0.

B. Planning, Zoning, and Transportation Committee

1. [Resolution](#) in favor of opening and expanding uses of public space on 18th Street

Commissioner Irani introduced a resolution to temporarily expand use of public space for pedestrians and restrict the use of vehicles on two blocks of 18th Street. He stressed the public health reasons for this resolution as restaurants are allowed to re-open with service outdoors noting that there is not enough space for pedestrians and those seated at tables to keep a safe distance.

Commissioners discussed issues of handling traffic coming north on 18th Street; whether 18th should be closed starting at Florida Avenue; the effectiveness of attempting to limit traffic to local-only; and, adapting the plan going forward. Commissioner Bowles suggested adding a previously passed resolution regarding other sidewalk extensions in Adams Morgan, but it was decided to keep the two resolutions separate.

Members of the community (including residents and business owners) commented on: the fact that input on this proposal came from various sectors of the community; the public health aspects of the proposal; the need for regular review and adapting the plan going forward and whether residents will be included in those discussions; how long the plan will be in place; daily hours of closure; traffic on side roads; the possibility of closing 18th from Florida Avenue; signage for no through traffic; the benefits to physical and mental health by having this open space; getting input from employees as well as business owners; possible geofencing of rideshare vehicles; location and size of the

designated zones for rideshare pick-up and drop-off; public health measures for businesses in re-opening; pedestrian safety if sharing space with bicycles and scooters; possible health risks if Adams Morgan becomes a magnet; Metro Bus re-routing; access for delivery trucks for businesses and residents; and, access for emergency vehicles and MetroAccess.

Kelly Lundgren, the Principal of Marie Reed school spoke in support of the resolution as written because it will still allow families access to the school, while reducing traffic and speed along 18th Street. She said, however, if 18th Street is closed all the way down to Florida Avenue, it would be a great inconvenience for parents. Ms. Lundgren also cautioned that the possible increase of visitors coming might create spill-over onto the Marie Reed plaza and field as picnic areas. She said it is already a challenge to keep those areas safe and clean, but otherwise she is on board with the resolution as written.

Commissioners thanked everyone for the input and constructive discussion. Commissioner Irani moved for adoption of the resolution. Commissioner Bowles seconded the motion that then passed by a vote of 7 to 0.

2. Request for a crosswalk at the intersection of Biltmore Street and 19th Street

Emma Arons asked for ANC 1C support for her request for a [safety assessment](#) of the intersection of 19th Street and Biltmore Road. She said that she had collected 118 signatures from neighbors on a [petition](#) requesting a crosswalk across Biltmore, but learned that the safety assessment needs to happen first. Commissioner Irani noted that there are currently no crosswalks on Biltmore from Calvert Street to Columbia Road. Ms. Arons added that Biltmore is a one-way street there but cars often go the wrong way. She said the neighbors are requesting anything to improve the safety there, including signs or speed bumps. Commissioner Guthrie moved that ANC 1C send a letter to DDOT asking for a safety assessment at the intersection of 19th Street and Biltmore Road. Commissioner Zottoli seconded the motion that passed by a vote of 7 to 0.

C. ABC and Public Safety Committee

1. Settlement agreement with Amsterdam Falafelshop and stipulated CR license

Commissioner Guthrie moved to add to the agenda consideration of a modified [settlement agreement](#) with Amsterdam Falafelshop without the usual 10 days' notice on the basis that it is in the community interest to help support businesses on 18th Street at this time. Commissioner Bowles seconded the procedural motion that then passed by a vote of 7 to 0. Commissioner Guthrie then moved for adoption of a settlement agreement that ANC 1C and the Kalorama Citizens Association worked out with Amsterdam Falafelshop to allow take-out liquor orders with food orders, and to agree to a stipulated license allowing them to begin such sales before the end of the protest period.

Commissioner Irani seconded the motion that then passed the motion by a vote of 7 to 0. Arianne Bennet of Amsterdam Falafelshop thanked the Commissioners and said they are excited to re-open.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 pm.