

16th Street Neighborhood Association
Final Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2015

The meeting at Simpson-Hamline Church was well-attended with about 24 neighbors. The minutes from the November meeting were approved by attendees with no corrections.

Voting Matters

Incorporating as a Non-profit Association

Jack introduced two neighbors, Ulysses and Nathan, who are working on organizational matters for the association. They gave a short presentation on the pros and cons of registering the association as a non-profit association with D.C.'s Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), which was the status of the association before it became inactive. Pros include the ability to collect dues and open a bank account; more political clout in dealing with local government agencies; and limited legal protections for officers if someone is injured during an association-sponsored event. Cons include the need to update the association's bylaws and other documents; the efforts needed to submit periodic filings with DCRA and the related filing fee costs.

In response to questions, Nathan said that no decision had been made as to how we would register the association. There are two options: 1) Reinstating 16th Street Neighborhood Association by paying fines for allowing the association to become inactive; or 2) Registering the association under a new name such as 16th Street Heights Neighborhood Association. Several members expressed a preference for keeping the past association name (option 1). The Executive Committee will develop a recommendation on the best option and present it to the membership.

Following the discussion, an oral vote was held to resolve whether the association should register with DCRA as a non-profit association. The attendees unanimously supported the passage of this resolution. No one voiced disagreement with the resolution.

New Executive Committee Members

Jack introduced two members, invited by the Executive Committee to participate on the Executive Committee, namely Greg Phillips who moderates the Listserv and Elisa Irwin, our ANC representative. Both Greg and Elisa have been instrumental in reviving the association in the last year. Motions were made and resolutions were unanimously passed confirming the membership of Greg and Elisa on the Executive Committee.

Committee focused on Seniors and Neighbors with Special Needs

Jack introduced a newly-formed committee to support seniors and neighbors with special needs who live in our neighborhood. The committee, which is led by Sandra L. and Dot (co-chairs), will initially focus on developing communications with neighbors who are not adept with using the Listserv and Internet and may need help obtaining city services. The committee will also seek ways to include seniors and neighbors with special needs in association events. The Committee may be asking block captains and other neighbors for help in identifying and contacting seniors and neighbors with special needs.

Crime Committee Update

Cecelia shared an update from the Crime Committee. There continues to be crime in the neighborhood. Recently, there was an armed robbery on the 4500 block of 15th Street and an attempted robbery on Buchanan at Piney Branch Road. Carrie, the chair of the Crime Committee followed up with MPD on the status of its investigations into these crimes. So far, no one has been arrested.

In the last month, several members of the crime committee conducted a neighborhood walk-through to identify unsafe conditions, particularly dark alleys and streets. A list of unsafe conditions in the neighborhood was distributed to interested neighbors at the meeting. Carrie has notified DDOT of street lights that need repair and is engaging other agencies to resolve the other unsafe conditions.

Because the police may need to respond to reports of criminal activities in alleys, we encourage neighbors to put address signage on their garages and garbage cans. Additionally, we encourage neighbors to add motion-detecting lights along dark alleys.

In the spring, the Crime Committee plans to hold another Safety Training with MPD's Samantha Nolan. It also plans to invite an MPD representative to our next meeting to obtain an update on neighborhood crime.

Finally, the Crime Committee needs more active members with ideas on addressing crime in the neighborhood. Interested neighbors should contact Carrie.

Update on 1521 Varnum Street

John Stokes, the neighbor challenging the zoning permit issued for the 7-unit apartment building planned for 1521 Varnum Street, provided an update on his recent fundraiser to pay for legal fees. He was able to raise \$2600 and retained Cornish Hitchcock, an experienced land-use attorney, to review the case record and provide him with advice on pursuing an appeal of the unfavorable BZA decision. An appeal cannot be prepared until after BZA issues a written opinion for its decision. John anticipates that the opinion will be issued in January or February 2016.

Jack is hosting another fundraiser to help pay for legal fees on Sunday, December 6, 2015, from 4-5:30 PM, at 1511 Allison Street NW. At this event, John plans to provide neighbors an update on information he recently received from Mr. Hitchcock. Interested neighbors should attend this event (a donation is not required to attend).

ANC Update by Elisa Irwin (our ANC rep):

- The zoning for the commercial section of 14th Street, between Buchanan and Decatur Streets, is about to change to C2A, a higher density zoning district than what exists today. This new zoning district permits social halls, auto detailing businesses, and theaters.
- Elisa is holding a meeting with neighbors concerned about this zoning change and other issues relating to this commercial section of 14th Street on Monday, December 7, 2015, at 7:00 PM in the Community Meeting Room of the Bus Barn Building on 14th Street (near Crittendon Street).

- The next PSA 404 meeting is on December 17, 2015 at 7:00 PM at 801 Shepherd St. NW.

Other Discussions:

- Michele from Brandon Todd's office asked the Crime Committee to report broken street lights to DDOT by identifying the number labeled on the street light pole.
- Neighbors discussed the need for safety measures at the cross-walk across 16th Street near Buchanan Street. Ideas included cutting back the shrubbery and/or placing a speed camera on the corner.

OFFICIAL MINUTES APPROVED AT FEBRUARY 2, 2016 MEETING

Cecelia Waldeck
Secretary