

**Neighborhood Association  
Meeting Minutes  
September 1, 2015**

The meeting at Simpson-Hamline Church was well-attended with about 85 neighbors and some cute children. We also had the pleasure of meeting Pastor Yvonne Mercer-Staton of Simpson-Hamline Church who shared some thoughts about the need for the community, including the police department, to address the currently, very-underserved needs of mentally ill neighbors and residents.

We devoted the meeting to discussing recent crime in the neighborhood and ways to protect ourselves and other neighbors from criminal activity. The speakers on these issues included Councilman Brandon Todd and Lieutenant Raul Figueras, who is in charge of the PSA District in which we reside (*i.e.*, PSA 404). We are very grateful for the participation of both these speakers because they provided very helpful information:

- Councilman Todd has made the recent uptick in violent crimes a priority issue for his constituent services staff and he personally has been going on police ride-alongs in our neighborhood. He has pushed for police over-time and other initiatives that have increased the number of police patrols in our neighborhood and he will continue to push for increases in these policing services.

On the legislative front, Councilman Todd is working to provide neighbors with a tax deduction for installing security cameras on their homes. The video from these cameras have helped the police solve crimes. Additionally, he and others are considering remedies to discourage crimes by repeat offenders who return to our neighborhood. Finally, he shared information about community initiatives, including block captain trainings and a gun buyback program that provides monetary rewards to anyone who turns in a gun to MPD. For more information on these programs, contact Jackson Carnes, Director of Constituent Services, 202-724-8793 or [jcarnes@dc.council.us](mailto:jcarnes@dc.council.us)

- Lieutenant Figueras described some of the recent violent crimes in the neighborhood, including an armed robbery on 15<sup>th</sup> St. NW and a shooting on Crittendon St. NW. MPD caught the three perpetrators of the armed robbery who had stolen the victim's BMW and used it in other robberies in D.C. after changing the license plates. In addition to violent crimes, there continue to be thefts from automobiles and burglaries in the neighborhood. The burglaries occur primarily during the day; however, most crimes occur in the early evening through early morning hours (*i.e.*, 6 PM to 4 AM).

Due to the uptick in violent crimes, MPD has added more police resources to patrol our neighborhood. These additional patrols are scheduled during the second and third shifts and are most frequently found on 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets. Additionally, there are two survey units

that drive through our alleys and streets. We also have two bike patrol officers who patrol in the more commercial areas of the neighborhood.

Lieutenant Figueras emphasized that neighbors should call 911 whenever they notice suspicious behavior by someone or evidence of a crime. Our neighborhood will have a more active police presence if the residents report potential safety issues. If you see someone that you don't know who is spending significant time in the neighborhood looking at buildings or watching people on the street, call 911 and request that the police investigate. Lieutenant Figueras vouched that his officers will not harass the unknown person that you report but will simply say hello and ask the person where they live or what they are doing in the neighborhood. Predators will often avoid committing crimes in neighborhoods where they have had such a casual interaction with a police officer because the interaction may facilitate catching them in the future if they commit a crime. Additionally, he recommended that you get to know your neighbors. (Participation in association activities can help you do this.)

Lieutenant Figueras provided some good safety tips on protecting yourself when walking in the neighborhood including, but not limited to:

- i) Survey your surroundings at all times when going between your home and your car or when walking around the neighborhood (*i.e.*, take care not to use your cell phone outside because it distracts you);
- ii) Walk with someone else, if possible, or have other residents at your home look for you as you approach;
- iii) At night, walk in well-lighted areas – avoid alleys—and, if possible, walk on streets that are used by more cars and other neighbors; and
- iv) Call 911 if your instinct tells you someone on the street may be suspicious.

After a question and answer period with the speakers, Carriellen, who heads the Association's Public Safety Committee, announced a free, safety-training program led by Samantha Nolan who works with the MPD's Neighborhood Watch Program. This training includes a discussion of actual crime scenes and how to protect yourself in similar situations. This event is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 7:00 PM, location to be announced soon on the Listserve. Contact Carriellen for further details and questions ([carriellenc@gmail.com](mailto:carriellenc@gmail.com)).

The meeting ended with Elisa Irwin, our ANC representative and an active member of the Association, describing the importance of reinvigorating the Association so it can more effectively work for the neighborhood on safety and other neighborhood issues (*e.g.*, repaving the 4300 block of 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW). Our next Association meeting, on Tuesday, October 6, 2015, requires good attendance by neighbors to vote on the following key organization matters:

- 1) Election of association officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Communications Director and Treasurer) and three additional members who participate on the Board of Directors.

- 2) Vote on Resolution A -> Whether the association should expend resources to re-establish it with DCRA; such status will allow association officers to present testimony at government hearings and participate in other official functions; and
- 3) Vote on Resolution B -> Whether the association should expend resources to pursue non-profit status with the IRS; such status will allow members to deduct dues and other contributions to the association and allow the association to seek grants and other funds as a non-profit entity.

This voting meeting is on Tuesday, October 6, 2015, at 7:15 – 8:30 PM, Simpson-Hamline Church (side door to school cafeteria is on Allison Street NW near the corner with 16<sup>th</sup> Street). Contact Jack for further details or questions ([jackhcampbell@verizon.net](mailto:jackhcampbell@verizon.net)).

Finally, we will be holding another Happy Hour at the Red Derby, Upper Deck, on Friday, September 25, 2015 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. The Red Derby is located at 3718 – 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW. Social events, such as this one, help us get to know each other and build a safer neighborhood. Contact Cecelia for further details or questions ([cwald4517@gmail.com](mailto:cwald4517@gmail.com))

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Cecelia Walden  
Co-Chair