

January report to constituents

Here is news of the January Advisory Neighborhood Commission meeting, what we plan for the February meeting, and notes about other events in our part of Mount Pleasant.

Highlights of the January ANC meeting

This was the first meeting of your all-new ANC.

Organizing the new ANC: The January meeting began with the election of officers:

Chair	Dominic Sale (1D06)
Vice Chair	Will Grant (1D02)
Treasurer	Peter Muller (1D05)
Secretary	Barbara Bitondo (1D01)

Standing committees were named. Any resident of the neighborhood can be on a committee, which then advises the ANC on the committee topic. Volunteer!

Crime and City Services	Will Grant
Traffic and Parking	Jack McKay
Latino Affairs	Barbara Bitondo
Permits and Zoning	Peter Muller
Business District	Dominic Sale

New ANC By-Laws were accepted. These are substantially modified from the previous, because the ANC Reform Amendment of 2000 specifies a long list of items that must be in the By-Laws, e.g., the ANC boundaries. The previous ANC's By-Laws had not been brought into compliance with this law.

In addition to the required changes, we changed the provisions for **ANC grants**. Previously, applications for grants could be made only in response to formal solicitations by the ANC, which occurred only twice a year. The By-Laws have been revised to permit grants in response to unsolicited proposals, which may be received by the ANC at any time.

Crime in Mount Pleasant: Dave Sandrowitz spoke on his organization of Orange Hat patrols, a response to a perceived increase in violent crime in our area. I applaud the motivations of Mr Sandrowitz and the OH volunteers, and I admire their willingness to walk the streets of Mount Pleasant on bitter cold nights, but I question the effectiveness of their patrols in actually reducing crime. I participated in one "walk", and it was a fun nighttime tour of the neighborhood, but I'm sure that we saw, and were seen by, none of the guys who do the crimes. In my opinion we were in the wrong place, at the wrong time, to have any deterrent effect. I am pleased to see that Mr Sandrowitz is increasing the focus of the OH patrols on Mount Pleasant's high-crime areas.

ANC 1D03 NEWSLETTER

Jack McKay, January 25, 2003

Automobile registration

No one has offered any argument for allowing residents to keep their cars registered outside the District, contrary to DC law. There are numerous good reasons for requiring DC registration of all residents' vehicles:

- DC registration assures that the owner has proper insurance. Owners of cars registered in Virginia, for example, are not required to carry any liability insurance.
- It assures that the vehicle passes DC safety and emissions inspections.
- It avoids the problem of all these cars clogging up the few remaining blocks not zoned for residential permit parking.
- Vehicle registration fees go to the District, not to some outside jurisdiction.
- Insurance premiums are credited to the District, significantly reducing the insurance rates that will be charged the rest of us.

The District is cracking down on this problem, and there are now eight teams of officers conducting patrols to identify cars violating DC registration laws. *They are now working in Ward One.* If a car with non-DC tags is observed twice in 15 days, a warning is posted. If that car is observed again, 15 days later, it gets a citation demanding that the car be properly registered. *If, 15 days later, that car is seen again and still has neither DC tags nor a valid reciprocity sticker, it gets a \$100 ticket, and it will continue to collect \$100 tickets until it is registered.*

If you're one of the many residents who just has never gone to the trouble of registering your car in the District – *be warned, do it now.*

Marx Café: A number of issues were brought up during the Community Forum – police coverage, trash, abandoned cars, traffic – we are well aware of these problems, and will deal with them as time permits. An immediate issue is the application by the Marx Café to move to the site of the Engels Restaurant, and there offer live-band music and karaoke. The addition of live bands in particular would surely exacerbate problems of noise, late-night disturbance, and parking for nearby residents.

The ANC is seeking discussions with the management of the Marx Café to decide what position to take, if any, on this license application. At an ABRA hearing after the ANC meeting, the lawyer for the Marx Café agreed to delete the request for changes in operating conditions, i.e., the live bands and karaoke. However, we have not yet been formally notified of this change.

Police abuse in Mt Pleasant

The ANC has received credible reports of appalling abuse of a Latino driver by an MPD policewoman on Mt Pleasant Street. Reportly this woman berated and ridiculed the Latino for his lack of English, and rudely rejected attempts by the man's children to translate. "You're supposed to speak English!" she is said to have demanded. (A full report can be found at <http://www.safeststreetsdc.com/>.)

Such behavior by any MPD officer is utterly unacceptable and intolerable, and the ANC will take action to prevent any recurrence.

Klingle Road

Numerous constituents have said they want Klingle Road reopened, as a convenient route to 34th Street and points west, bypassing the congested intersections of Connecticut Avenue.

In my judgment, the campaign to restore the old road will fail. The cost has escalated to \$5.7 million, which the Department of Transportation, and the Mayor, consider excessive for the modest benefits of this road. The National Park Service, which has a veto power over the project, "cannot support a roadway" in the Klingle Valley, due to environmental damage. Even if City Council should pass its bill calling for restoration of the road, the road is not going to be built.

The plan at present is to build a paved bike/hike path on the old roadbed, sturdy enough to support trucks and heavy equipment to service utilities in the Valley. This is an admirable outcome, promoting recreational use of a beautiful location, but it does nothing for the people who want to drive the road.

I have offered a compromise between the recreational and automotive purposes, hoping that, if the two sides can form a unified popular front, the Mayor and the Park Service will relent and permit a partial road. I propose that the roadbed be paved as a one-lane, one-way road for cars, plus a wide paved path for bicycles and pedestrians (Berger Option G). Furthermore, I would minimize traffic noise by allowing use only by passenger cars – no trucks, no buses. I would further enhance the recreational value by closing the road on weekends, so the valley can then be enjoyed in traffic-free peace and quiet.

Would this compromise lead to a partial reopening of Klingle Road? It is a very long shot, requiring that the road supporters make a serious effort to compromise with, and unite with, the road opponents. I have detected no sign that the road advocates are willing to compromise in the least, and the result of that recalcitrance will be no Klingle Road at all.

February ANC meeting

The next ANC meeting will take place Monday evening, February 3, **7:30 pm**, at La Casa, 3166 Mount Pleasant Street. Note the earlier start time!

Guest presentations: Ramona's Salon and Day Spa (expansion, and zoning change), and FlexCar (shared-use car, parked near Heller's). These will start promptly at 8:00 pm. The Community Forum is scheduled for 8:30 pm, but may be delayed by the guest presentations.

Opinions expressed here are those of Dr. McKay alone, speaking for himself, not for the Mount Pleasant ANC.

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