

## February report to constituents

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

### *Highlights of the February ANC meeting*

**Financial reports:** As you already know, the membership of this ANC is entirely new: all six of our predecessors declined to run for reelection. We newcomers have found that the records left by the preceding ANC are in disarray. We were stunned to find that the Mount Pleasant ANC had failed to file the quarterly reports required by the District in August and November 2002. The financial records of the ANC are in such chaos that we may be unable to file the quarterly report due on March 3.

Our new ANC Treasurer, Peter Muller, is working hard at putting these financial records in order. There is no indication that any funds have been lost, or misappropriated. In fact, there is more cash in the ANC bank account than can be accounted for. The Treasurer of the former ANC, Gwen Davidow, is working diligently with Commissioner Muller to try to balance the books.

**Ramona's Salon and Day Spa:** Most of Mount Pleasant Street is zoned C-2-A commercial. The apartment houses lining 16th Street are zoned R-5-B residential. Oddly, the R-5-B boundary jumps west, to Mount Pleasant Street, a few doors above Irving, so that the last bit of this block is limited to small home businesses. Ramona's Salon is leading an effort to revise the boundary so that the whole block is C-2-A. This will permit Ramona's, and the other small businesses in these houses, to expand to larger floor areas, consistent with the rest of Mount Pleasant Street.

This seems quite reasonable, and the ANC is leaning in favor of supporting the request for a zoning change. We worry, of course, about who might be harmed by the change, so we have asked Ramona's to survey all of the immediate neighbors to find out who might be harmed, and who might object.

**Marx Café:** The Marx Café had applied to move a few doors up Mount Pleasant Street to the site of the Engels Diner. This move was complicated by the proposal also to change the conditions of operation, adding, in particular, live entertainment, currently

## ANC 1D03 NEWSLETTER

Jack McKay, February 25, 2003

### ***Police abuse resolution***

Because the Mount Pleasant Neighborhood is a highly diverse community, including a large number of residents and visitors of limited English proficiency; and

Because the Mount Pleasant Advisory Neighborhood Commission represents all the residents of this community, without exception or discrimination; and

Because the Mount Pleasant ANC rejects and condemns mistreatment of any person by the Metropolitan Police;

The Mount Pleasant ANC resolves that it will recommend the immediate removal of any officer or agent of the Metropolitan Police Department who is proven to have physically or verbally abused any resident of or visitor to the Mount Pleasant neighborhood. The ANC will communicate this to the Captain of the 4th District Sub-Station at 750 Park Road, and to the Commander of the 4th District.

The ANC resolves to communicate its concerns about particular officers whenever credible evidence of an incident comes to the ANC's attention within the current period of office of the sitting commissioners.

The ANC further resolves that it will recommend to the Metropolitan Police Department that officers serving in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood be trained in respectful and appropriate interaction with persons of limited English proficiency, minimizing conflict and friction between the police and non-native-born persons in the neighborhood.

*Passed unanimously by the Mount Pleasant ANC, February 3, 2003.*

**Bulletin:** On February 20, Chief Ramsey said that Lt. Ricki Leonard, the head of our Police Service Area, and the officer accused in the incident on Mount Pleasant Street, will face a "recommendation for adverse action" -- the equivalent of a guilty verdict. *The Lieutenant has been transferred out of Mount Pleasant.*

The next ANC meeting will be on Monday evening, March 3, **7:30 pm**, at La Casa, 3166 Mount Pleasant Street. The tentative meeting agenda:

- 7:30 Call to order
- 8:00 Guest presentation: Larry Clark, of Donatelli & Klein, *Development in Columbia Heights*
- 8:30 Community Forum
- 9:00 Committee reports
- 9:30 Unfinished business
- 9:35 New business:
  - ANC budget
  - Payment for La Casa use
  - Ramona's Salon rezoning
  - Grants committee formation
  - Lt Leonard, and the Muñoz incident
- 10:30 Adjournment

prohibited by their "cooperative agreement" with the Mount Pleasant Neighbors' Alliance. We have been having discussions with the Marx management, and we are looking for a compromise that would enhance the viability of Mount Pleasant businesses by permitting live entertainment, while respecting the concerns of nearby neighbors. At the moment the Marx Café has agreed to postpone this matter, and has withdrawn its application to move.

**Traffic and parking issues:** I reviewed my various efforts in this area, and there's no space to repeat things here. One item warrants mention. In the January newsletter I noted that a project has begun to identify cars "housed" in the District but lacking DC tags. Since then a number of people have pointed out that this project will cause problems for people with a variety of special situations. For example, there are nonresidents who frequently stay overnight with friends or relatives here; and there is the man whose Maryland-based company provides him with a company car. The DC regulations have no suitable provision for these exceptions. I have asked Councilmember Jim Graham to consider simply making visitor's permits renewable. (Currently one can get a visitor's permit only once, good for 180 days.) Mr Graham thought this a good idea, and has instructed his staff to investigate its feasibility.

On another Traffic and Parking matter, I mentioned in the December newsletter that the DDOT had taken our Mount Pleasant traffic study and buried it in the Columbia Heights traffic study. At the February meeting the ANC passed, unanimously, a resolution calling for the return of our traffic study. DDOT is now arguing that they never intended to give us a neighborhood-wide study, but meant only to evaluate the effectiveness of their traffic calming measures on Irving Street. We need much more than that, because of speeding traffic problems on Park Road, Klingle, Walbridge, and Adams Mill. I will continue to press this issue.

## Crime

I've been attending PSA (Police Service Area) meetings not only here (410) but in Columbia Heights (412) and Park View (414) to get a view of the crime problem throughout our part of the city. In 414, the major problem is drugs. In 412, robbery seems to be the big headache, including gangs lying in wait for people walking from the Metro station. Our special plague here in 410 is theft from autos.

What to do about our theft from auto problem? Not much, sadly. This kind of theft is so quick and easy that the probability of an MPD patrol happening by during the crime is nil. Furthermore, the MPD considers this crime so unimportant that they make no effort to track down the perpetrators. Once the thieves have the radio out of the car and are on their way back to the east, they're home free. Unless the thieves are spotted in the act, it's all over.

I asked our PSA 410 Lieutenant what we, and the MPD, could do to stop this plague. Put motion-sensitive lights on your front porch, she advised. She's also been persistent about telling people to leave no valuables visible in their cars. In short, protect yourself, because the MPD can't.

This is discouraging. Buy a car alarm.

## Commercial parking for Mount Pleasant

We all know that one factor determining where we choose to shop is the availability of parking. The lack of short-term parking around the Mount Pleasant business district is a real deterrent for people who want to shop here but live beyond walking distance. I am initiating discussions with DDOT, and the Mount Pleasant Business Association, to see how the supply of short-term parking might be increased here. We will all benefit from a more prosperous business district, capable of attracting new, high-quality businesses to our neighborhood.

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

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