

## Jack's November report

At the October meeting, the ANC:

- Advised ABRA to approve the petition by the Marx Cafe to terminate the three “voluntary agreements” imposed on them years ago;
- Advised ABRA to approve renewal of the liquor licenses for the five taverns of Mount Pleasant (Marx, Haydee's, the Raven, Don Jaime's, and Suns Cinema).

At the November meeting, the ANC:

- Advised the Council “to establish a universal paid leave program” in the District;
- Expressed support for the Council resolution opposing immigration raids by the Federal Government;
- Expressed support for Mayor Bowser's statement that the District will remain a “sanctuary city”.

OK, why this **very late November** newsletter? Well, ordinarily our ANC meeting would be around November 22, but, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, it was moved up to November 15, so delivery would be around November 8. But I thought it necessary to include the results of the November 8 election in the November newsletter, so I decided to do this newsletter the week after our November 15 meeting, to be delivered during the week of November 21.

OK, but that November 15 meeting was a disaster. Mayor Bowser came to our meeting, and we allowed 45 minutes for her use of the meeting as a community meeting. Shortly into her participation, a noisy demonstration appeared in the corridor outside the meeting room, people demanding her attention. So she spoke to them, then returned to our meeting, and her 45 minutes turned into 90 minutes. She left just 20 minutes before the Library closed, and we had in effect, no November 15 meeting.

To make up for having lost that meeting, we had to schedule a second November meeting. The week following was Thanksgiving, so the second November meeting could not take place until the week of November 28. And I couldn't very well deliver a newsletter during Thanksgiving week, so this newsletter had to come after that meeting, as well. So here we are, at the very end of November!

Our December meeting is set for December 13 – early in the month, to avoid conflict with Christmas. My December newsletter would ordinarily be delivered the week of December 6. That's just a few days away! So it's likely that this November newsletter will be the last for this year.

About the November 8 election: we'll have a **mostly-new ANC**, come January. I prevailed by a modest margin, 651 votes to 493, over my challenger, Benjamin Mann. I'm very grateful to the residents who chose me, despite his vigorous opposition. Frank Agbro lost to his challenger, Monroe Street resident Jon Stewart. Rosa Rivas, Arturo Griffiths, and Adam Hoey all declined to run for re-election, so I'm the only current commissioner who will continue in 2017.

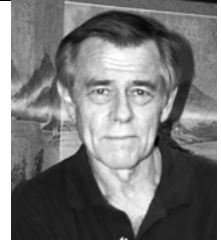
Elected:

- 1D01: Jon Stewart (1641 Monroe St)  
1D02: Paul Karrer (1655 Newton St)  
1D03: Jack

## ANC 1D03 NEWSLETTER #165

Jack McKay, November 30, 2016

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1D04: Yasmin Romero-Latin (3145

Mount Pleasant St)

1D05: Stuart Karaffa (1809 Irving St)

Yasmin has been a 1D commissioner before, 2011 to 2014. The others are new to this ANC work.

I'm still **in stunned disbelief** about the election of Donald Trump. His platform is wholly contrary to my most fundamental principle: that America must be, and will be, *multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual*, a model for the world of people living in harmony despite ethnic or lifestyle differences. Trump symbolizes the America of the 1950s, homogeneous, and intolerant of anything or anyone who deviates from a bland, middle-American model. “Make America Great Again” means “let's go back to the world of Eisenhower”, when “white was right”, blacks rode in the back of the bus, and gays were confined to the closet.

Well, there's nothing for it but to work to minimize the harm that Trump and his followers will do in the coming years. Not that we, in the District of Columbia, can do much about it. Whatever hopes we might have had for some voting representation in Congress vanished with this election.

And how did **Mount Pleasant** vote in the 2016 election? In precincts 39 and 40 (Mount Pleasant, plus a chunk of Columbia Heights), there were 6442 votes for Hillary (92%), 170 votes for Trump (2.4%), 164 votes for Jill Stein and the Green Party (2.3%), and 106 votes for the Libertarian ticket (1.5%).

Councilmember Nadeau has offered a resolution in the Council that voices **opposition to Federal immigration enforcement raids**. I offered, and the ANC passed, a resolution of support for her resolution. In this time, with an anti-immigrant president about to take office, we must send a message to our immigrant neighbors: *we, your neighbors, will stand up for you, and defend you, against this President.*

Similarly, on November 14, Mayor Bowser issued a statement affirming that the District will remain a “sanctuary city”, despite the Trump takeover of the Federal Government. The ANC passed my resolution of support at the November 28 ANC meeting, in furtherance of my effort to assure our immigrant neighbors that they have our support.

Many residents have expressed their approval of the new, “protected” **bike lanes on Kingle Road**, west of the Adams Mill Road intersection. The westbound bike lanes provide safe access to Rock Creek Park for runners and walkers as well as bicyclists. The eastbound bike lane ends conflicts

between bicyclists and pedestrians, who no longer have to share that narrow sidewalk.

There is a bit of a problem with that eastbound bike lane, where it ends, and Klinge Road splits into a Klinge Road lane and a right-turn Adams Mill Road lane. Morning traffic can be heavy, and the line of cars waiting for the right-turn-arrow to switch may extend into the straight-through lane, blocking drivers who have the green light. DDOT will shorten the bike lane a bit to allow more space for right-turn cars to accumulate, and will also look into modifying the traffic light timing to avoid long backups there.

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A house on Klinge Road was **burglarized** on November 1. Fortunately a housekeeper arrived and scared him off before he did too much damage. The guy got into the house by lifting out a basement-level window air conditioner. (Lesson to all of us: fasten ground-level air conditioners down, so they can't be easily lifted out from outdoors.)

That is, by my count, the 14th burglary in Mount Pleasant this year. That's actually a remarkably small number: recent years have averaged about 40 burglaries total, and in 2011, there were 80 burglaries here. I don't know why the burglary count in Mount Pleasant has dropped so substantially, but I'm certainly not complaining about it!

How does Mount Pleasant compare to other DC neighborhoods? Comparing burglary rates for 2016, through early November, the DC average is 2.98 burglaries per 1000 residents per year, while the Mount Pleasant rate is 1.24, less than half the DC average. Of the 56 PSAs (Police Service Areas) in DC, *only six have lower burglaries-per-capita rates than Mount Pleasant*. Ninety percent of the District has burglary rates higher than ours.

That said, something unusual may be going on here on the "west end" of Mount Pleasant. On November 9 there was an attempted break-in on Pierce Mill Road. The homeowner was home, and the would-be burglar fled. On November 26, somebody tried to get into our house, while we were away for Thanksgiving. (The alarm scared him off.)

Is a single individual burglar "working" this end of Mount Pleasant? The Klinge Road burglar fled, on foot, by a route that suggests that he knows the neighborhood. Be careful, keep those doors locked.

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I noted last month that there's a proposal to build a pair of row houses on **the vacant lot adjacent to 1840 Monroe Street**. The project was brought up at the October ANC meeting, mainly to give residents an opportunity to learn about, and comment on, what is planned. Residents objected to the size of the planned development – two three-story, two-unit rowhouses, somewhat taller than the adjacent row house. But the design complies with zoning regulations, so there are no grounds for the ANC to advise denial of permits. The design went to the HPRB on November 3, where the board members "supported the concept" but had numerous concerns about the design, and requested a reworking of it.

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Concerning that **Paid Family Leave** bill, a topic which has consumed much of our time this month – it's an example of a citywide matter that is appropriately dealt with by our District

Councilmembers, not by us neighborhood ANC folks. Barring some special Mount Pleasant aspect, as is, for example, the case for immigrant policies, then it's not something that we mere ANC commissioners should spend time on. We have little influence in citywide matters, representing just 1.6% of the District's population. Forget "great weight", which is not applicable in these matters.

The District's Paid Family Leave bill has been in the works downtown for a year, and is guaranteed passage in December. Seven Councilmembers are co-sponsors of the bill, and Council Chair Mendelson has promised that it will be considered this month, beginning with a first reading by the Council on December 6. Believe me, nobody down at the District Council is waiting for word from the Mount Pleasant ANC as to what position they should take.

So why are people pushing this ANC so insistently to pass a resolution favoring the Council's bill? *That resolution will have no actual effect on anything*. It's really a waste of our time, which is better spent on actual neighborhood issues, such as bike lanes, building permits, crime, liquor licenses, and the like.

As for Paid Family Leave, everyone is in favor of it, sure. The peculiar problem here is that most of the benefits will go to suburban residents whose jobs are in DC, while DC taxpayers are required to bear the full costs of the program. Anywhere else in the country, employees would contribute to the costs of the program. Here in DC, that cannot be done, because taxing nonresidents – a "commuter tax" – is prohibited by Congress.

Well, if it turns out that the costs of the program substantially exceed the wage-tax revenue, and DC taxpayers are then required to pay these costs – do you imagine that the Congress will step up and help the District cover the excess costs? Hah. Not a chance.

So I persuaded the Commission to add one sentence to our resolution in support of the Paid Family Leave act, specifying that whatever bill the Council passes must "not place an excessive financial burden on District taxpayers". The resolution as proposed by advocates, and presented by Commissioner Agbro, included no such protection.

On November 30, even as I write this newsletter, Councilmember Mendelson has finally released the version of this bill that will be taken up by the Council on December 6. That bill incorporates a shutoff, to protect DC taxpayers from heavy cost overruns: "If the balance in the Fund falls below the equivalent of six months of benefits, the District shall immediately cease any further payments of benefits."

The resolution passed by this ANC will in fact accomplish nothing, and this was a great waste of our time, as we had to study the topic carefully, as if our resolution would have some effect. Surely there are better uses for our (unpaid) time.

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I need to provide a good explanation of that **40-foot parking rule** again. But I'm out of space here. Maybe January!

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| The next meeting of the ANC will be on <u>Tuesday, December 13</u> , 7:00 pm, at the Mount Pleasant Library. |
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