



Minutes of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D Meeting

Tuesday, December 15, 2015, 7:00 PM

Truesdell Education Campus, 800 Ingraham St., NW

The regular monthly meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D took place on Tuesday, December 15, 2015. **Chairwoman Colbert called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 4D01 Nancy Roth, 4D02, Renee Bowser; 4D03 Lisa Colbert; 4D04 David Sheon; 4D05 Krystal Branton; 4D06 Bill Quirk.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: **Bowser asked that Donna Cooper, president of Pepco Region, be added to agenda. Colbert so moved, Bowser seconded. The amended agenda was unanimously approved by acclamation.**

MINUTES: **Not printed by mistake. To be supplied next meeting.**

Comm. Colbert announced an ANC 4D Health Fair in spring 2016 and asked the public to suggest health topics they especially wanted to be covered at the event. She also proposed to invite a series of health topic experts to speak at ANC public meetings over the coming year.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: **Comm. Branton read aloud the Treasurer's Report for the previous month of November 2015** showing expenditures totaling \$369.98 plus \$12.23 in bank charges leaving \$12,190.59 in the ANC treasury at end of November. **Comm. Branton moved that the commission accept the 2016 budget. Comm. Colbert seconded. The motion unanimously passed by acclamation.**

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Arick Sears, Assistant People's Counsel at the Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) said Exelon's proposal to merge with Pepco was filed in 2014. OPC rejected the proposal in August 2015, but were later approached to negotiate on a settlement agreement. OPC believes terms of revised settlement agreement address the problems of affordability and benefits for DC citizens. He summarized each of the provisions of the settlement agreement and explained why the OPC supported them. An attendee asked about the affordability of Pepco's electricity provision, and noted that bills had gone up in small, hard-to-trace amounts over the years.

Basev Sen of Green Neighbors DC said the most "fundamental" problem with the proposed settlement is "conflict of interest between Exelon business model and what we in DC need," which he attributed to the uncompetitive nuclear power production of Exelon plants compared to cheap wind and gas power. He suggested DC residents would get massive rate increases starting in April 1, 2019, after the rate freeze was lifted. He noted that Exelon also had a terrible record of lobbying against subsidies for renewables, including regulations allowing solar customers to sell their excess generation back to the local utility company at a premium price.

Donna M. Cooper, president of Pepco Region, noted that a core component of Pepco's provision of safe and reliable service was ensuring its affordability. She said there was a benefit to consumers in stabilizing rates from 2016 to 2019. She added that all the companies that Exelon acquire are brought to better performance and that Exelon has committed to taking Pepco to that "upper quartile" level without expenditure of additional Pepco resources. The Exelon merger would give Pepco resources to forgive the energy bills of customers who had not been able to pay bills for years. Cherokee, an attendee, suggested that often higher-level workers are displaced first when a company is taken over, and new jobs are only created for lower-salaried workers.

The three speakers continued debate while answering questions from commissioners and attendees. **Comm. Roth** asked Mr. Sen how much renewable power cost per MWatt-hour compared to that of nuclear generation, and Mr. Sen could not provide numbers. **Comm. Roth** read out numbers from Energy Information Agency indicating that only land-based wind energy was cheaper, though less efficient, and that solar and sea-based wind was much more expensive than nuclear, which she said contradicted the heart of his objection to the agreement. **Comm. Sheon** noted that Exelon had in the past sought to limit economic advantages to solar cooperatives in other communities, and asked Ms. Cooper why the agreement could not include a phrase prohibiting such interference in DC. Ms. Cooper said DC law currently protects the group purchase of solar. Debate continued until 8:15.

Christopher Grayton from the Yellow Cab Co. described Transport DC a year-old program run by the Yellow Cab and Capitol Cab companies that brought people of limited mobility anywhere in the city for a flat fee of \$5. Unlike Metro Access, which requires 48-hour advance notice, passengers only need to call 1 hour in advance and pickup is often sooner. The program is available to all DC residents that have registered with Metro Access. All pickups and drop-offs must be within city limits. Mr. Grayton asked those present to help get the word out, and received enthusiastic applause after his presentation.

OLD BUSINESS

Comm. Sheon said he'd recently spoken to the owner of the Trinidad & Tobago Clubhouse at a Status hearing (prior to Show Cause hearing) before the ABC Board. The owner had not responded to **Comm. Sheon's** attempts to contact him. In a cordial conversation they spoke about the community's interest in seeing Clubhouse become a better neighbor. Owner promised to be in touch. A few days later the Clubhouse building bore a "For Sale" sign, **Comm. Sheon** reported. The owner has not called.

In an update on the neighborhood protest of liquor license for Castello Lounge on Hamilton St. **Comm. Sheon** said the Castello owner and representative had come more than half an hour after the scheduled start of a mediation meeting at ABRA, after **Comm. Sheon** and neighbor Karen Abbott had given up and left. At the subsequent status hearing, ABC Board Chairman Donovan Anderson mentioned he had a "casual" relationship with Mr. Dee Hunter, representative of the Castello Lounge. **Comm. Sheon** requested details from ABRA Community Resource Officer Sarah Fashbaugh, but no further information was released. **Comm. Sheon** therefore had written a letter to ABRA Asst. General Counsel Jonathan Berman requesting the Chairman to recuse himself from the Jan. 6 protest meeting. **Comm. Sheon moved to approve the recusal request letter, Comm. Bowser seconded. The motion was unanimously passed by acclamation.**

Following up on the earlier debate of Pepco-Exelon merger settlement, **Comm. Bowser introduced a resolution urging the Public Service Commission to reject the deal. Comm. Roth**

noted that the resolution contained strong arguments, but expressed concern that the issues were extremely complex and she had not fully formed an opinion. Comm. Quick called for a vote on the resolution. Comm. Bowser moved that the commission approve the resolution, Comm. Sheon seconded. Comm. Sheon and Comm. Bowser voted in favor. Comm. Quirk voted against. Comm. Roth, Comm. Branton and Comm. Colbert abstained. With two votes in favor and one against (abstentions not counted), the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Comm Sheon described new legislation introduced by CM Silverman and co-introduced by CM Todd requiring owners of vacant and blighted buildings to prove to the city their buildings were not vacant to avoid a high vacant/blighted property tax. Comm. Sheon noted that currently 4 city inspectors are responsible for verifying status of 1200+ vacant/blighted buildings all over the city twice yearly.

Comm. Sheon described his experience in MPD's Community Engagement Academy, describing how police are trained to de-escalate situations rather than confront, and to mentor youth perceived to be going down wrong path. A community member noted his recent terrible experience when a policeman in a car confronted him after he got out of his truck in front of his house. He was ticketed for "obstructing traffic." He also said he had been jailed 3 years at age 16 for a bank robbery he'd had nothing to do with.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

An attendee noted that every time there is an offense in the neighborhood a police officer is stopping a young African American male. "We really need more community work" with the police, she noted.

She also announced that the Plymouth Congregational Church was having a Xmas Eve Jazz Sing-Along, free and open to the public. 5301 North Capitol St. NE.

Dolly Turner of Ward 4 CM Brandon Todd's office announced a Ward 4 Holiday Party/New Coat Drive on Dec. 19 at St. Johns College High School, 6-8 pm.

Comm. Colbert announced the ANC 4D Holiday Party and coat drive netted 29 coats, of which only 25 were new, and several more were needed for the students. Coats to be distributed to students on Dec. 17.

ADJOURNMENT: **Chairwoman Lisa Colbert adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm.**