

1D01: Jon Stewart Chairperson jonstewart.anc1d01@gmail.com	<p style="text-align: center;">Mount Pleasant Advisory Neighborhood Commission</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">1380 Monroe St NW, #117 Washington DC 20010</p>	1D04: Yasmin Romero-Latin Vice Chairperson yasminkikiANC1D04@yahoo.com
1D02: Paul Karrer paulanc1d@gmail.com		1D05: Stuart Karaffa Treasurer stuart.k.anc@gmail.com
1D03: Jack McKay Secretary jack@dcjack.org		Website: anc1d.org e-mail: anc1d@googlegroups.com

Minutes of the February 20, 2018 meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D

These minutes accepted at the March 20, 2018 meeting.

Meeting call to order

[7:04 pm] At 7:04 pm, Chair Stewart called the meeting to order. Present were all five Commissioners, constituting a quorum. Hearsay Interpreting was available to provide simultaneous interpretation into Spanish.

Agenda agreement

[7:05 pm] The commission agreed on the agenda for the evening.

Public discussion

[7:05 pm] The meeting continued with the mandatory Public Discussion period.

Committee reports

[7:08 pm] Jon, Stuart, and Paul reported on the status of their committees.

Secretary's report

[7:11 pm] No corrections were noted for the draft minutes of the January meeting, which were declared accepted.

Treasurer's report

[7:11 pm] Treasurer Stuart Karaffa reviewed the current, routine expenditures. Stuart also noted the reimbursement to Jack for the computer purchase, \$249.99. No objections were raised.

Postpone Comprehensive Plan Amendment Hearing due to Lack of Notice

[7:14 pm] Stuart offered the following resolution:

Resolved, that ANC 1D advises the District of Columbia Council to postpone the public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2018 (B22-0663) for 30 days, from March 20 to April 20, 2018.

Why: On January 8, 2018, the District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP) sent to the District of Columbia Council a list of recommended amendments for the District's Comprehensive Plan. The Office of Planning did not provide 30 days' notice to Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) as to the finalizing of these amendments. Releasing a final list of amendments to the Council without providing notice to ANCs was in violation of section 1-309.10 of the District of Columbia Code, which states:

The executive branch and any independent agency, board, or commission shall give 30-days written notice before ... any final policy decision or guideline with respect to ... comprehensive plans...

Since OP has already sent the list of Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Council, and the Council has already agreed to consider the amendments as the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act, we request that the council postpone the scheduled public hearing on the bill for 30 days (or from March 20 to April 20, 2018). This postponement will serve as the de facto replacement of the legally required 30 days' notice that OP never provided to ANCs.

There are over 200 proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Framework Elements chapter. As Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners, we need the full 30 days of notice to adequately evaluate the effect of each of these amendments on our commission area. Furthermore, 30 days' notice is necessary to assure a monthly public meeting of the Commission, where these proposed amendments may be considered. Without this extra time, we may not be able to gather the information we need to agree or disagree with proposed amendments, and thus, we may not be able to act in the best interest of our fellow community members.

Passed 4 to 0 with one abstention (Yasmin).

Deny Special Exception and Variances for 1665 Harvard St NW

[7:28 pm] Stuart offered the following resolution:

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the Board of Zoning Adjustment to deny the Special Exceptions and variances requested for 1665 Harvard St NW, Case 19629.

Why: This Commission appreciates the substantial reduction in size made by the applicant, responding to concerns expressed last fall. The height of the structure has been reduced from over 20 feet to 15 feet, and what was a garage and an alley apartment is now only a garage with overhead storage.

This Commission has no objection to an alley garage, per se. Under ordinary circumstances, this Commission would not object to the BZA allowing variances to permit a garage. This is, however, no ordinary circumstance. This situation is unique because the location of this tiny lot is directly behind the dwelling at 1701 Harvard Street, which is home to a different owner than the owner of the alley lot in question.

The current application is similar to that filed in 2008 for this location, a garage which was to be 16 feet tall. In October 2008, this ANC advised, by unanimous vote, against permitting variances for that proposal, arguing as follows:

“Any building constructed on this tiny lot would face the rear of the home on lot 826, 1701 Harvard Street. With a roof height of 16 feet above the back-yard ground level, only 17 feet from the existing row house at 1701 Harvard, this construction will clearly have an adverse effect on the light and air of that dwelling.

“Though some neighbors favor this construction, the residents of 1701 Harvard are very unhappy at the prospect of a garage being built on that location. They have a valid complaint, and ANC1D advises that this application for a zoning variance be denied.”

The current application only slightly modifies these dimensions. The proposed structure is 15 feet tall and would be 19 feet from the back of the 1701 dwelling. These reductions are not sufficient to overcome the

clear fact that this construction would “box in” the backyard of 1701 Harvard and would obstruct all view from the top-floor windows of that home. The fence visible in the photograph is six feet tall, so the proposed garage would tower nine feet over it and would match the overall height of the 1701 Harvard residence.



On a community-wide level, another detriment to the public good would be how the proposed garage would obstruct pedestrian sightlines between a public walkway alongside the 1701 Harvard lot (taking the place of a nonexistent block of 17th Street) to a public alleyway. Currently, the lack of any structure in this lot allows pedestrians a clear view of oncoming alley traffic from the west (see Figure 1). The construction of a garage on this lot without considerable side setback will greatly reduce the ability of pedestrians to see oncoming traffic and thus increases the chance of cars hitting pedestrians (see Figure 2).

In order to permit a variance, the BZA must find that “granting the request would not cause substantial detriment to the public good. This Commission believes that, due to the height of the proposed garage, on this very awkwardly situated lot, its construction would be a “detriment to the public good” of the adjacent neighboring properties (and especially the neighbors at 1701 Harvard).

FIGURE 1: Current unobstructed sightlines

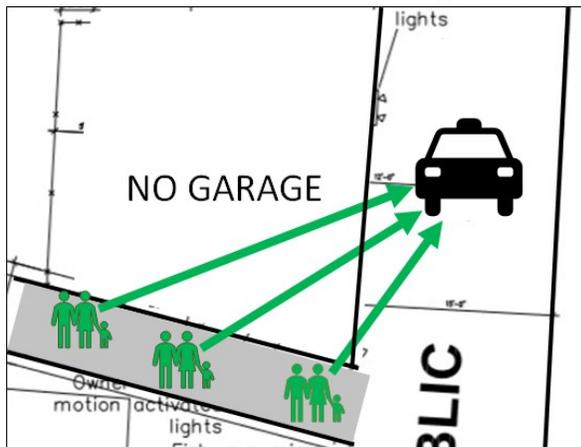
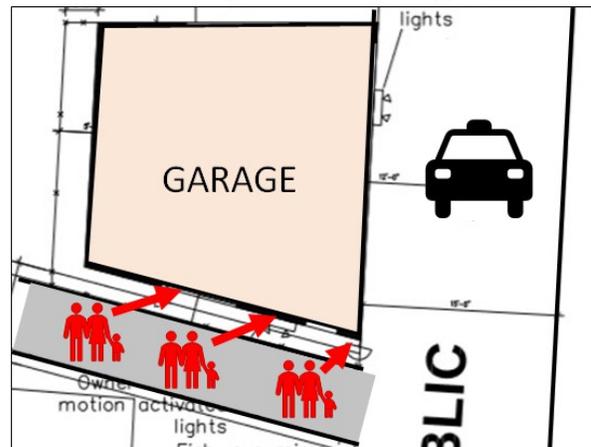


FIGURE 2: Proposed obstructed sightlines



Furthermore, the BZA must also find that “granting the request... would not be inconsistent with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Regulations”. The Zoning Regulations for Mount Pleasant’s RF-1 district are explicitly intended to “Control the location of building bulk in relation to adjacent lots and streets, by regulating rear setbacks, side setbacks, and the relationship of buildings to street lot lines” to avoid proximate obstructions as will occur if the BZA approves this application. Thus, the approval of this application would be inconsistent with that objective of controlling building bulk in relation to neighboring lots.

Passed 5 to 0.

Adjournment

[8:05 pm] The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.