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Don't Undermine ANC's Great Weight

Recently, Commissioners Robinson and Beatty used their titles as ANC Commissioners to express their personal opposition to a long-standing position of the ANC aimed at protecting residents from misguided development in a residential neighborhood – a position that has strong community support. The ANC had adopted its official position by a majority vote of the Commissioners at a properly-noticed ANC meeting. In fact, Commissioner Beatty had voted in support of that position.

Despite the misuse of their role as ANC Commissioners, they were elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the ANC, respectively, at the ANC's January meeting.

In December 2009, the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) ruled against the wishes of the ANC as expressed in the position adopted by the ANC. The Chair of the PCSB stated that the letter from Commissioners Robinson and Beatty was a significant factor in PCSB's decision to rule against the ANC.

The precedent set by the actions of these Commissioners is damaging not only to ANC 6A but also to the statutory consideration given to all ANCs – and to the ordinary citizens of the City who rely on the "great weight" of the ANCs to address problems in their communities.

Although Commissioners are afforded individual rights as citizens under the First Amendment to express their opinions, the exploitation of their elected roles to add weight to those opinions abuses their office and the trust of the citizenry.

The failure of judgment and the abuse of power by these two Commissioners did great damage to the ANC system and the Capitol Hill community.

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Clarifying January's Ask Judith

The District of Columbia Water and

Sewer Authority (DC WASA) currently bills an Impervious Area Charge (IAC) to all properties with more than 100 square feet of impervious area. At this time, residential properties are all charged for 1,000 square feet of impervious area, regardless of the actual size. The current rate for 1,000 square feet is \$2.20/month. Our GIS based analysis indicated that the median amount of impervious area for residential properties was just under 1,000 square feet, and that more than 75% of the residential properties had impervious area measurements between 600 and 2,100 square feet. There are less than 300 residential properties with more than 6,000 square feet of impervious area.

Currently, there are no green roof credits, although DC WASA is in discussions with the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) to jointly develop a green credit program that will include projects that reduce impervious cover and an incentive fund to help support storm-water retrofits. Details are expected to evolve in the late spring 2010.

The writer wondered how DC WASA could distinguish between brick on sand versus concrete. At this time, differences such as this are not meaningful from a billing perspective for residential customers, as they are billed for 1 ERU. The discrepancy is important for non-residential customers, as they are billed based on the actual amount of hard surface area.

DC WASA is working to divide the residential assessments into six levels of impervious cover, so we can distinguish between larger and smaller plots. The writer correctly points out that perhaps the greatest difficulty in these programs will be correctly assessing site conditions to properly substantiate an IAC level or credit. If any customer has a concern about the measurement recorded for their property, call 202-354-3600 to speak to a specialist.

George S. Hawkins

General Manager, DC WASA ★

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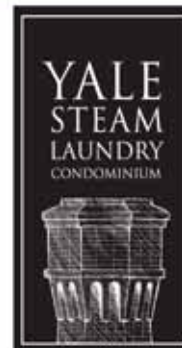
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