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“Each of us should take pride in knowing that [the ANC] is now viewed as one of the more functional and responsible commissions in the city... For more than three years, it’s been an honor to work with you, [Ward 6] Councilmember [Tommy] Wells and his staff, and members of the community,” wrote Velasco.

Under city regulations, a replacement for the now vacant seat cannot be sought within such close proximity to the upcoming citywide elections, but Chairperson Karen Wirt stated that Velasco’s duties will be divided amongst the remaining commissioners and that constituents of 6C07 will still be represented by their panel.

ANC’s ‘Great Weight’ in Jeopardy?

Commissioner Tom Hamilton was charged to report that the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) has seemingly ignored a January ANC recommendation that would allow the homeowner of 647 C St. NE to construct a second story arts studio on top of their existing garage. In addition to the affirmative ANC vote, Hamilton also wrote a personal letter in support of the project - only to watch neither be considered when the BZA voted down the measure 3-2.

“The BZA gave no thought to our recommendation when it voted to deny the application,” said Hamilton. “It seems to me that this is consistent with the modus operandi of this administration, and I suggest to all of my fellow the commissioners that notion that any ANC advice be taken with great weight ... may well be a thing of the past.”

Another Show of Support for Streetcars

Following a report from the ANC’s Transportation and Public Space Committee on the outcome of a June 3 meeting on streetcar construction, Commissioner Phelps proposed that the commission draft a letter to the city council in support of the Transportation Infrastructure Amendment Act of 2010 - a piece of legislation introduced by Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells that would overturn 19th-century federal statutes barring the use of overhead wires in the District of Columbia. While the amendment would continue to proscribe their use, it would return the authority to make exemptions to the council, thereby enabling streetcar construction to proceed unhampered.

“It’s important to return transportation planning and authority to the municipality,” said Phelps.

“This body has supported the streetcar

project since its inception as a way to create a neighborhood transportation system within the District but also as a way to spur economic development.”

Phelps went on to explain her belief that in the coming years “battery technology should have advanced so that we can move off of the overhead wires,” but that, at present, they remain vital to the streetcars’ immediate implementation.

Following a second from Commissioner Silver, the commission voted unanimously in support of the motion. Commissioner Richardson will appear on behalf of the ANC at an upcoming council hearing regarding the Amendment Act.

ANC 6C meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Ave. NE. Call 202-547-7168 or visit www.anc6c.org for more information and meeting agenda. ★

ANC 6D

Another Capper/Carrollsbury
Hope VI Delay

BY ROBERTA WEINER

The DC Housing Authority (DCHA) and EYA, its private development partner in the long-term Hope VI project that is slowly coming into being in Southeast, have asked Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D for support before the Zoning Commission of a two year extension of its Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the construction of the community center that is a key part of the project. The delay would require that construction begin in 2012.

The original PUD for the project was filed in early 2003, and the building permit application for the center was scheduled to be filed by July 1. The sole reason for the delay, according to project manager Dan McCabe is that there is an inability in the current real estate market to obtain sufficient financing for the project.

Commission Chair Ron McBee reflected

the views of the commissioners when he asserted that the community is adamant about having the community center as a central part of the project and that the ANC needs assurances that it will be built. McCabe responded that the plans are complete, and the design program is far along. David Cortelia of DCHA added that the agency believes there are two cornerstones to the project: one is to replace the 707 housing units that were eliminated when the Capper/Carrollburg House was razed, and the other is the construction of the community center.

He said the project has consistently moved forward, and they will close on the second phase of the row houses in August. He reported that there had been a grant of \$9.5 million in stimulus funds to the project, which was being spent on infrastructure for the several new streets of row houses that were currently being built, which will be low income, workforce rate, and market rate housing.

A motion was made to support the request for a delay in the construction start date until 2012. A suggestion was made that the motion be tabled until there was a meeting was held at which the community could be briefed on the delay, and on other issues concerning the relocation of former tenants. The developers were amenable to holding such a meeting, and the commission then voted unanimously to support the delay, with the proviso that a meeting was held before July 12, the date the issue is scheduled to come before the Zoning Commission.

In a related presentation, Adam Hayes, the engineering director of EYA, the developer of Capitol Quarter, the residential development at the site, gave an update on the new townhouse construction. Phase 1 will begin construction in late July or early August and

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will consist of 179 units, and Phase 2 will begin in late December or January and will consist of 163 units. The build-out for the project will take about two years.

Town Center West Park

An enthusiastic response greeted a presentation by Kelly Malone, a member of a new group, the Friends of Two Center West Park, the lovely but rundown park at Sixth and I streets SW. The Friends have undertaken to cleaning up the park, which has a new pump for the pond at its center.

Malone came to the ANC to ask for support for the group's plan to apply to the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to be designated as the official Partner of the park, part of DPR's Park Partnership Program that enables one group per park to assume responsibility for its well being. According to Malone, this will enable the group to solicit donations from area business and individuals for projects such as tree trimming and pond cleaning.

The park was originally designed as part of Marina View Towers, and the developers of the new modifications to that project have committed \$250,000 as part of their PUD to the park's restoration. To date, they have paid for a study by the original landscape architects of the park's condition and will move forward with a renovation before they receive a certificate of occupancy for their delayed renovation and reconstruction of Marina View Towers.

The commission voted unanimously to support the application of the Friends of Town Center West Park to be its official Partner of the Park.

Randall School

Commissioner McBee gave an update on the status of the plans by the developer Telesis and the Rubell family to purchase the Randall School from the Corcoran Galley and School. The District had sold the building to the Corcoran with a covenant requiring that the property be used as a school. Current

plans call for a mixed-use residential, hotel and retail development, along with a gallery/museum in the school building itself to house the Rubell's extensive art collection — but no school. This will require an amendment to the original agreement by the city council. The council is expected to act in September, and, according to Commissioner McBee, a decision whether the ANC will support the project should be made in July.

A major element in the commission's support of the project will be the future of the expansive community benefits agreement that had been worked out between the ANC and the Corcoran. And while a community benefits agreement cannot be negotiated until the building changes hands and the developers are working on a new PUD, the commission voted unanimously to reconstitute its previous negotiating committee — Commissioners McBee, Moffatt and Sobelsohn — to meet with the potential owners to discuss their ideas for future community benefits.

Public Space Policy

Asserting that the ANC had an inconsistent policy in making decisions to support sidewalk cafes and other uses of public space, Commissioner Sobelsohn moved a resolution that would require a negotiated community benefits agreement as a condition of support for a public space application.

Commissioner Jane Jorgensen said that outdoor seating was, in itself, a community benefit because people appreciated the ability to sit outdoors, and she found having a requirement of community benefits distasteful. Commissioner Bob Siegel agreed and said that the ANC should be reaching out to new merchants, not issuing them requirements. However, Commissioner Moffatt's view that there had not been adequate notice of the resolution so it could not be studied carried the day, and the motion was tabled.

Outdoor Cafe at Justin's

The commission voted to sup-

port a substantial change to its liquor license, and an amendment to the voluntary agreement it has with Justin's Cafe at Fourth and L streets SE that will permit the service of liquor at a new 16-seat outdoor cafe. The public space permit for the space was apparently approved without any notification to the ANC, but the tenants of the building in which the cafe is located overwhelmingly approve of the outdoor seating.

Commissioner Moffatt was concerned that the eating area extended beyond the cafe's property, and Commissioner Sobelsohn objected to the fact that smoking will be permitted. There were the two negative votes.

The next meeting of ANC 6D will be July 12, 7 p.m., at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW. 202-554-1795, www.anc6d.org. ★

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