

Monday, 06/15/2020

**Bloomingdale Civic Association meeting**

Virtual meeting via Zoom

Note: This BCA meeting was held during the Coronavirus pandemic. The usual meeting location, St. George’s Episcopal Church, was closed.

BCA board members present: Teri Janine Quinn, Jennifer McCann, Sherry Howard, Felicia Davis, Bertha Holliday, Ernie Emrich, Jean-Christophe Deverines, Scott Roberts

The meeting commenced at 7:05 pm.

54 people attended.

Ms. Quinn made introductory comments.

**Public safety**

MPD Third District (3D) Commander Stuart Emerman reported that overall crime was down. There has been an increase in calls for service for quality-of-life issues like urinating in public. Some MPD resources were temporarily reassigned to the First Amendment activities around the District.

Ms. Quinn reviewed the Thursday, 05/29/2020, MPD walkthrough around North Capitol St & Florida Avenue. MPD is still actively working with the Crime Suppression team to address issues identified during the walkthrough. Ward 5 CM McDuffie has some assigned take-away tasks from the walkthrough.

Ms. Quinn asked Commander Emerman what citizens can expect when calling about quality-of-life issues, like drug use issues. She related a story of calling MPD when she witnessed a person using drugs near her front yard. Commander Emerman described how Narcan is administered to drug users. He said that arresting drug users may not be the best choice.

Mr. Deverines described the drug user “party atmosphere” gatherings on the unit block of T Street NW along St. Martin’s Catholic Church. Neighbors have been calling 911 for a long time, which not much police response. The party atmosphere include alcohol, barbecues, no COVID-19 masks. None of the people are neighborhood residents. Commander Emerman suggested looping in the DC MOCRs and the councilmember’s constituency services team into the discussion. Dr. Holliday suggested involving the violence interrupters.

Ward 5 MOCR Dominique Chestnut said that the DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) is the solution to this issue. He suggested calling the DBH Helpline at 1-888-793-4357 if people are passed out or strung out on the sidewalk. He can help work with neighborhoods on specific targeted locations to get nuisance spots abated.

A Quincy Place NW neighbor said that her husband has taken photos of an individual selling narcotics on the block. Commander Emerman described the process for taking action – a photo alone is not enough to make an arrest. MPD knows who this specific individual is.

**BCA Scholarship Committee student awardees**

Ms. Howard thanked the BCA Scholarship Committee members. She likewise thanked the BCA scholarship program donors:

* Florida & Q St LLC – the owner of the vacant 1600 North Capitol Street NW lot: $3,300, and
* Foulger-Pratt Community Benefits: $3,000.

Last month, the BCA approved the two $1,500 scholarship awards. It was noted that the payments are to be made directly to the universities.

Ms. Howard then introduced the two scholarship awardees:

1. Regine Campbell, a graduate of Dunbar High School, who will be attending Norfolk State University this Fall 2020.
2. Jeffrey Hayward, a graduate of McKinley Tech High School, who will be attending Temple University this Fall 2020.

Ms. Kimball of Foulger-Pratt Community Benefits advised that the scholarship is part of the Eckington development project.

The two BCA scholarship award recipients received a hearty applause.

Ms. Quinn announced that Alpha Phi Alpha kindly matched the scholarships to the two students. A generous contribution during the meeting!

**41 Quincy Place NW zoning and historic relief**

David Do, owner of 41 Quincy Place NW, shared his architectural renderings and described his project within the Bloomingdale Historic District. His project needs both historic and zoning approvals.

The historic approval is needed because there is a roof addition.

The zoning relief: two special exceptions for lot occupancy of 70% and for rear setback.

He indicated that both adjoining neighbors have written letters of support.

The HPRB hearing is scheduled for either 06/25/2020 or 07/09/2020. It was noted that the HPO staff report for 41 Quincy Place NW has not yet been issued. The zoning hearing will be in September 2020.

Dr. Holliday made a motion for the BCA to support both the HRPB application and for zoning. The motion was seconded. A roll call vote was then taken.

Vote results:

Support: 19

Opposition: 1

Abstentions: 0

The motion passed.

**BCA website redesign**

Ms. Quinn provided a brief overview of redesigning the BCA website. Ms. McCann described a budget of $5000 to $7000 to modernize the organization’s website. The new website would provide analytics, calendar of events, payment processing, process transactions, research info, communication channel, transactions and interactive capability.

A motion was made to support funding for the BCA website modernization with a budget of $5000 to $7000. The motion was seconded. A roll call vote was then taken.

Vote results:

Support: 18

Opposition: 0

Abstentions: 0

The motion passed.

**Alpha Phi Alpha Mu Lambda at 2405 1st Street NW request to symbolically designate the 2400 block of 1st Street NW as “Alpha Phi Alpha Way”**

Ms. Quinn provided an overview of the initiative.

Bryon Williams of Alpha Phi Alpha introduced himself, who is the parliamentarian of the APA Mu Lambda chapter. He is seeking support for the symbolic renaming of the 2400 block of 1st Street NW between Bryant St NW and Michigan Avenue NW. The chapter reached out to nearby neighbors and have received support. He described the recent service activities that include the House of Ruth and peacefully protesting social injustice. There are six APA chapters in DC – three college chapters and three alumni chapters. (Mu Lambda is an alumni chapter). He described how Mu Lambda participated in the Bloomingdale racial covenant challenge. He listed off a long list of prominent APA members. The list of neighborhood supporters was displayed. He solicited the BCA for its support.

Mr. Brent Radcliff of APA indicated that the request is to rename the two blocks of 1st Street NW between Bryant St to Michigan Ave NW. He said that it is possible to have multiple blocks renamed. He shared some examples elsewhere in the District.

There was discussion about the ceremonial designation of just the one block of 2400 block of 1st Street NW between Bryant St NW and Channing St NW vs. both the 2400 block and 2500 block of 1st Street NW between Bryant St NW up to Michigan Ave NW.

The ask has been revised to just be in the one block between Bryant St NW to Channing St NW.

There was a question about if there is a process to have a ceremonial renaming removed. There was no response.

A motion was made for the BCA to support either the one or two block ceremonial renaming of the 2400 block of 1st Street NW as “Alpha Phi Alpha Way”. The motion was seconded. A roll call vote was then taken.

Vote results:

Support: 20

Opposition: 0

Abstentions: 0

The motion passed.

**Community representatives**

Ms. Quinn said that the BCA may be called upon to respond to the topic of funding for the DC Metropolitan Police Department.

Mr. Chestnut reviewed that DC is currently in Phase 1 of DC re-opening. He provided details about DC’s COVID-19 program. Friday, 06/19/2020, is the targeted date of Phase II re-opening. There is no targeted date for the Phase III re-opening.

He mentioned that DC is in the current fiscal year budget discussion.

There was a question about police budgeting and the re-opening schools.

**Bloomingdale Village Square Youth Project update**

Dr. Holliday provided an update.

In May 2019, the BCA was awarded a $20,000 grant from Humanities DC to enable BCA's Bloomingdale Village Square (BVS) Initiative to develop and implement a youth project (grades 6 - 12) that focuses on neighborhood history, development of social science & history research and other skills, with the goal of cultivating youth voice and leadership on issues of neighborhood change and related impacts on youth.

Thus far, BVS has revised/updated its Timeline Bloomingdale History booklets and other prior presentation for use by the youth project, and initiated recruitment of potential project sites (nearby schools, churches and youth programs/organizations). BVS has finalized more than 85% of a formal curriculum and Teacher Guide for which guidance for all proposed 10 community expeditions has been completed, as have 17 of the 20 lesson plans. The COVID-19 pandemic then hit, schools were closed and many youth were found to have insufficient resources for participation in on-line teaching/learning efforts, which DCPS has attempted to address (providing computer technology and 'internet connection through use of 'hotspots'.) The future status of DC schools and public education process and procedures remains unknown.

In response, the federal government engaged in massive spending related to disruptions associated with COVID-19 through the passage of the CARES Act. That Act included $75 million designated for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for addressing disruptions in humanities projects and programs due to COVID-19. NEH awarded $30 million of this CARES money to its state affiliates including Humanities DC, which received $350,000 and established a grant award program for dispensing those funds, with the maximum size of a grant award dependent on the size of an organization's annual budget. BCA is eligible for a maximum grant of $7500. Monies must be targeted to activities that will ameliorate the effects of COVID-19.

On 5/29/2020, BVS submitted its application for a COVID-19 grant, requesting the maximum of $7500. If awarded in June 2020, these monies, during the grant period of 5/22/202-9/30/2020, will primarily be used to develop a digitalized version of its curriculum and resource materials using the platforms of Google Classroom, Google G+ Suite, and Google G+ Nonprofit Suite. Collectively, these integrated platforms will enable management of classroom activities and assignments, whole classroom & small group collaborative learning activities, guest lectures & distant learning, parent/community involvement, easy access to all teacher and student curriculum and resource materials, and many other capabilities.

A motion was made – see the motion text below:

In the event BCA is awarded a CARES grant from Humanities DC for the approximate period of 6/22/2020- 9/30/2020, the BCA Membership authorizes the acceptance of such funds and their immediate expenditure on efforts that address the impact of COVID-19 on BCA's Bloomingdale Village Square Initiative's Youth Project ('Taking Village History to Our Youth') including digitalization of that project's curriculum.

The motion was seconded. A roll call vote was then taken.

Vote results:

Support: 10

Opposition: 0

Abstentions: 1

The motion passed.

**Closing comments**

Ms. Quinn solicited feedback from the community on police reform.

The meeting ended at 9:20 pm.

**Motion summary**

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| **Motion #** | **Motion** | **Results of motion** |
| 1 | A motion was made to support both the HRPB application – for a roof addition -- and for zoning relief – for two zoning special exceptions for lot occupancy and rear setback -- 41 Quincy Place NW.  The motion was seconded.  There was a roll call vote. There were 19 votes in support, 1 vote in opposition and 0 abstentions. | Motion passed. |
| 2 | A motion was made to support funding for the BCA website modernization with a budget of $5000 to $7000.    The motion was seconded.  There was a roll call vote. There were 18 votes in support, 0 votes in opposition and 0 abstentions. | Motion passed. |
| 3 | A motion was made for the BCA to support either the one or two block ceremonial renaming of the 2400 block of 1st Street NW as “Alpha Phi Alpha Way”.  The motion was seconded.  There was a roll call vote. There were 20 votes in support, 0 votes in opposition and 0 abstentions. | Motion passed. |
| 4 | A motion was made – see the text below:  In the event BCA is awarded a CARES grant from Humanities DC for the approximate period of 6/22/2020- 9/30/2020, the BCA Membership authorizes the acceptance of such funds and their immediate expenditure on efforts that address the impact of COVID-19 on BCA's Bloomingdale Village Square Initiative's Youth Project ('Taking Village History to Our Youth') including digitalization of that project's curriculum.  The motion was seconded.  There was a roll call vote. There were 10 votes in support, 0 votes in opposition and 1 abstention. | Motion passed. |