



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7F

Government of the District of Columbia

One Commitment, Our Community.

General Commission Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2024 6:30 p.m.

1. Moment of Silence

Chairperson Holcomb asked all participants to observe a moment of silence

2. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Holcomb at 6:36 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Commissioner Hayes

Commissioner Thompson-Wright

Commissioner Edwards

Commissioner Hughes

Commissioner Nelson

Commissioner Orendoff (initially experienced technical difficulties but was later confirmed present)

Commissioner Ruff

Commissioner Holcomb

3. Consideration and Adoption of the Agenda

A motion to adopt the evening's agenda, with the movement of old and new business items to a special call meeting was made by Commissioner Ruff and seconded by Commissioner Hayes.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Safety Update - 6th District MPD

At the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 7F General Commission Meeting on September 17, 2024, Lieutenant Hakeem Iodii of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Sixth District provided an update on crime statistics and recent incidents within Police Service Area (PSA) 603.

Crime Statistics Overview:

- Violent Crime: Lieutenant Iodii reported a 15% overall reduction in crime within PSA 603. Violent crimes, including homicides, assaults with dangerous weapons, and robberies, have decreased by 60% over the past 30 days and 42% year-to-date.

- Property Crime: Despite the positive trends in violent crime, property crimes, particularly thefts from automobiles, have increased by 177% year-to-date. Lieutenant Iodii emphasized the importance of community vigilance and securing personal property to mitigate these incidents.

Recent Incidents

- Assault with Intent to Kill: On Sunday, September 15, 2024, an incident occurred at 222 35th Street Northeast during the midnight tour, involving multiple rifle and handgun casings. A firearm was recovered, and detectives are actively investigating the case.

- Shooting on Benning Road: On September 10, 2024, at approximately 7:03 p.m., officers responded to a shooting in the 4500 block of Benning Road Southeast. An adult male victim was transported to a local hospital.

Community Concerns and Responses:

- Area Hotspots: Commissioner Ruff expressed concerns about persistent criminal activity around 35th Street, 36th Street, and the Shelters. She highlighted the need for a comprehensive plan to address these hotspots, especially with the approaching fall season.
- MPD Patrols: Lieutenant Iodii assured that overtime units are assigned to these areas and committed to instructing officers to pay special attention to identified hotspots.
- Vehicle Break-Ins: Residents raised issues regarding vehicle vandalizations. Lieutenant Iodii acknowledged a 177% increase in thefts from automobiles year-to-date and mentioned that community outreach units distribute pamphlets on securing vehicles. He noted that such crimes are often opportunistic, occurring when valuables are visible inside unattended vehicles.

Preventative Measures:

- Light Towers and Weed and Seed Vans: MPD utilizes light towers and the Weed and Seed van as deterrents in high-crime areas. However, due to limited resources, deployment is prioritized based on crime severity and frequency.
- Community Engagement: Lieutenant Iodii encouraged residents to participate in community outreach programs and maintain open communication with MPD to effectively address and prevent crime.

Contact Information:

Lieutenant Hakeem Iodii shared his contact details with meeting attendees, encouraging residents to reach out with concerns or information related to public safety.

The MPD Sixth District remains committed to collaborating with the community to enhance safety and address crime proactively.

5. Presentations/Special Guests

Mr. Jack Jones, representing the management of Solstice Apartments, addressed the commission and community members. He discussed significant safety concerns affecting the residents of Solstice Apartments, located at 3534 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20019.

Key Points from Mr. Jones's Presentation:

Vehicle Break-Ins: Mr. Jones reported that 21 vehicles were vandalized in a single night within the apartment's secured garage. He emphasized that this incident appeared to be a coordinated effort rather than random opportunistic thefts.

Public Safety Concerns: Beyond vehicle vandalism, Mr. Jones highlighted issues such as open drug activity occurring directly in front of the leasing office. These activities have raised significant safety concerns among the approximately 232 families residing in the building, many of whom include single parents, elderly individuals, and children.

Collaboration with Authorities: Mr. Jones expressed a strong desire to collaborate with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to enhance security measures. He proposed establishing a break station for MPD officers



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7F

Government of the District of Columbia

One Commitment, Our Community.

within the Solstice Apartments building, offering amenities to encourage a consistent police presence as a deterrent to criminal activities.

Community Engagement: He also sought partnerships with local commissioners and community organizations to provide residents with access to essential services, particularly for those facing challenges such as rent payment difficulties.

Mr. Jones's presentation underscored the management's commitment to improving safety and quality of life for Solstice Apartments residents through proactive measures and community collaboration.

Commissioner Feedback

Commissioner Ruff:

- Expressed appreciation for Mr. Jones's proactive engagement and emphasized the need for immediate collaboration with MPD.
- Highlighted ongoing plans to move the “Takeover Tuesdays” initiative to Solstice Apartments to bring essential services and increased community resources directly to residents.
- Reaffirmed her commitment to providing continued support to Solstice residents and their management team in addressing safety concerns.

Commissioner Thompson-Wright:

- Supported the idea of a substation and emphasized the importance of collaboration between Solstice Apartments and Metal Green Courts, another neighboring property facing related challenges.
- Proposed a roundtable discussion involving Solstice management, Metal Green Courts, MPD, and the Attorney General’s Office to address broader public safety issues in the area.
- Suggested facilitating the establishment of a tenant association at Solstice Apartments to ensure resident representation and input in decision-making processes.

Chairperson Holcomb:

- Expressed solidarity with the residents of Solstice Apartments and acknowledged the impact of crime in the community, including his personal experience with vehicle theft.
- Highlighted existing resources, such as the CARE DC Act, that could provide funding for safety measures, though he noted that such measures might not take effect until the next fiscal year.
- Committed to supporting efforts to address safety and increase the presence of violence interruption programs on Minnesota Avenue.

Resident Feedback

Delan (Resident of Solstice Apartments)

- Requested that residents be included in discussions and planning regarding the proposed MPD substation to ensure their concerns and perspectives are heard.
- Shared her efforts to establish a tenant association and emphasized the importance of having a formal structure to facilitate communication between residents and management.

General Resident Sentiments:

- Residents echoed concerns about the safety and security of the property, particularly after the break-in incident involving 21 vehicles.
- Many expressed a desire for more transparency and involvement in discussions about solutions to safety concerns.

Proposed Next Steps:

- Facilitate a roundtable discussion with Solstice management, MPD, local commissioners, and residents to align on security priorities and develop an action plan.
- Establish a tenant association at Solstice Apartments to provide residents with a structured platform for advocacy and communication.
- Explore funding opportunities, such as the CARE DC Act block grants, to implement safety initiatives, including public safety ambassadors or additional surveillance equipment.
- Work with MPD to finalize plans for a substation or increased officer presence at Solstice Apartments.

Brittany Ethridge, the Ward 7 Manager for the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS), introduced herself and described her responsibilities in supporting the ward. She emphasized that her role involves assessing, strategizing, and resolving community concerns while maintaining accountability to the mayor's office.

Key Updates Provided:

Metro Bus Service Enhancements:

Announced temporary adjustments to Metro bus service to offset the phase-out of the DC Circulator.

Initial changes, including the elimination of the Roslyn and Dupont routes, will begin on October 1, 2024, with further modifications slated for December 31, 2024.

New Pharmacy Technician Program:

Highlighted a 22-week program in partnership with Howard University's School of Pharmacy.

Includes paid externship opportunities, career readiness training, and certification support until May 2025.

Veggie Giveaways:

Ongoing DPR community farm veggie giveaways in Wards 1, 5, and 7 through November 28, 2024.

Encouraged residents to participate for fresh produce.

Health Insurance Rate Announcements:

Shared updates on 2025 rate increases, which are lower than in recent years.

Individual health insurance rates will increase by 4.7%, and small business rates will rise by 4.9%.



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7F

Government of the District of Columbia

One Commitment, Our Community.

Changes in Animal Services:

Announced the December 31, 2024, discontinuation of the DC Humane Rescue Alliance's shelter services.

Outlined services that will remain, including veterinary care, adoption, and spay/neuter programs.

Contact Information:

Brittany Ethridge provided her email and phone number for community members and commissioners to reach out regarding concerns or assistance.

Feedback and Comments from Commissioners and Community Members

Chairperson Holcomb:

Thanked Brittany for her updates and requested additional details about the priority bus lanes that would serve Ward 7 once the DC Circulator phase-out is complete.

Reiterated the importance of transportation updates being communicated effectively to residents.

Commissioner Ruff:

Expressed interest in further collaboration with MOCRS on food security programs like the veggie giveaways to ensure that residents in Ward 7 have access to fresh produce.

Community Member Input:

No specific feedback from the community was recorded during the session, but participants acknowledged the importance of the updates, particularly regarding public transportation and health insurance changes.

Proposed Next Steps:

Follow-Up on Bus Service Enhancements:

Brittany Ethridge committed to providing specific details about the routes and services impacting Ward 7.

Community Awareness Campaigns:

Commissioners emphasized the need for broader communication efforts around resources like the veggie giveaways and the pharmacy technician program.

Animal Service Transition Clarity:

Commissioners suggested additional outreach to ensure residents understand the changes in animal care services after December 31, 2024.

6. Consent Agenda

Resolution 24-009: Recognition of East River Family Strengthening Collaborative Executive Director Mae Best for 25 years of service to Ward 7 families, youth, and seniors.

Adopted unanimously without discussion.

Chairperson Holcomb took a moment of personal privilege to commend Ms. Best for her contributions.

7. Announcements

Volunteer Opportunities: Call for volunteers at Marvin Gaye Park and Lederer Gardens for ongoing farm initiatives.

Art All Night: Scheduled to take place at the Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street, with ANC 7F exploring ways to support the event.

8. Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business, Commissioner Ruff moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.