

LeDroit Park Civic Association

Meeting Minutes

September 22nd, 2020

*Meeting conducted virtually via Zoom.

Board Present:

President - Elliot Seibert

Vice President – Sarah Bishop

Treasurer - Danielle Lopez-Lezama

Secretary - Becky Reina

Financial Secretary - Elizabeth (Zeba) Floyd

Parliamentarian – Richard Myers

Motions:

- Driveway Curb Cut Request @ 501 T St NW - 9 aye, 12 nay, 4 abstentions. Motion defeated.
 - Conducted via chat feature in Zoom and verbally for participants calling in via phone.
 - See discussion below.
- Requested Resolution on 421 T St NW - 21 aye, 1 nay, 1 abstention. Motion passes.
 - Conducted via chat feature in Zoom and verbally for participants calling in via phone.
 - Resolution below.

Announcements:

Moment of silence to commemorate the passing of longtime LeDroit Park resident Dr. Hill.

Future LeDroit Park Civic Association Meetings – October's virtual meeting will take place on October 27th, 7-8 PM.

Agenda:

Safety Report and Update – Sgt. Keirn, MPD -

- LDP spans Boundaries of 306 and 308. Over last 60 days in 306 and 308:
 - Homicide increase - 3 homicides.

- Decrease in assaults with a dangerous weapon and robberies compared to last year.
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- Total property crime has decreased
 - Stolen cars up 64%, most are Uber Eats and similar drivers who leave keys in the car while making deliveries.
 - Theft decrease - 73 to 54, primarily package thefts.
- 67 arrests over last 60 days (65 adults, 2 juveniles)
- 3 guns recovered

DC Council At-Large Candidates (LPCA does not endorse any candidate but offers a platform for all)

- Ed Lazere, Candidate
 - Has spent all of his adult life in DC; married his wife and raised his now-adult children here. Lives in Brookland.
 - Spent his career as the Executive Director of the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, where he has worked for affordable housing, investment in schools through an equity lens, growing a DC budget expertise.
 - Led an advocacy effort to eliminate corporate tax breaks and redirect funds to mental health, etc.
 - Running to address structural inequality and strengthen the progressive wing of the current DC Council.
 - Endorsed by JUFJ, Working Families Party, Sierra Club, Metro AFL-CIO, CM Silverman, CM Nadeau, and AG Karl Racine.
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- Christina Henderson, Candidate
 - Formerly lived at 7th and T NW, now lives in Ward 4 in Petworth.
 - Daughter of an army veteran and bus driver. Worked on political campaigns, for school systems, as CM Grosso's first Legislative Director and then ran the DC Council Education Committee.
 - Wants more CMs focused on equity for all DC residents.
 - Mom of 18-month-old.
 - Her focuses: 1) increasing access to health care, particularly maternal health care, 2) access to childcare, which she views as a workforce issue, 3) equitable growth and affordable housing including housing preservation, and 4) public safety.
 - Commonsense approach to policy making.

Questions for both candidates:

- Safety question for Ed Lazere - please explain more on his approach to community safety: We should not be over-relying on police. Key to safety is stable families and stable communities, requiring investment in communities. In near-term, community based services, including defunding police to redirect funding into community for things

like violence interrupting services and affordable housing. Ex of Davon McNeal, killed just after a police officer was present, showing inability for policing to prevent community violence.

- Example of house on Florida Ave where drug dealing was taking place, eventually resulting in a death after months of little progress:
 - Lazere: discusses need for interdisciplinary teams to solve problems rather than reliance on police.
 - Henderson: feels this is a “yes and situation.” MPD has tools around deterrence, but is often slow to roll out those measures. Gives example of her daughter’s daycare center not bringing children outside due to daytime shootings, yet MPD was very slow to post a camera to deter shootings.
- What is the theory of change on why we need to reallocate money from MPD to things like violence interruption?
 - Henderson: thinks these programs need to be invested in at scale in order to create useful change.

Update from Director of Constituent Services Oscar Montiel of CM Brianne Nadeau’s office

- DC Council passed Standby Guardian Bill to make short term plans for a child if parents are detained without requiring them to give up parental rights.
 - https://www.brianneknadeau.com/updates/press-release/new-law-allows-undocumented-residents-designate-standby-guardian-children-if?fbclid=IwAR3YYg4Tv_nU1fGF3X2yvUPkhraDZ9unhxAvL_7Qf7l6GhW2gGnUeInMHiY
- Vision Zero omnibus bill passed today.
- September Flooding
 - DC Water is committing \$1.5 million for clean-up relief.
 - Dewatering, cleaning and sanitizing with a per property limit of \$5,000
 - DC Water will pay the company directly for these services
 - To schedule service, please contact one of the following companies beginning at 9:00 am on September 17, 2020:
 - Service Master at 703-212-7000 (24/7)
 - ServePro at 703-448-8444 (24/7)
- Census 2020 deadline is 9/30/20.
- Remember to register to vote. All registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail.
 - <https://dcboe.org/>
- Grant opportunity for Streeteries to assist in winterizing outdoor spaces:
<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/recovery-business>
- Reimagining Reeves - survey for reimagining the Reeves Center:
<https://publicinput.com/Reeves>

Driveway Curb Cut Request @ 501 T St NW – Nico Costanzo, on behalf of owners Francesco and Graziella Costanzo, requesting LPCA support for Historic (HPRB) application.

- Request for curb cut to accommodate off-street parking on what is currently a patio.

- Nico Costanzo explains that his father is about to turn 80-years-old and has increasing mobility issues.
- Q: are you taking an on-street parking space? Yes, possibly 2 based on the need for spacing on either side of the curb cut.
- Discussion of a dedicated handicap parking space instead.
- Motion on proposed letter to approve the curb cut defeated.
 - Yay: 9
 - Nay: 12
 - Abstain: 4

1928 6th St NW 3rd-Story Addition and Renovations – Yonis Benitez, property owner, requesting support for Historic (HPRB) application

- Tabled, potentially to be revisited at future meeting.
- Update from Jason Bello, Historic Zoning Commission member: owner has been advised by HPRB to revise their plans - as they are currently non-comforming - and has chosen to do so.

1952 2nd St NW 3rd-Story Addition, Renovations, and Garage – Gayll Worsley, W+W Associates Architects PC, requesting support for Historic (HPRB) application and zoning relief (BZA).

- Worsley states that existing building is a “non-contributing structure,” built as infill. Worked with Brendan Myer of HPRB desk to bridge the two existing styles on the block; Myer encouraged the development to keep the rhythm of a bay and similar proportions to existing buildings.
- 2 family flat: 2 bedrooms over 2 bedrooms, with a detached 2-story garage (storage on 2nd story, no living space).
- Brick veneer and faux brick panels above.
- Update from Jason Bello, Zoning Commission committee member:
 - Voted against on a zoning basis. Developer agreed to come back to the committee with a different design. Board decided to not vote on historic grounds and hold off on submitting the vote against for zoning purposes, given developers willingness to return to a future meeting.
 - Committee liked the idea of a more modern take on a bay, but suggested somewhat smaller windows with more masonry and to soften the top of the building in some way, more like the turrets that appear in nearby historic buildings. Additionally, the committee suggested the top story should not project toward the back of the lot to the full length of the 2nd story.
 - No 2-story garages have previously been approved by HPRB and Committee has concerns regarding the proposed garage.
 - Current plan does not fit zoning in 2 ways: .1% over lot coverage and 2 feet over height restriction.
- Community discussion broadly agreeing with Zoning Committee suggestions.
- Developer will return to LPCA October meeting with updated plans.

ANC Single Member District Updates – Anita Norman, ANC 1B01 Commissioner - Update pushed to October meeting. Commissioner Norman not in attendance.

Other community announcements and updates:

Common Good City Farm:

1. Free produce giveaway on Wednesday, 4 - 6 pm will continue until October 28.
<https://www.commongoodcityfarm.org/common-good-city-farm-and-arcadias-ledroit-park-market>
2. Our annual A Night on the Farm fundraiser will be virtual this year and feature meals from local restaurants over 6 evenings from October 1 to November 2. Guests can pick up a meal from a restaurant or have their meal delivered and the meal will be accompanied by a virtual cooking demo or other programming featuring the restaurants' chefs. Eventbrite link will be live soon at https://virtualnightonfarm.eventbrite.com_
3. We are doing a community needs assessment and would love people to offer their thoughts.
<https://www.commongoodcityfarm.org/blog/2020/8/27/community-needs-survey>

Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) meeting: Featuring 1928 6th St, 1952 2nd St, & 421 T St. September 24th 12:45 pm with possible extension October 1st.
<https://planning.dc.gov/node/1491046>

ANC1B Meeting: October 1st, 2020 6:30 – 8:30 pm:
<https://www.anc1b.org/upcoming-meetings/8nc2jzp2pf45hl3nn345s9pw23rhsj>



Historic Preservation Review Board
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite 650 East,
Washington, DC 20024

September 22, 2020

RE: 421 T St NW
HPRB Case No. HPA 20-300

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Review Board:

This letter is to inform you that the LeDroit Park Civic Association passed the following resolution at its September 22nd, 2020 meeting in response to the project's design revisions:

The LeDroit Park Civic Association is opposed to the development at 421 T St NW on the grounds that it is incompatible with the historic district and therefore, not in the public interest.

We believe the changes made to the project are not significant improvements, and that the fundamental issues raised by the Historic Preservation Office and the Board were not addressed. This includes that the structure should "restrict itself to a modesty that does not insert itself into the streetscape of U Street," which is the most iconic block in the LeDroit Park Historic District, and that the third floor should be "more of a roof than an occupied space."

Sincerely,

Elliot Seibert
President, LeDroit Park Civic Association