

## February 13 ABC Hearing Update on VA Termination & Live Music Debate

The purpose of the hearing before the ABC Board was to hear testimony regarding two ABC establishments, **Don Jaime's** and **Haydee's**, on two issues; (1) whether to terminate the voluntary agreements (VA) between these establishments and the Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Alliance (**MPNA**); and (2) to consider allowing something called "Entertainment Endorsement" applications—i.e., to allow live music—for these establishments. MPNA testified in support of live entertainment occurring Tuesday through Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays from 6 p.m. to midnight with no moving of the tables for dancing and no cover charge. Four other protest groups testified for stricter provisions allowing weekend-only entertainment.

The nine-hour hearing began with witnesses for the licensees who spoke in favor of live entertainment seven days a week until closing hours of between 2 and 3 a.m. Testimony began with a **musician** claiming that he has never been allowed to play in his neighborhood because culture can only be expressed in alcohol-serving establishments. After eight years of silence, Don Jaime claimed his voluntary agreement was a fraud. Haydee claimed she was forced to sign her voluntary agreement, even though she was under the guidance of her **well-known, experienced liquor attorney**. Testimony was heard on how a handful of people were going to be the masters of noise control, and how expert collaborators with long-winded solutions were going to fix all the problems of the Mount Pleasant liquor universe. None of this testimony addressed public safety, trash, or outside pedestrian disturbances.

A 1,600-signature blindly-signed **petition** acknowledging support for a new voluntary agreement was challenged by the **ABC Board** because the voluntary agreement was never made available for review as the signatures were being collected. Accompanying the petition was a geocoded map depicting the location of the signers/houses of those who signed in Mount Pleasant, tagged with a statement explaining that these signatories wanted the MPNA voluntary agreements *terminated*—something that was never revealed on the petition.

The Board heard from many residents who spoke about how for years, MPNA was the only civic group taking a leadership role in the community when everyone else did not—where were these groups over the last decade? We heard from **neighbors** who expressed real concerns about noise, fights and other issues that pour from the late night bars and how the voluntary agreements have helped improve their quality of life. We heard from the **police department**, which spoke on how manpower would be strained and public safety would be negatively impacted if our neighborhood had live entertainment—more people, more parking problems, and more public safety issues, trash and noise. We heard from Latino families who are trying to raise their children in our diverse community and who while supporting live entertainment, oppose restaurants morphing into bars and nightclubs.

But at the end of the day, it isn't about emotion, passion, or even cultural expression. It is not about what we wear or our livelihood or how many people support one side or the other. Everyone has agreed to have live entertainment—everyone has agreed on the need for a voluntary agreement. The only real issues before the board are how much live entertainment there should be and when it should happen. We do know one thing; it is likely that neither side will be completely happy with the outcome. It is in the hands of the ABC Board. Their decision might change the character of Mount Pleasant forever.

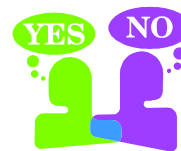


*We heard from Latino families who are trying to raise their children in our diverse community and who while supporting live entertainment, oppose restaurants morphing into bars and nightclubs.*

### What Has the ANC Done For You?

Do you feel the ANC is doing a good job? Here's your chance to speak out to the DC Council

**See Page 4 for more details >>**



### DC Area Books to Prisons Project

Looking to donate your used paperbacks and dictionaries to a worthy cause? **The Books to Prisons Project** answers prisoners' book requests free of charge. We rely on donated books, packing materials, and scissors! Donations can be left at **Foundry Methodist Church** (16<sup>th</sup> & P Sts. NW) or a pick up can be arranged by Mt. Pleasant area volunteer **Brian Fish**. Call Brian at 202-986-8906 or reach him at [brianjohnfish@yahoo.com](mailto:brianjohnfish@yahoo.com). The project is affiliated with **The Quixote Center** in Hyattsville, MD ([www.quixote.org](http://www.quixote.org)). If you wish to volunteer, please join volunteers any Weds. evening at the above mentioned **Foundry Methodist Church** to read letters and pack the books. Donations are tax deductible.

## MPNA Testifies at Councilmember Graham's Transportation Hearing

MPNA Board member **Leslie Blakey** testified before the DC Council on December 17, 2007 on the affects on Mt. Pleasant as it pertains to the Columbia Heights redevelopments. MPNA appreciated the opportunity for citizen input and wanted to encourage that part of the process. MPNA wanted DDOT to refrain from making any changes or implementing any "solutions" without a minimum comment period of 45 days with a scheduled public meeting at the end to hear community reaction. Here are some points of the MPNA testimony



- Mt. Pleasant is a closely-knit, historic neighborhood with characteristics and qualities that distinguish it from most of the rest of DC. Residents value this sense of community very highly. Bisecting our neighborhood with commuter traffic adversely affects this community.
- Many Mt. Pleasant residents are **bicyclists and walkers**; many use public transportation exclusively; many are families with children and pets. All these are put in jeopardy by aggressive, speeding cross town drivers.
- Speeding on our streets has outraged many residents and is very closely tied to commuter traffic (e.g., there is much less trouble with speeding on weekend days). Many of the measures put in place thus far to calm speeding have not worked.
- There are 3 schools either on or within a block of Park Road in Mt. Pleasant with many children who walk to school. This street is already too heavily used by cross-town traffic, including speeding trucks and buses. According to the transportation study data, there are more crashes on **Park Road** than any other stretch of road in Mt. Pleasant. In November, there was a terrible crash at **18th and Park** that knocked the bus sign and a utility box completely out of the ground. This is unacceptable and measures need to be taken to improve safety and reduce the risk to children.
- Similarly, **Irving Street** has been the site of many crashes and near-misses and has been a source of citizen complaints for years, without adequate mitigation.
- Therefore, to the maximum extent possible, commuter and cross-town traffic should be routed around Mt. Pleasant and no changes should be made that encourage through-traffic. Alternative routes that circumvent the bounds of Mt. Pleasant should be found, such as **Piney Branch Parkway**, which is very underutilized, to the north and **Harvard Street** to the south.
- Mt. Pleasant is bordered on 3 sides by **Rock Creek Park** and the many trails and recreation facilities it offers. Yet, there is practically no safe pedestrian/bicyclist access. The bike trail down Park to **Pierce Mill** ends abruptly at the bridge where the park land begins and cyclists must navigate very dangerous traffic and blind curves after that. Walkers are routinely cutting through the woods and across **Beach Drive** or Piney Branch to access the trails along the creek. This dangerous problem needs attention.
- **Parking** in Mt. Pleasant is a nightmare. At a minimum, a street by street parking audit, whose goal would be to identify unnecessary and misapplied restrictions, should be undertaken.

## Police Emergency & Non-Emergency Combined to 911



Last month, **Mayor Fenty** and **Janice Quintana**, director of the Office of Unified Communications, launched the new 311 phone number for government services from the Mayor's Citywide Call Center which used to be used as the number for all police "non emergencies". This means that you must **dial 911** to request police, fire, and emergency medical services for life-threatening situations.

This number will remain as the number to call for ALL SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE RESPONSE FROM MPD OR FIRE Because the 911 has been designated as the "Universal Emergency Number" throughout the United States, the DC Government now is receiving all emergency (911) and non-emergency (311) through the 911 only. The 311 number was previously used for police NON-EMERGENCIES. It will now be used to reach the Mayor's Citywide Call Center to reach government agencies and request services.

## Seeking Donations: Homeless Outreach Program at St. Matthew's Cathedral

This Monday morning walk-in program serves 40 to 70 people each week. Ongoing needs include sturdy men's clothes (especially jeans), coats, blankets, reading glasses, and toiletries. Donations are tax deductible. Please contact Mt. Pleasant resident, **Brian Fish** at 202-986-8906 or at [brianjohnfish@yahoo.com](mailto:brianjohnfish@yahoo.com) or contact **Teresa Volante**, Social Justice Coordinator, **St. Matthew's Cathedral** at 202-347-3215, ext.552. Your donations are greatly appreciated. Also you can speak to the same contacts about volunteering on Monday mornings between 8 and 11am to help serve food to the homeless at St. Matthews. They are looking for volunteers who are looking to make a regular commitment for Monday mornings.

## PSA 301 Moves From Sub Station

On Sunday, December 23, 2007, officers assigned to **PSA 301** began working out of the Third District's main station at **1620 V Street, Northwest**, phone 202-727-6315, instead of the 3D Substation on Park Road, Northwest.

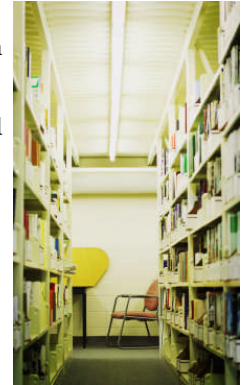
This change was made as a result of crime patterns more closely associated between Police Service Areas (PSA's) 302 and 304. While information sharing takes place between all PSA's, the information sharing is enhanced by having officers attend the same roll calls; and working out of the same facility. A similar benefit can be seen between PSA's 301 and 303, where similar robbery patterns have recently emerged. Officers from both 301 and 303 will attend the same roll calls as well.

One of the main concerns of the move expressed from the 301 community was in reference to the distance the officers would have to travel from **3D main station** to PSA 301. When it was disclosed that the distance the officers traveled from the substation was virtually the same as the distance from the main station, those concerns were laid to rest.

The move occurred as planned. and to date there has been no adverse impact from the move.

## Good News and Bad News for our Public Library Branch

There is both good news and bad news to report for our neighborhood branch library. The good news is that an architect should be selected soon to design a 7.5 million dollar renovation of the interior of the historic library building. In the interim, the Library System has installed even more public access Internet computers and there are even more new DVDs, books on CD, and music CDs for residents to borrow. **The Friends of the Library** are planning a book sale for March and the annual **Mount Pleasant Youth Arts Fair** for the month of May.



The bad news, however, is bad indeed. In October, **Maria Nina** was transferred from Mount Pleasant to Petworth. Maria spent 22 years at the Mount Pleasant branch and she was a valued resource for the Latino community of Washington, DC. Maria has since retired from the library system and will be moving to California in the spring. On November 30, branch manager **Ellen Kardy** was unceremonially dismissed after 12 years at the Mount Pleasant branch and 17 years at the DC Public Library.

The loss of both Maria and Ellen is a real tragedy for our small community. To date, neither has been replaced and the branch is being managed only part-time by the manager of the **Takoma Park** branch. These changes are only part of a larger shake-up of staff throughout the library system. 38 staff have either retired or were dismissed in the last two months, straining the staff that are left.

For more information about the Mount Pleasant branch library and its Friends of the Library group, contact Richard Huffine at 202-253-3511 or [richard-huffine@yahoo.com](mailto:richard-huffine@yahoo.com).

## Questions and Answers



**Q.** *I thought the [Washington] **Post** article was great. We've lived in Mount Pleasant since **1987** and I was not aware that an organization existed that was actually trying to improve the quality of life here for average families. In retrospect, I have heard the organization mentioned via **Jack McKay's** newsletters, but I could never quite figure out what all the issues were. I just joined your organization, and would possibly contribute to the defense fund, but I do have a few questions:*

*What is your position on the public drinking that is still occurring on **Mount Pleasant Street** during the day? How would you like to see it stopped? Are you against any specific commercial ventures on Mount Pleasant Street, such as a **Starbucks/Caribou** ? Would your organization move to block such a venture or would you accept it as a possibly positive addition to the neighborhood? I'm sure you may think these are strange questions, but I'm just trying to get a sense of the mindset of the organization prior to committing any money. Thanks.*

**A. Position on Public Drinking:** MPNA is against public drinking on the streets. MPNA was the first organization to pioneer the establishment of the first **single sale moratorium** in our city (which means no one is allowed to sell single containers of beer from our mom and pop stores). We sponsor the monthly PSA meetings and work closely with the police on quality of life issues such as you mentioned.

**Commercial Ventures:** MPNA supports commercial development of **Mt. Pleasant Street** within limits appropriate for our residential community. With that said, it is very difficult for any of us to influence the commercial landlords. Rents on Mt. Pleasant Street are extremely high and we suspect that the vitality of our commercial corridor will be affected when the **Columbia Heights** revitalization is completed. We also are working closely with the **Department of Transportation** to stop current traffic and future traffic traveling to Columbia Heights from cutting through our neighborhood.

The MPNA board has never taken a position on **Starbucks/Caribou** type establishments. Businesses looking to come to Mt. Pleasant tend to look at certain demographics, i.e., level of education; crime and the perception of crime; parking, whether there is surface or underground parking; they do age demographics, i.e. 50 and older have set incomes; 30-40 year olds have lots of kids so they are planned shoppers; 22-35 are impulse buyers, therefore, they are what you want. So I'm not sure how our commercial strip will fare against these types of test to determine whether or not the chains will come in.

# What Has the ANC Done for You?



Do you feel the ANC is doing a good job? Do you think that the ANC is working for you? This is your chance to let the City Council know. The ANC gets about \$4,000 allotment of taxpayer money every quarter to operate and our ANC has over \$52,000 in its treasury. Our ANC decided at the beginning of its term not to give out grants for any community projects or social service groups. Is the ANC listening to the community and proactively getting the word out to you about its decisions, stands and opinions which affect our quality of life in our hood? The ANC has rendered opinions on an ongoing transportation study, parking, and many other issues and at the same time it voted to eliminate community leadership of committees. City agencies give great weight to ANC decisions and resolutions on issues if they are properly vetted in the community. Do your ANC commissioners do a good job of keeping you informed so that you have an opportunity to weigh in on issues that are considered by the ANC? The ANC is the most basic grassroots level of representation for District residents. Do you believe your ANC does a good job representing you? Besides your ballot on election day, this oversight hearing is one of the only mechanisms of accountability out there – so whether you have no idea about what your ANC does, have praise, concerns, or complaints, please don't let this opportunity pass.

The DC Council Committee of the Whole is holding a public oversight roundtable session to review the operation and activities of the District's 37 Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC). Our ANC of Mt. Pleasant is scheduled to appear before the DC Council on March 13, 2008. While the public cannot testify, the Council has encouraged residents to submit written testimony prior to this hearing. All statements should be submitted in letter form, addressed to Chairman Vincent Gray, the Committee of the Whole, Council of the District of Columbia, John A. Wilson Building, Suite 410, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004, and can be emailed as an attachment directly to [cmurray@dcouncil.us](mailto:cmurray@dcouncil.us) before March 13.

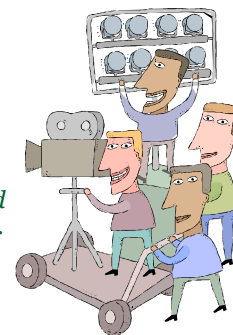
## Mt. Pleasant Library Community Meeting Rescheduled for March 11 from 6-8 PM

The Mt. Pleasant Library Community Hopes & Dreams Meeting has been rescheduled for Tuesday, March 11, from 6-8 pm. The meeting will be held at the Mt. Pleasant Neighborhood Library, located at 3160 16th Street, NW (near Lamont Street). This meeting is the first in a series of opportunities for the community to provide input into the design of the renovation of the Mt. Pleasant Library. Spanish interpretation services will be available. For more information about this meeting, please contact Archie Williams, at [archie.williams@dc.gov](mailto:archie.williams@dc.gov). For those who are unable to attend this meeting and would like to provide input, please contact [MtPleasantCommunityFeedback@dc.gov](mailto:MtPleasantCommunityFeedback@dc.gov).

## Roll out the **Red Carpet!**

### Filming in Mount Pleasant

- The film entitled "**State of Play**", from Universal Pictures will be filming in Mount Pleasant in March.
- It stars **Russell Crowe** and **Ben Affleck** and is a political thriller set in the Nation's Capital.
- At the moment, the producers plan to film on Mt. Pleasant St. between Lamont St. and Park Rd and Lamont Street NW between Mt. Pleasant and 16<sup>th</sup> Sts.
- This filming would take place starting at 6am on Friday, **March 28<sup>th</sup>** through 8am on Sunday, **March 30<sup>th</sup>**, 2008. Please note that the production team is still scouting locations and the dates, times, and streets are subject to change.



Did you know that you can now join and pay your membership dues on the web? Visit us at <http://www.mtpalliance.org> and click on **Membership** and mail us the form from the last page of this newsletter!

# Now is the Time to Get Involved!



**MT. PLEASANT NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE**  
POST OFFICE 21554  
WASHINGTON, DC 20009

Board Members: laurie collins, marika torok, leslie lakey, russell smith, bill wooge, tom conway, nick mattera

**NAME(S) PLEASE PRINT**

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**ADDRESS:**

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<b>Street</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>
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**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Work Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Dues:**  
 Individual \$25  Household \$35  Sponsor \$50  Benefactor \$100+

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like to work on one of the following:*

___ Music in the Park Series	___ Police/Crime
___ Clean Streets	___ Newsletter
___ National Night Out	___ Pro Bono Legal Assistance
___ Guest Speakers Series	___ Regulation and Compliance

**Join On-line:** <http://www.mtpalliance.org> and select **Membership**

The Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Alliance was organized in 1992 to promote social welfare and civic betterment in the Mount Pleasant community, to secure better enforcement of laws and regulations and improve public health and safety, and to address problems affecting the quality of life of Mount Pleasant residents.

The Alliance and its members work closely with officials and officers in the 3rd Police District to improve police response within Mount Pleasant as well as with other government officials including the DC Council and the Mayor; hold series of public events, including a series on city-wide guest speakers, sponsor the National Night Out for community public safety awareness, study alcohol beverage compliance by Mount Pleasant businesses, and sponsor community clean ups.

Each year, the Alliance continues its efforts to address quality of life issues, police delivery and other community-based services. In addition, new initiatives to increase the size of its membership base and to participate in focused neighborhood improvement projects are always undertaken.

MPNA meets the 4th Tuesday of the month. Location varies around the hood. Contact us for more details at [mpna@mtpleasantdc.org](mailto:mpna@mtpleasantdc.org)