

ANC-MEETING

Attn: Local editors

Residents complain about lack of safety at the monthly Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D meeting

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WASHINGTON – Local residents and commissioners met in Mount Pleasant on Tuesday for their monthly Advisory Neighborhood Commission meeting.

This meeting allowed residents in ANC 1D, which covers the Mount Pleasant neighborhood and area, to talk to local police officers and commissioners about the violence and high crime rate in the neighborhood. Around 10 residents came to the meeting to express their concerns.

One resident, who chose to remain anonymous, came to the meeting to announce that his car was stolen this week. He expressed concerns not only about his missing car, but also about the dozens of packages he and his family have had stolen within the past year.

Residents used the meeting as an opportunity to ask the local police officers what they were going to do about this problem, as safety has been an issue in the area for years.

The Metropolitan Police Department was represented by Lt. Mark Hodge and Sgt. David Randolph, who both spoke to the residents about how they were working to help increase safety in the area. Randolph reminded the residents that there are always multiple police officers present in the area to help in case of an emergency.

Adding onto this, ANC 1D Commissioner Yasmin Romero-Latin expressed her concern about the number of officers that patrolled the area, complaining that the neighborhood never felt safe in the nighttime.

Romero-Latin also brought up the issue that many local gang members tend to loiter outside of buildings and local businesses, and make it dangerous to go into these buildings, or even walk by them, at night.

Randolph tried to assure Romero-Latin and the other residents that there are always many officers in the area. Randolph explained that it was most efficient if the officers patrolled instead of staying in one location, but this did not satisfy the residents.

“We need to feel safe again,” Romero-Latin said during the meeting.

“Any kind of crime is disturbing, especially a personal crime where a person feels intimidated or they feel like they can’t go home. There’s a violation,” Randolph said when asked about the violence and crime issue in the neighborhood.

Randolph continued to say that he understands how residents feel unsafe and will look into placing more officers in the area and informing residents about more safety precautions.

“The only thing that you can really do as a resident is be vigilant. Be observant of your surroundings,” Hodge said when asked about what residents can do to make themselves feel safe in the neighborhood.

Romero-Latin continued to talk about the issue after the meeting. "We have three or four shootings a year in Mount Pleasant. We're trying to do something because the police are not working good enough," said Romero-Latin, who has been a resident in the area for 24 years.

Despite the reassurance of safety in the area from both Randolph and Hodge during the meeting, both the residents and the commissioners left seeming dissatisfied with the lack of action being taken.