



February 20, 2024

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Ste. #2032  
Washington, DC 20003-2141  
6B@anc.dc.gov

Ward 6 Council Member Charles Allen  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW #110  
Washington, DC 20004

RE: The Current MOA for Eastern Market Metro Plaza Park

### **OFFICERS**

Chairperson  
*Edward Ryder*

Vice-Chair  
*Vince Mareino*

Secretary  
*David Sobelsohn*

Treasurer  
*Frank Avery*

Parliamentarian  
*Kasie Durkit*

### **COMMISSIONERS**

SMD 01 Frank Avery

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SMD 04 Frank D'Andrea

SMD 05 Kasie Durkit

SMD 06 Chander Jayaraman

SMD 07 Vince Mareino

SMD 08 Edward Ryder

SMD 09 Matt LaFortune

Dear Councilman Allen:

The ANC6B appreciates the persistent work of your office to secure agreements among five agencies having principal responsibility for maintenance of the park. ANC6B shares your original vision to have the park become a town square for Capitol Hill and we believe the MOA can contribute to achieving this goal.

The ANC6B's Parks and Public Spaces Committee has reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement recently joined by city agencies responsible for maintenance of our new park at the Eastern Market Metro station (dated April 1, 2023), and has shared its conclusions with the Commission. The ANC6B applauds the statement of goals to be accomplished by the MOA: "to ensure the park is well-equipped, well-maintained, safe and secure for the benefit of District residents and visitors." After considering the responsibilities of the MOA from the perspective of our personal observations and experiences in the park since its formal opening, the Commission is now prepared to offer comments and recommendations for moving forward, and with a vote of 8 - 0 approved sending you this letter.

Comments:

We can now draw on several years' experience with our new park and can identify both successes and problems. Our experiences have demonstrated how much the community needed such a facility. The evening concerts, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July ceremony, the community Christmas tree lighting, and Saturday programs for children in the summer, have been enjoyed by Capitol Hill residents of all ages; for younger children, the splash pool and play equipment in the north-east park have been wonderful additions.

We look forward to the opportunity of linking programs of the remodeled Southeast Library with the park facility.

Concerns

However, daily experiences have surfaced challenges to our aspirations for the park. Among them:

1. The park remains incomplete. Several important sculptures that were to be part of the park design have not been installed. Most significantly, there was to be a sculpture on the platform that is now empty in the south-west park; an art installation to have been installed outside of the Trader Joe's on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue has not appeared.

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2. The movable furniture that was an integral part of the park design on the south-west side of Pennsylvania has largely been removed and has not been replaced. A recent count revealed that there were currently only 13 tables remaining in the south-west park and only six chairs. The landscaping program has been generally inadequate;
3. Maintenance continues to be spotty. Today there are three light posts on the ground in the south-west park. The problem of gravel spreading across the pavement with each rain has not been addressed. Fencing necessary to protect the shrubs in the south-west park has not been provided.
4. The south-west park does not provide a safe, attractive environment. It has attracted groups of unsupervised students and the homeless in sufficient numbers to discourage activities such as a quiet lunch or reading in the park. The metro police and DC police are frequently called to the south-west park, especially in the after-school hours.
5. The issue of provision of a public restroom, made even more important with the closing of the SEL for two years, needs to be addressed aggressively.

### Recommendations:

We offer three recommendations for achieving our aspirations for the park. First, that a group of community representatives be convened to rethink the south-west side of the park from the perspective of our two years of experience. The group might include those engaged in the original design of the park, among others. The question before this group should be to determine if the best approach moving forward is to rethink the design components of the park (e.g., movable furniture, open design), or to suggest changes or actions designed to make the south-west side of the park work as well as the north-east side.

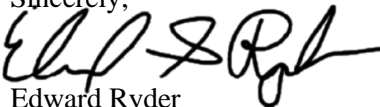
Our Parks and Public Spaces Task Force is prepared to work with you to re-think the park design, either by taking a leadership role or by participating with your office.

Second, we recommend that the roster of agencies contributing to the current MOA be expanded, formally or informally, to include the MPD and the Board of Education.

Third, we recommend that the MOA signatories be regarded as a continuing body and be re-convened on occasion to assess progress being made toward achieving the objectives of the MOA.

The ANC6B has designated Commissioner Jerry Sroufe, chair of the Parks Committee as its liaison for working with your office and other engaged in the park improvement efforts; he looks forward to discussing items introduced in this memo with you.

Sincerely,



Edward Ryder  
Chair, ANC 6B

Cc: Jerry Sroufe, Commissioner 6B02, Chair of the Parks and Public Spaces Task Force