

## **Minutes of the October 2003 Meeting of the Cleveland Park Citizens Association**

**Meeting Date:** Saturday, October 4, 2003  
**Location:** Cleveland Park Library  
3310 Connecticut Avenue, NW; Washington, DC

Cleveland Park Citizens Association (“CPCA”) President George Idelson called the meeting to order at approximately 10:20 a.m.

### **I. Approval of September 13, 2003 Minutes**

Minutes of the September 13, 2003 meeting of the CPCA were circulated to those in attendance. Minutes were approved unanimously.

### **II. What to Do About Rising Natural Gas Prices**

The next order of business was a presentation by Arthur Finch, Attorney, DC Public Service Commission (PSC) regarding natural gas prices in the District. The PSC regulates utilities – gas, telephone, and electric – in the District. Mr. Finch stated that Washington Gas has a hearing currently before the PSC to increase both the distribution price of gas and actual gas prices. The PSC regulates the distribution prices; the requested increase is tied to the overall cost of maintaining the plant. Mr. Finch gave the audience tips on reducing gas consumption, such as weatherizing one’s house and getting a home’s filters and heating system checked regularly. The DC Department of Energy will help residents analyze how best to weatherize their homes.

Peter Espenschied asked about the comparative efficiency of gas vs. oil as a heating fuel. Gas is still generally cheaper than oil, but price fluctuations require examining long term costs for the best analysis. David K. Taylor commented on oil transportation costs.

### **III. Street Cars for Our Neighborhood**

The next order of business was a presentation by Art Lawson and Rob Johnson of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) regarding future transit alternatives. Mr. Lawson announced that he would soon become WMATA’s DC government relations officer and could be reached at (202) 962-1050. WMATA originally did a transportation vision plan in 1967 and is now conducting further studies. Issues raised: How do we improve neighborhood and cross-town transportation? What’s next now that the subway system has been built out? Expanding Metro is prohibitively expensive. Is some sort of street car or light rail system a more likely scenario? The street cars being considered by WMATA, at 8 feet by 60-100 feet, are generally smaller than most light rail alternatives.

Mr. Lawson gave a detailed presentation describing five or six possible street car routes in the District. One route would operate from Woodley Park across town through Adams Morgan and U Street to the Stadium-Armory. WMATA is also set to launch a demonstration street car project in Anacostia, operating from Bolling AFB through an historic Anacostia corridor to Pennsylvania Avenue. WMATA would purchase an abandoned rail track currently owned by CSX for this street car route. Councilmember Kathy Patterson stressed that District funds would cover only portions of the project within the District. Audience members raised numerous questions regarding Metro’s mistakes in developing the subway system, options for subway system expansion, and lessons to be learned from European subway and light rail systems.

#### **IV. November 1, 2003 Cleveland Park Library Anniversary Celebration**

Mr. Idelson reminded the audience of the upcoming events planned on Saturday, November 1, 2003 to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cleveland Park Library. The event will be emceed by Cleveland Parker, Mark Russell. The Celebration Committee, chaired by Pat Armbruster, plans to have keynote remarks about the history and future of the library, local author book signings, giveaways, refreshments and sales of Anniversary mugs, T-shirts, umbrellas, tote bags and a "Cleveland Park Cookbook." CPCA's general November meeting at the library will merge into the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. The Cleveland Park Citizens Association is the principal sponsor of the event working closely with the Cleveland Park Historical Society, Friends of the Cleveland Park Library, local merchants, CP Librarian Brian Brown, and others in the community.

#### **V. Isabel Power Outages: What Now?**

Ward 3 Councilmember Kathy Patterson addressed the impact of Hurricane Isabel – the power outages, downed trees, and the response by the District government and Pepco. Ms. Patterson reported that local officials and Pepco were on extended conference calls with local officials, including Elizabeth Noel from the District's Office of the People's Counsel, during the hurricane to discuss response efforts. She saw the need for better coordination between Pepco and local District agencies, especially in response to downed trees and power lines. Improved tree maintenance by the city and also by homeowners was another important need, she said. To date, proposals to bury power lines have been presented by the power companies as prohibitively expensive. Audience members asked about an inter-jurisdictional organization to review Pepco and its actions; DC, Maryland and Virginia do have separate oversight agencies regulating Pepco.

The floor was then opened for questions to Ms. Patterson on other issues. Mr. Lars Hydle, a former neighborhood ANC commissioner, restated his opinions regarding the importance of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions to the District. He criticized the Metropolitan Police Department's proposal to align the department's Police Service Areas (PSA's) citywide with the Office of Planning's "neighborhood clusters" rather than the more familiar Neighborhood Commissions.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donald A. Fishman and George Idelson