



Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D

Resolution Supporting Expanded Community Input Into Amigos Park Planning & Engaging With Amigos Park Coalition Input

Introduced June 20, 2023

Whereas, Hispanic and Latinx residents in Washington, D.C. have historically been underrepresented in community decision-making processes^{1,2}, and it is essential to ensure their perspectives are integrated into any initiatives aimed at enhancing the community. Mt. Pleasant residents have advocated for over a decade³ for an improved park space at the northwest corner of Mount Pleasant Street, N.W. and Kenyon Street, N.W., referred to as “Amigos Park.” In 2021 D.C. Council referred to developing the park as “a significant opportunity to improve a long-standing neighborhood gathering space to meet the needs of many Mount Pleasant residents, and to treat the District’s Central American immigrant community with the dignity it has long deserved⁴”; and

Whereas, in the absence of a D.C. government led community engagement process, the “Amigos Park Coalition” has proactively organized multiple community engagement sessions which have been sporadically attended or moderated by D.C. government officials with decision making authority regarding Amigos Park. The Advisory Neighborhood Commission recognizes the importance of community engagement and inclusivity in the park’s design process, fostering a sense of ownership and reflecting the needs and aspirations of the local residents; and

Whereas, the residents of the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood in Washington, DC, recognize the need for increased green spaces and recreational areas to enhance the quality of life for all community members, and share the desire that the park will serve as a safe and inclusive gathering space for people of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds; and

Whereas, public safety concerns have been raised regarding the designated area, and an equitable approach to the creation of the park presents an opportunity to address these concerns by promoting a more vibrant and monitored space; and

Whereas, ANC1D previously passed a resolution in 2013 expressing interest on behalf of the community in “a community-developed architectural redesign of the space.”⁵

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Advisory Neighborhood Commission advocates for DGS to prioritize an inclusive implementation process based on the following measures:

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/the-rising-tide-of-latino-political-power-detours-around-dc/2016/11/06/0bb8777e-a202-11e6-8d63-3e0a660f1f04_story.html

² <https://dchistory.org/learn/contextfortoday/salvadorandmv/>

³ <https://thekojonnamdishow.org/shows/2018-06-04/what-one-mount-pleasant-corner-means-to-the-neighborhood/>

⁴ <https://dccouncil.gov/legislative-requests-for-october-5-2021-legislative-meeting/amigos-park-establishment-resolution-2021/>

⁵ https://static1.squarespace.com/static/574f2c54b6aa608304000a38/t/57728366ebbd1a7fc33c4cf3/1467122534834/Kenyon+community+space_May+2013.pdf

Full Park Construction: The Advisory Neighborhood Commission strongly recommends that DGS formally and transparently respond to the request of the Amigos Park Coalition that DGS explore all available options to pursue park design and construction plans that include the adjacent parcel of privately owned land under discussion. This approach not only will allow for a more efficient use of resources, minimize disruptions to the community, and expedite the park's availability to residents, but was also recommended by the D.C. Council in its “Amigos Park Establishment Resolution 2021.”⁶

Community Input in Design Process: The Advisory Neighborhood Commission emphasizes the significance of community input in the park's public design process. It calls for engaging local residents, including the Hispanic and Central American communities and targeting various age groups, through community meetings, surveys, or other participatory methods that address language barriers. This approach will ensure that the park design reflects the cultural diversity and preferences of the community, creating a space that is truly representative of the neighborhood.

Safety Considerations: The Advisory Neighborhood Commission acknowledges the public safety concerns associated with the designated area and views the park as an opportunity to enhance safety in the neighborhood. The park design process should incorporate input from law enforcement agencies, behavioral health service providers, local residents, and other relevant stakeholders to implement appropriate safety measures, such as well-placed lighting, clear sightlines, and thoughtful landscaping, that promote a safe and secure environment for all park users.

Transparent Communication: The Advisory Neighborhood Commission commits to providing regular updates and transparent communication throughout the park design process. It will actively engage with the community to share information, gather feedback, and address any concerns or questions raised by residents, ensuring a collaborative and accountable approach.

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Advisory Neighborhood Commission is committed to creating an inclusive decision-making process that promotes equity and fairness. It encourages the active participation of all community members, particularly those whose voices have been traditionally marginalized, to ensure that the park design addresses their needs and aspirations.

Certification:

At a regularly scheduled and publicly noticed meeting held on June 20, 2023 Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D considered the above resolution. With a quorum of 6 Commissioners present, the Commission voted with 6 yea's, 0 no's, and 0 abstentions to adopt the above resolution. Voting yes: Grigg, Nunez, Romero-Castillo, Parbhoo, Allison, Decker.

⁶ “The District government should use its existing FY21 resources to engage in negotiations with the property owner and the established Amigos Park organization to establish a lease or other agreement that allows the fencing to be removed and future improvements to be made.”
<https://dccouncil.gov/legislative-requests-for-october-5-2021-legislative-meeting/amigos-park-establishment-resolution-2021/>