



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

July 5, 2018

Mr. Keith Anderson
Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
1250 U Street NW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20009
keith.anderson@dc.gov

RE: The Over-Permitting and Under-Maintenance of Francis Field

Dear Director Anderson,

At its regular meeting on June 20, 2018, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (“ANC 2A” or “Commission”) considered the above-referenced matter. With seven of seven commissioners present, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission unanimously voted **(7-0-0)**, after a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy, to adopt the following resolution:

ANC 2A wishes to inform the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) of the complaints of community residents and to request a limitation on the size and frequency of “social sports” teams on Francis Field, a DPR facility located in the increasingly-residential West End neighborhood.

A review of permits by DPR from March 19th to June 16th of 2018 shows 305.5 hours of permitted time on the field. Many of these permits have been issued to “social sports” groups which regularly have 75 to 125 players on the field at one time, playing team sports in multiple areas and playing music on boomboxes. Several of these groups have 4-hour and 5-hour time blocks. Additionally, some groups that have shorter time blocks vastly overstay their permitted times.

Community members sent a letter to DPR’s Permits Office on May 21st, 2018, requesting a meeting regarding these issues, and a meeting was granted and held on May 31st on the field. DPR was represented by Seth Shapiro of DPR’s Permits Office, Katie Rehwaldt of DPR’s Partnerships Office, and Peter Nohrden of DPR’s Capital Projects Office.

The requests that were made at the time of the meeting, which ANC 2A wishes to endorse and support with this letter, were that DPR:

1. notify permit holders that amplified music is prohibited unless specifically allowed on the written permit,
2. limit groups to fewer than 50 participants, unless they have the documented support of ANC 2A, and



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3. conduct a review of the appropriate uses and related maintenance for Francis Field, now that it is more closely surrounded by residential rather than office properties.

During the last decade, DC’s Office of Planning and Office of Zoning have encouraged the residential expansion of the West End neighborhood and the Francis Field area. Last year alone, 59 new residences were constructed adjacent to Francis Field, bringing the number of adjacent residences to 414. Ten years ago, in June of 2008, there were only 73 such residences. As DPR is aware, DC’s current Comprehensive Plan states that recreational facilities must change as neighborhoods change, and that “the community must be involved in key planning and design decisions.”

ANC 2A thus respectfully requests that DPR take action regarding these requests.

Commissioner William Kennedy Smith (2A04@anc.dc.gov) is the Commission’s representative in this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

William Kennedy Smith, MD
Chairperson

CC: Gary Griffith, President, Friends of Francis Field
Seth Shapiro, Permit Systems Director, DPR
Katie Rehwaldt, Manager of Park Partners and Community Engagement, DPR
Peter Nohrden, Capital Projects, Planning, and Design, DPR
Richard Livingstone, Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services