



Media Advisory

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CONTACT: Kristen Barden 202-841-2813 cell kbarden@dccouncil.us

Councilmember Muriel Bowser pushes aggressive Ward 4 economic development agenda, expands public voice on historic preservation, and supports key public education and hand gun initiatives

(Washington, DC) – “I am always looking for ways to improve the economic development climate in Ward 4,” said Councilmember Bowser. Today, Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser moved legislative measures to support the Ward 4 economic development agenda, improve public safety and enhance citizen participation in neighborhood decisions. “I’m pleased my colleagues on the Council agreed and voted unanimously to support these initiatives to benefit our neighborhoods,” she added.

She moved on four new pieces of legislation to support economic development:

“I made a promise to make sure that Ward 4 commercial corridors are thriving with businesses and residents wanting to use the services offered.” The Residences at 4100 Georgia Avenue broke ground in summer of 2007 and will house 72 affordable rental apartments and 10,000 square feet of much needed retail space. **Yes! Organic Grocery Store** is slated to be the primary retail tenant. I introduced legislation today to exempt a new, full service grocery store (or substantially renovated full-service grocery store) within the boundaries of ANC 4C07 from the current Ward 4 moratorium on new Class B alcohol licenses. “It is my hope that this legislation will enable a full-service grocery store to apply for a Class B alcohol license within ANC4C07,” said Councilmember Bowser. She looks forward to a full vetting in the community and support of ANC4C before final DC Council action.

“I also introduced a bill to expand the definition of priority development area to include the Fort Totten neighborhood commercial center which will create an economic incentive for a full-service grocery store to locate in the **Fort Totten Square** project (formerly Tiger Mart) at South Dakota Avenue and Riggs Road, NE. A prominent grocery store chain has submitted a letter of intent for this site and this measure treats this important Riggs Park center like other revitalized areas in the City.

Two additional important items for the Ward 4 economic development agenda were approved today. “My colleagues and I voted to approve the **Kennedy Street Revitalization Plan**

Approval Resolution of 2008, and the Upper Georgia Avenue Great Streets Redevelopment Plan,” said Councilmember Bowser. “Each plan lays out a strategic land use plan that will help guide development and growth in these areas over the next 5-10 years. These plans suggest a vision for these commercial corridors that will make them destination places that are pedestrian friendly and provide for the density where businesses can thrive. I was very pleased that so many residents and ANC Commissioners testified at the June 10th hearing,” she commented.

Councilmember Bowser co-introduced legislation today with Ward 3 Councilmember Mary M. Cheh to be sure the rights of citizens are protected as neighborhoods weigh whether or not to become a recognized historic district. This legislation requires a formal process whereby the residents within a given proposed historic district can indicate their preference for historic district designation. The Historic Preservation Office (Office of Planning) is charged with implementing this public participation process.

Councilmember Bowser voted to support the reprogramming of capital funds for contracts for this summer’s school facilities modernization and stabilization. There are ten Ward 4 schools affected by the approval of these contracts. Phase I will begin the conversion of schools who will become PreK-8th grade schools – 12 schools in all. Phase II is the receiving schools’ blitz to ready them for additional students for the fall. The summer blitz repairs include space reconfiguration, adding restrooms, elevators and science rooms for schools currently without. Included in this funding is renovations and upgrading for Coolidge High School gymnasium including adding air conditioning.

Councilmember Bowser voted to support the “**Firearms Control Emergency Act of 2008,**” introduced by Councilmember Phil Mendelson in response to the recent decision by the Supreme Court on June 26 to allow the registration and storage of handguns for self-defense in the home.

In agreement with the predominate will of DC residents, today’s legislation will preserve the most restrictive handgun regulations within the parameters of the Supreme Court decision and will be in effect for 90 days. The legislation has four components: 1) it lifts the prohibition to register handguns for personal protection within the home, 2) defines the boundaries of “home”, 3) authorizes the Chief of Police to perform ballistic testing on hand guns and makes testing a requirement, 4) clarifies safe-storage and trigger-lock requirements. There is no right to carry handguns on the streets in the District. That has not changed. Automatic and semi-automatic weapons will continue to be banned throughout the City.

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 406, Washington, DC 20004
202-724-8052 phone 202-741-0908 fax
