



WARD 4
MURIEL
 BOWSER COUNCILMEMBER



FOCUS ON

March 4, 2009

Muriel Bowser

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Dear Neighbors,

Today I had the pleasure of touring the newly renovated Takoma Park Neighborhood Library, which has served the northwest and Takoma Park community since 1911. The library closed in October 2008 for a six-month renovation; I am pleased to announce that the library will open its doors earlier than expected on March 10, 2009.

The newly renovated library will boast new computers, an Early Literacy Workstation, increased number of shelves, and many wonderful amenities that will add to this historic library in our community. One of four Carnegie-funded library buildings in the city, this one-story Renaissance Revival-style brick building is the oldest DC public neighborhood library and yes it's in Ward 4! Join us Saturday, March 21 from 10:00 -3:00 pm, for the library open house!

I promised you I would continue to make improvements to reduce blight in our neighborhoods and we have taken an important next step to do just that. In an effort to improve our neighborhoods we are taking stronger moves to remove illegal auto car storage and auto repair lots. On Monday March 2, I joined Mayor Adrian Fenty, Attorney General Peter Nickles and Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Director Linda Argo to announce new towing and auto repair regulations which include but are not limited to the following:

- ★ Car storage lots will no longer be able to store vehicles for more than sixty (60) days.
- ★ All auto repair shops servicing motor vehicles must perform repairs within a permanent garage or permanent building by a licensed auto repair shop or mechanic.
- ★ Auto repair shops are prohibited from repairing and storing of motor vehicles outdoors.

In Ward 4, Metropolitan Imports, Inc., located at 5102 Georgia Ave., N.W. was placarded with notice to abate and then tow all vehicles on the lot. Members of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) towed approximately forty cars from the lot.

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Legislative Corner

Highlights from the March 3rd Legislative meeting:

- ★ Councilmember Bowser co-introduced with Councilmember David Catania the mini-COBRA legislation. This legislation will allow District workers who have been involuntarily terminated to enjoy the health coverage benefit provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Council unanimously approved the legislation on an emergency basis. A permanent bill was also introduced, which Councilmember Bowser plans to move through her committee this spring.
- ★ Councilmember Bowser moved legislation that elevated Betty Ann Kane to Chairman of the Public Service Commission and appointed Lori Lee as a Commissioner to the commission. “I am pleased that the Public Service Commission will now have a full complement of members to carry out its important regulatory mission on behalf of the residents of the District of Columbia,” said Councilmember Bowser. “Chairman Kane stressed her commitment to clean energy, infrastructure safety, reliability & affordability and moving the commission docket”.

The mission of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission is to serve the public interest by ensuring that financially healthy electric, gas and telecommunications companies provide safe, reliable and quality utility services at reasonable rates for District of Columbia residential, business and government customers.

- ★ Councilmember Bowser announced that she will visit the Public Service Commission and the following agencies and offices, in preparation for oversight and budget hearings.

The visits are as follows:

- ★ Public Service Commission- Wednesday, March 4th at 2:00 pm
- ★ PEPCO- Friday, March 6th at 9:30 am –
- ★ Oak Hill Youth Center -Monday, March 9th at 10:30 am
- ★ District of Columbia Jail-Tuesday, March 24th at 9:00 am

“I believe it is essential as Chairman of the committee on Public Services and Consumer Affairs and a member on the Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary, Public Works and Transportation, Human Services and Economic Development to see first hand how these agencies operate,” said Councilmember Bowser.

Councilmember Bowser plans additional site visits to other agencies in the future.
Please visit the new DC Council website: www.dccouncil.us.

Real Property Tax Assessments

The DC Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) mailed Tax Year 2010 real property tax assessment notices to all real property owners in the District of Columbia on Friday, February 27. A total of 190,000 taxable and exempt real properties have been reassessed to reflect current market values as of January 1, 2009. Property owners receiving new assessment notices will not be taxed on the new assessed value until March 2010.

Property values in most neighborhoods experienced a decrease in value. The overall change for residential properties is -3.67 percent. Commercial properties show an overall increase of 1.38 percent. The commercial increase in value is attributable to new construction, conversions and/or renovations.

Property owners who believe that their assessment is not equitable in comparison with similar properties or that their assessment does not reflect the market value must file an appeal with OTR's Real Property Tax Administration by or before April 1.

Information about the appeal process and the assessment appeal application is available on OTR's Web site at www.taxpayerservicecenter.com in the "Real Property Service Center." If you have any questions regarding your assessment you may call 202-727-4829.

Parking Meter Rate Change Reminder

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is reminding residents and visitors that parking meter rates in the District are increasing. Parking meters that previously charged a rate of \$1.00 per hour will now charge \$2.00 per hour. The rate at all other parking meters in the District will increase by 25 cents per hour. For example, if it previously cost 25 cents to park at a meter for one hour, the rate at that meter will now be 50 cents per hour.

DDOT is in the process of updating the 15,453 meters in the District to reflect the rate increases. All of the meters are expected to be updated by April 30, 2009. If you have questions about the parking meter rates change you may call 311.

Emerging Leaders Program is now accepting applications

The District government's Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) is currently accepting applications from applicants who wish to participate in the Certified Public Manager (CPM), Capital City Fellows (CCF), and the Centralized College Internship (CCIP) Programs.

Administered by the Workforce Development Administration (WDA) of the DC Department of Human Resources (DCHR), ELP is a mayoral umbrella initiative that offers four flagship training programs designed to attract, recruit, and retain talented graduate, undergraduate, and high school students for careers in public service with the District government. ELP is also designed to introduce training programs that enhance the skills of District government managers and provide them with the tools to be more effective leaders.

DCHR encourages qualified applicants with an interest in public service and a desire to advance their careers, while working to advance the public good, to apply. Interested applicants should visit the Emerging Leaders Programs information page at www.dchr.dc.gov or call (202) 727-1523 for more information.

31st Annual Piano Competition- March 7th

Join the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) for the 31st Annual Piano Competition finals on Saturday, March 7th at 2:00 pm at the UDC, Fine Arts Auditorium Van Ness Campus, located at 4200 Connecticut Avenue NW. Admission is free.

Business Series Comes to Ward 4- March 12

The Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) will host the Initial Start-up Considerations Series on Thursday, March 12 at 8:00 am at the Emory United Methodist Church located at 6100 Georgia Avenue NW.

The goal of the Washington, DC Economic Partnership's Initial Start-Up Considerations Series is to actively engage communities through entrepreneurship training and tutorials on the use of the 2008 Doing Business in DC Guide Book (published in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese). "This series helps to demystify the process of starting a business for potential entrepreneurs and enhances the business know-how of existing small business owners. Entrepreneur by entrepreneur we can help to develop thriving retail and business corridors in communities that need them the most," said Natalie Cofield.

The WDCEP has partnered with Emory Beacon of Light and the Upper Georgia Avenue Gateway, to produce the upcoming workshop. This event is free to the public and registration is not required. If you would like more information contact Natalie Cofield at 202.661.8679 or ncofield@wdcep.com. This series and its publication have been sponsored by a grant from the Neighborhood Investment Fund.