On Tuesday, March 6, 2018, the ANC 6C Parks & Events Committee convened with a quorum of five members consisting of Chair J. McCann; 6C01 Commissioner C. Healey; At-Large member P. Tahtakran; 6C03 representative L. Dejesus and At-Large member Briana Battle.

**NOMA Parks Update and 3rd and L Park Name**
Stacie West from NoMa Parks Foundation provided a status update on the various parks projects. Attached is a spreadsheet containing the information presented to the Committee.

In addition, the NoMa Parks Foundation requested, and the Committee unanimously adopted, the following motion:

“The P&E Committee recommends that ANC 6C write a letter to the Mayor’s Office in support of the District naming the park at 3rd and L” “Swampoodle Park.”

**Leaf Blower Regulation Amendment Act of 2017 - (B22-0234)**

Grif Johnson from Quiet Clean DC appeared before the Committee to explain its sponsorship of a bill before the Council that would prohibit the sale and use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers in the District by January 1, 2022. Quiet Clean DC seeks ANC 6C support for: (1) a resolution calling on Council Chair Mendelson to grant the bill a hearing promptly and (2) to urge all members of the Council and Mayor Bowser to support its passage.

Mr. Johnson, who resides in NW DC, explained that he and his neighbors initially founded their group to address noise concerns in their neighborhoods. Contractors usually deploy the gasoline-powered blowers in groups of three or four operators at a time, which has an exponential impact on the noise generated. The gasoline-powered leaf blowers are used 7-10 months of the year and are particularly problematic for folks who are retired, work at home or are house-bound.

As Quiet Clean DC has further studied the issue, they now see several aspects to the problem.

First, there is the issue of noise. The group is concerned about noise impacts to the community but also is concerned that equipment operators face unacceptable risks of hearing loss. Mr. Johnson explained that federal agencies deem decibel levels above 85 to be harmful and that leaf blowers often range above100 decibels at the ear of the operator. The decibel levels increase when additional operators are in proximity.

Second, Quiet Clean is concerned that the high velocity wind force of the gas-powered leaf blowers, which often exceed 150 mph, is unnecessary to accomplish the job. The excessive wind force disturbs topsoil and sends spores, pesticides, animal feces and other contaminants into the air. This is injurious to operators but also to children and pets given their proximity to the ground.

Third, the gasoline-powered leaf blowers use a two-stroke engine, which uses a mixture of gas and oil, and is no longer permitted in automobiles. This type of engine generates ozone-forming chemicals injurious to the environment.
Fourth, Quiet Clean views the matter as one that involves issues of environmental/social justice. In this regard, many of the operators are immigrants who face language barriers. As a result, Quiet Clean believes that many of the operators do not appreciate the health risks and/or are not in a position to alter their workplace to create a safe environment. Members of the P&E Committee inquired about the use of ear and facial protection. Mr. Johnson explained that in his experience most operators are not using these protections. In particular, he noted that operators often must enter the street to perform their work and thus there is a reluctance to wear ear protection.

In terms of alternatives, Mr. Johnson cited evidence that battery-powered blowers are quieter and generate less wind force. Mr. Johnson will appear at the 6C Commission meeting on Wednesday 3/14 and can address any Commissioner questions in this area.

The Committee asked about the costs of battery-powered blowers vs. gasoline-powered blowers. Mr. Johnson explained that the initial capital cost to purchase battery-powered blowers is higher, but the operating cost over the useful life of the blower (roughly three to four years) results in a cost-neutral environment. The legislation at-issue is designed to provide contractors with the ability to utilize their existing equipment over its useful life and to provide time for them to prepare for the initial capital expenditures in 2022. In addition, Mr. Johnson cited to examples of multiple contractors in the District who have voluntarily switched to battery-powered blowers in recent years and who can attest at a Council hearing to the utility and the cost-neutral cost structure of moving to battery-operated blowers.

With respect to legislative support and adoption, Quiet Clean reports that 37 jurisdictions/communities have implemented restrictions on the use or sale gas-powered blowers. The DC Chapter of the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth support the legislation before Council. In the District, 7 ANCs, including 6D, have also registered support. The legislation before the Council is sponsored by Mary Cheh and co-sponsored by four council members, including Charles Allen.

The P&E Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend that ANC 6C vote in support of sending a letter: (1) calling on Council Chair Mendelson to grant the bill a hearing promptly and (2) to urge all members of the Council and Mayor Bowser to support its passage.