



Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.



Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau



Councilmember Brooke Pinto



Councilmember Elissa Silverman

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the sense of the Council supporting the establishment of a public park at the intersection of Mount Pleasant Street, N.W. and Kenyon Street, N.W..

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council Supporting the Establishment of Amigos Park Resolution of 2021”.

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) The Mount Pleasant neighborhood became home to a large population of Central American immigrants beginning in the 1970s and the 1980s, particularly Salvadoran residents fleeing conflict and establishing communities in the District of Columbia.

(2) Throughout the following decades, these residents created in Mount Pleasant a hub of Salvadoran and Central American community organizing and culture, including tenant organizing, musical performance, restaurants, grocers, retail, and healthcare clinics.

33 (3) The intersection of Mount Pleasant Street, N.W., and Kenyon Street, N.W. –
34 colloquially known as “La Esquina” – became a central gathering place for many
35 Latino/Hispanic residents.

36 (4) La Esquina and the “Esquineros” who frequent it were the subject of a Smithsonian
37 Folklife exhibition in 2018, which notes that the space is used by many to “share stories of life
38 back home in Latin America, journey[s] to D.C., and life in the Latino barrio... In fact, many
39 consider this corner a second home.”

40 (5) For many years, Esquineros and other residents have advocated for an improved park
41 space at the northwest corner of Mount Pleasant Street, N.W. and Kenyon Street, N.W., referred
42 to as “Amigos Park”.

43 (6) In 2017, the nonprofit Green Spaces for DC helped residents and advocates to
44 incorporate an “Amigos Park” organization to advance the cause of “turning the small, fenced
45 greenspace located at northwest corner of Mr. Pleasant and Kenyon Streets N.W. into a public
46 park.”

47 (7) The establishment of Amigos Park has been supported by two unanimous votes of
48 ANC 1D.

49 (8) Mount Pleasant Village has written in support of the establishment of Amigos Park.
50 In a letter from October, 2019, they state: “We would value the creation of this park for the
51 benefit of our 200 members and for the benefit of our Mount Pleasant Community. Currently,
52 there is no location to stop and rest along the length of Mount Pleasant Street once one leaves
53 Lamont Park to the north. Many of our members would welcome such a place to stop, to meet
54 and to engage with our community outside our homes...Many of our members have lived in

55 Mount Pleasant for decades, and with those years have come the appreciation of the special
56 diversity of our neighborhood across ages and cultures.”

57 (9) District Bridges, a nonprofit organization that manages the Mount Pleasant Main
58 Street, has also expressed strong support for a formalized park space. “We envision this park to
59 be a place where residents can exercise, rest in the shade, children can play, and the community
60 can come together. This space is currently underutilized, and it would benefit all the residents of
61 Mount Pleasant.”

62 (10) The space in question is approximately 1700 square feet and is bisected by a fenced-
63 in planting area that often poses a rodent and trash problem. The many residents who gather at
64 the corner do not have access to this fenced-in area. Approximately 740 square feet belongs to
65 the adjacent private property owner, a 7-11 store. The remaining 960 square feet are DDOT
66 public parking.

67 (11) The private property owner has indicated that they are interested and willing to
68 collaborate with the community and District government to make better use of the space in
69 question.

70 (12) The area is covered by an existing Clean Team that is able to absorb any additional
71 maintenance needs created by a park space.

72 (13) In addition to maintenance being covered by existing resources, there is a great deal
73 of community interest in making improvements to the space, which would be accomplished
74 through a formalized “Friends Of” agreement with the District.

75 (14) Despite the overall cost to the District being de minimis, without a client agency, the
76 Department of General Services has declined to engage in lease negotiations for the space. The

77 Department of Parks and Recreation has indicated that the space is too small to be considered for
78 their portfolio.

79 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council, that creating a legitimate park or plaza space at the
80 northwest corner of Mount Pleasant Street, N.W. and Kenyon Street, N.W. constitutes a
81 significant opportunity to improve a long-standing neighborhood gathering space, to meet the
82 needs of many Mount Pleasant residents, and to treat the District's Central American immigrant
83 community with the dignity it has long deserved. The District government should use its existing
84 FY21 resources to engage in negotiations with the property owner and the established Amigos
85 Park organization to establish a lease or other agreement that allows the fencing to be removed
86 and future improvements to be made.

87 Sec. 4. The Council shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the
88 Mayor and the Directors of the Department of General Services, Department of Parks and
89 Recreation, and Department of Transportation.

90 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
91 the District of Columbia Register.