



Guardian Angels get mixed City Hall reception

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By [CHRIS HEINBAUGH](#) / WFAA-TV

The Alliance of Guardian Angels paid a call on Dallas City Hall on Tuesday in an effort to convince city leaders their planned patrols for the city will do more good than harm.

After a weekend of touring troubled neighborhoods in Dallas, Curtis Sliwa, the nationwide head of the New York-based Guardian Angels, faced the tougher challenge of winning over the city's top brass.

At Dallas police headquarters, Chief David Kunkle assigned a liaison to the group but is taking a wait-and-see approach.

"There's still a dispute whether they've made differences in communities they've come into or not, but I think Guardian Angels have become more mainstream over time, and are probably embraced more by communities recently than they've been in the past," Kunkle said.

Sliwa's meeting with City Council members was more encouraging; several felt the group's presence would be positive.

"I have kids doing crime at this point," said council member Elba Garcia. "Do I want kids looking up to the drug dealers, or looking up to the Guardian Angels?"

But the toughest critic was mayor Laura Miller.

"I definitely felt like I was on a witness stand being cross-examined," Sliwa said.

Sliwa said the mayor peppered him with questions about his observations and goals here, and about controversies in the past. He took it as a challenge.

"Madam Mayor, you've made it personal for me, I have to make it work," Sliwa said. "You have basically called me the Don King of public safety, (so) I have got to deliver."

The mayor's mind was not changed, but she can't stop them.

"If they walk around and then there aren't any skirmishes, or shootings, or kidnappings - the things that they've been involved with in other cities - then maybe it'll be fine and they'll be low-key," Miller said. "But they're not low-key people, so we'll see what happens."

Sliwa thinks Deep Ellum might be a good place to start patrols, but first they must recruit, screen and train new members. They don't expect to hit the streets until June.

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