

Olney Town Center

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC)
Monday, January 22, 2007
Sandy Spring Bank, Olney Inn Room

Members In Attendance: James Smith (Chairman), Dorothy Kane, Paula Kahla, Tom Gallagher, Helen Rosenheim, Joe Fritsch, Jim Wallace, Mark Feinroth, Sunita Bhatia (Vice Chairman), and Walter Lee (temporary recording secretary).

Guest: Mary Jane Heinbuch (Olney Library)

Staff: Khalid Afzal, (MNCPPC)

Members Absent: Nancy DeLalio, John Lyons

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jim Smith at about 7:30 pm. Introductions were made. Walter Lee was identified as the recording secretary. The minutes of December 18, 2006 were approved.

Chairman Smith proposed that a member of the OTCAC would volunteer to be a permanent recording secretary for the OTCAC in order to facilitate efficiency and to promote a consistent format for the recorded minutes. It was noted that the duty of recording the meeting may hamper the secretary's ability to also participate in the meeting itself. To mitigate the burden of the duties of secretary, it was agreed to limit the recording secretary term to 6 months. The inclusion of a new OTCAC officer, recording secretary, requires a changing of the OTCAC charter. By voice vote, OTCAC voted to make a recording secretary office. Tom Gallagher volunteers to be the recording secretary for the next six months (starting February 2007); the OTCAC, by voice vote, elects Gallagher as the recording secretary for the next 6 months.

Chairman Smith submitted an OTCAC Fact Sheet to review.

Ms. Rosenheim reported there hasn't been any substantial change to the OTCAC website; she urges fellow members to test out mailboxes. Chairman Smith promises to send Ms. Rosenheim revised maps for the OTCAC website. Ms. Rosenheim says that members' towncenter.org email addresses are forwarded to a corresponding yahoo.com account. Since OTCAC members are not using their towncenter.org email addresses, Khalid offered to forward email via group.

Ms. Kahla reported only two inquires with regards to the OTCAC logo contest; it is conjectured that many students may not know about the contest. Ms. Kahla says she will try to get the Gazette to make another announcement for the OTCAC logo contest. Ms. Kahla promises to send Chairman Smith and Ms. Rosenheim a copy of the OTCAC logo contest rules.

Mr. Afzal announced that the developers for the Kirk Farm Development have resolved the traffic and parking issue without having to make any major modifications to their original plan. The resolution calls in part for its storm water management facility will be integrated inside parking lot area. The project still has a pending review for forest conservation and the fire marshal. The project will integrate fire hydrant into the building. It was noted that a street fire hydrant is situated on the opposite side of Hillcrest Avenue facing the project. It was noted that the Kirk Farm Development project has not yet identified the location of any public use area. The project calls for on street parallel parking is upfront along Hillcrest Ave. A new draft for Kirk

Farm design has been sent to MNCPPC. Mr. Afzal says the proposed amendment of the AGP policy to freeze the approval of development probably won't affect the Kirk Farm project.

Mr. Afzal urged committee members to respond to his qualitative analysis survey. He promises to share the survey response w/ OTCAC

The issue of who should pay for the OTCAC Mail box was raised. Ms. Rosenheim said that the mid-county service might be able to pay for it. Khalid said that it would be difficult to get funding from MNCPPC. It was suggested that each OTCAC member contribute \$3 each to cover the cost of the mailbox set up by the Olney chamber of commerce. It is duly noted that the OTCAC should look into setting up rules/procedure with regard to the handling of any fees it needs to pay. The OTCAC mailbox is PO Box 1164 Olney, MD 20830. Paula gives the mailbox's 2nd key to Chairman Smith.

Tom distributed multiple copies of the Olney Area architectural review that the Freeman Company commissioned, "Local Building Traditions – History and Analysis" to each OTCAC member. A copy of the report is also given to Mary Jane Heinbuch for the Olney Public Library. The Freeman Company is in phase 2 the design phase – preliminary site planning is being made. Tom says that Freeman Company Retail Vice President Mike O'Reilly is now heading Freeman Company's Olney Town Center project. A discussion as to what a mixed-use town center should look like.

Olney Theater has acquired an adjacent 4-acre lot along Route 108 West of Olney Theater. Olney Theater hopes to build a 125-seat restaurant, 60-seat bar, and 30-room bed and breakfast inn. The new structure would be attached to the western side of theater. Olney Theater has sent out a request of interest to search for a developer to build the new facility. The new facility will generate more traffic and will extend the operational hours of the Olney Theater. It is anticipated that Olney Theater will select a developer to build this facility this summer. The restaurant is expected to be leased by developer who in turn will lease the property from Olney Theater.

The definition of a civic center and the town commons for the Olney Town center is cited from the Olney Master Plan and then a brainstorming session is held as to what the civic center and town commons would host? The following is a summary of the items identified.

Town commons

Green area/amphitheater

Open space/Multi purpose space – special event space – flexible use spaces

Trees/shade

Street skater/biker plaza

Benches and nice landscaping

Bike racks

Gazebo/bandstand

Café restaurants with outdoor seating

Picnic/food court

Perimeter pedestrian and bike trail path

Kiosks/directory

Defibrillator/first aid center

Basket ball court

Playground (for elementary age children) adjacent to commons

Bike path around perimeter

Civic center

Community meeting area

Teen center

Police satellite station

Mid-county regional service center office

Chamber of commerce

Visitor center

Visitor center with information and materials

Library

First aid/safety/defibrillator

Joe Fritsch expresses concern over a county proposal to mandate the building of narrower roads (10.5 feet wide) to promote pedestrian safety and the elimination of extra road width for bicycles (3.5 feet). Fritsch contends that the elimination of the extra road width for bicycles would make it more dangerous for cyclist and will encourage jay walking. In addition, the question of access for wider fire and emergency vehicles was raised.

The meeting was adjourned at about 9:40 pm.