

## MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC)  
Monday, November 20, 2006 - 7:30 pm  
Sandy Spring Bank, Olney Inn Room

**Members in attendance:** Dorothy Kane, Paula Kahla, Nancy Delalio, Sunita Bhatia, Tom Gallagher, Helene Rosenheim, and Joe Fritsch. **Guests:** Visitors were Mary Jane Heinbuch, Olney Library. **Staff:** Khalid Afzal, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Sunita Bhatia. The minutes of the September 18, 2006 and October 16, 2006 were approved with no additions or corrections.

Tom Gallagher, Carl M. Freeman Associates (CMFA), reported that Miche Booz, a local architect, and Robert Boras, of CMFA, plan to attend the December meeting to discuss the first phase of the vernacular study they are conducting for CMFA in connection with the development of the Olney Village Center and the Olney Town Shopping Center.

### Subcommittee Reports

**Nominations Committee:** Sunita Bhatia reported that Joy Turner, the nominee from the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) to fill their vacancy, will not be able to join the OTCAC. She is currently the president of the Sandy Spring Civic Association and their members were concerned about an appearance of a conflict of interest by serving on both organizations. The consensus of the Committee was that they would prefer to have a representative from the MCCAB, regardless of where they live until such time as a new representative from the Olney area is placed on their Board.

**Website:** Helene Rosenheim reported that she was finally able to get to the administrators screens for their Yahoo mailboxes and has reestablished mailboxes for those members who had not been able to activate them. Those involved were sent emails inviting them to activate their mailboxes. She also noted that she is still having a problem accessing the website. She was able to download files, but was not able to upload files. So, she will contact Laurence King, our web support staff member at Park & Planning (P&P) for assistance. There were no additions or corrections to the text she proposed for the home page of their website.

**Logo Contest:** Paula Kahla reported that she has arranged for a post office box: PO Box 1164, Olney, MD 20830. She has mailed letters to the principals at Blake, Sherwood, Magruder, and Good Counsel High Schools with the contest rules. Good Counsel thanked her for including them. It was suggested that a letter also be sent to the Sandy Spring Friends Upper School, which she will do. Paula also sent a press release to the Olney Gazette. Because of delays in getting the letters out, she extended the deadline to February 28, 2006.

### Additional Concept Plans

Tom Gallagher and Nancy DeLalio each presented sample concept plan and master plan documents from their companies, Carl M. Freeman Associates and RTKL, respectively, as examples of the kinds of concept plans the OTCAC might put together, the kinds of information that could be contained in these documents, and the level of detail that could be included. It was noted that the situation in the Olney Town Center area is more complicated than the plans they presented because there are multiple property owners involved throughout the town center area.

It was suggested that a strategy for the OTCAC could be to work with the Freeman organization as they develop a plan for their property and then work on the rest of the town center area. Nancy noted that her contact in her company's master plan department is willing to provide some pro bono services to the Committee. She suggested that the Committee could do a general plan for the whole area and do more specific plans for selected areas. Khalid Afzal also presented an outline of some of the kinds of information common to many plans and guidelines that the Committee could start to build on, and an example of how roadway lanes and sidewalks could be represented. Khalid also noted that P&P has received a letter from the Freeman corporation regarding a traffic study for the Olney Village Center. This is usually one of the first steps in contacting P&P in connection with a development plan and establishes the scope of the traffic study. The study includes mitigations options, more details of their development plan, traffic flows, and other improvements.

Helene Rosenheim will arrange with the manager at the Olney Library to provide space in the Periodicals Room for the Committee to store the sample plans and other documents the Committee members or the public may want to see later.

### **Qualitative Analysis of the Town Center**

Khalid Afzal distributed copies of a series of questions to the Committee to assist the members in beginning to identify aspects of the town center we like or dislike. Some positive aspects identified were convenience, variety, potential walkability of the area, the layout and atmosphere of the area around Cold Stone Creamery, Caribou Coffee, and California Tortilla; and outside of Ricuitti's. Some of the negative aspects are the speed of traffic in the town center area, the convoluted ways you sometimes have to drive to get from one store or businesses to another; the difficulties pedestrians have crossing both Rtes 97 and 108, including the wide curves at this intersection that allow cars to turn right more quickly. It was noted that goals of the State Highway Administration and the Department of Public Works & Transportation to get as many cars through an intersection or down a road conflict with the goal of the Committee to create an environment that is more pedestrian-friendly. Features such as road markings, structure of medians, tighter turning radii at intersections, and providing refuge areas can make it safer for pedestrians. Khalid also noted that different areas of the County have different levels of acceptable congestions based on density and level of development. For example, the level of congestion acceptable at Georgia Ave and University Blvd is higher than at Georgia Ave and Rte. 108.

### **Skate Park in the Town Center**

Joe Fritsch noted that new skate board park in Olney Manor Park will have long period of time it is not open, and to date the County is not going to permit bike riders to use the facility. He suggested that there might be an opportunity in the town center area to provide concrete, street-style skateboard/bike facility. He presented an example of a concept plan for a street-style skate park that was illustrative of something that could be worked into the design of the town center area. The concreted facility could also be used for other community events. Khalid noted that with 500+ new residential units in the town center area, there might be a need for a facility like this.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 pm.

Submitted by Helene Rosenheim