

Olney Town Center

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Tuesday, November 25, 2008 – 7:30 p.m.
Olney Library, Large Meeting Room, Olney, Maryland

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) members in attendance: Jim Smith-Chair, Bob Beard, Dorothy Kane, Eileen Cahill, Mark Feinroth, Joe Fritsch, Paula Kahla, Helene Rosenheim, Joe Buffington.

Staff present: Khalid Afzal, Crystal Myers, Community Planners for Olney.

Others present:

Rich Sonnenschein, Olney Concert Band/Big Band
Jim Haddow, Hallowell HOA
Peter Mechak, Comsource
Dr. Joe Buffington, Outreach Subcommittee
Chris Garland, Freeman Companies

Call to Order/Introductions/Acceptance of Agenda/Approval of Minutes/Announcements

Chair Jim Smith called the regular meeting of the OTCAC to order at 7:37 pm. Jim observed that Nancy DeLalio, Recording Secretary of the OTCAC was absent and asked for a volunteer to record minutes for the November meeting. Mark volunteered to take the minutes. Jim asked OTCAC members to review the minutes from the September and October meetings. Mark made a motion to accept the September minutes as revised and Bob seconded the motion. The motion was agreed to unanimously. Eileen noted an error on page three of October minutes concerning comments attributed to her as well as a typographical mistake. Ms. Cahill agreed to send her proposed changes via email to Nancy. With those changes, Dorothy moved acceptance of the October minutes, Joe seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed. Jim then asked for Committee members to review the proposed agenda and it was accepted.

Member/Public Comments – Peter Mechak, representing the owner of 3414 Morningwood introduced himself and asked why that property appeared in gray on the OTCAC redevelopment map. Mr. Smith responded that the Committee was under the impression that the parcel would not be redeveloped during the life of the Olney Master Plan since the building on the site was relatively new and in any case the use of the property would likely remain commercial.

Nominations Subcommittee

Helene distributed the Nomination Form submitted by Chris Garland, Director of Development and Construction for the Carl M. Freeman Company and she explained his prior experience with redevelopment projects. On behalf of the nominations committee, Helene moved the nomination of Chris Garland to the vacant seat on the OTCAC. Eileen seconded the nomination. Chris addressed the Committee and described how exciting it can be to work on redevelopment projects built. Jim called for a vote and the nomination was approved eight votes to zero. Chris then took his seat with the OTCAC.

Old Business – Civic Center Concept Paper

Jim asked the Committee members to turn their attention to the Concept Paper for the Civic Center/Town Commons and he presented the changes made in the document as a result of the discussions with Olney area civic and community groups that commented on the draft paper. The major substantive addition was a reference to the possible inclusion of a performance pavilion as suggested by the Olney Big Band and Concert Band leadership. Khalid pointed out that the size of the proposed project probably could not accommodate all of the uses mentioned in the Concept Paper and that there should be some mention that the list of the possible uses contained in the

Concept Paper is not a list of requirements but rather a list of every potential use under consideration. There was a general discussion concerning where funding might be obtained and Eileen mentioned the possibility of pursuing a public/private partnership.

Old Business – 2009 Meeting Room

Paula reported that the Montgomery General Hospital second floor conference room is available for the Committee's use on the fourth Tuesday of each month in 2009. She went ahead and reserved the room for the OTCAC.

Subcommittee Reports

- a. Executive: Jim asked Committee members to update their biographies that would be circulated by email. The biographies are just for circulation among committee members at this time.
- b. Outreach: Jim Haddow updated the Committee regarding efforts to engage the greater Olney community to consider all potential uses for the Civic Center/Town Commons project. At the end of that process, there should be an effort to present the plan to county and state elected officials. There was a general discussion as to when and how to begin discussions with the County Executive, County Council and State legislators. There was general consensus that meetings in early 2009 with Councilman Knapp, staff to Executive Leggett and State Senators Kramer and Lenett would be an effective way to begin building relationships that could lead to funding for the Town Center at sometime in the future. Chris explained the need for funding to address the traffic capacity issues at the Georgia Avenue and Route 108 intersection. Chris also briefed the Committee on the status of the Olney movie theatre in the Freeman Company lower shopping center since the lower shopping center is a potential site for the Town Center project. The movie theatre is not expected to remain in the lower Freeman shopping center. Chris could not predict what type of business might replace the movie theatre.
- c. Redevelopment: Mark intends to interview Mr. Sayag, the owner developer of the Hillcrest Avenue property who is the only developer to have brought a redevelopment project to the OTCAC and for which OTCAC made recommendations to the Planning Board. Once Mark completes that interview, the Subcommittee will meet to draft a form or questionnaire for use in preparing developers to meet with OTCAC.
- d. Rules: Eileen reported that she has completed a review of the OTCAC rules and bylaws.
- e. Committee for Montgomery: Dorothy reminded Committee members that the Committee for Montgomery annual legislative breakfast is scheduled for December 8 and that the OTCAC is sharing a table with Project Change. Committee members interested in attending should speak with Dorothy or Helene.
- f. Property Owners: Joe had no report.
- g. Website: Helene reported that she revised the introductory paragraph and she is ready to post the Town Commons/Civic Center concept paper.
- h. Pedestrian Safety: Helene has corresponded with the new Montgomery County government pedestrian safety coordinator who is expected to attend a future OTCAC meeting. She noted that a new bicycle priority area has been established in the White Flint area and suggested that such a designation might be pursued for Olney.
- i. Capital Improvement Plan – Eileen attended the Germantown area CIP workshop on behalf of Holy Cross and reported that there was light turnout for the meeting. There were tables for participants to register their interest in particular issues and or criteria.

New Business

Jim announced the schedule for OTCAC meetings in 2009 and asked members if there were particular dates that presented scheduling conflicts. The meetings will be the 4th Tuesday of each month of the year except August.

A motion to adjourn was offered, seconded and adopted at 9:27 p.m.

Submitted by Mark Feinroth