

Takoma Park Parking Management Task Force

Meeting Minutes – April 22, 2020

Attendance

City Staff: Rosalind Grigsby, Rick Baravechia

Task Force: Greg Gorman (note-taker), Jackie Davison, Claudia Wayne, Jim Douglas, Howard Schaffer, Allen Fetter, Tim Judson,

Public: Paul Huebner (Ward 3)

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of last meeting minutes
3. Presentation and discussion of parking enforcement
4. Recruitment and outreach discussion
5. Assignment of background material
6. New Business

Minutes

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.
- 2) Reintroduction of task force members and updates provided.
- 3) Minutes from the March 11th meeting will be re-constituted from participant notes.
- 4) Today's briefer was Paul Grenier of the Flower/Piney Branch business district. Six businesses of this group are in Takoma Park and the rest are in unincorporated Montgomery county. This includes Manna Restaurant which is permanently closed after a fire. Previously the owner had complained of a lack of parking for customers. The other businesses include Beijing Takeout and Takoma Laundry, both of which say they have sufficient parking. There's less interaction with Tropicana Bar or Pablo's Barber. The Skyward travel agency conducts most business online. "The area as a whole has either more than enough parking or not enough parking."

Mr. Grenier described the experience of an eight-day festival for the area called Long Branch weekend in September 2019. They had anticipated that there would be not enough parking. However, the vast majority of attendees of this well-attended event walked to the festival.

A task force member asked if that it was an issue of parking or not attractive enough pedestrian access and building facades. Mr. Grenier responded that it was both. Prior to the covid-19 pandemic, there was some indication of county investment to improve the area. There was a discussion of repurposing the Manna Restaurant lot and improving the street façade in general.

The next topic was the impact of the Purple Line. Mr. Grenier said that they construction impact has been minimal to date. It has attracted real estate giants (e.g. JBG) who have ratcheted up rents.

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A TF member asked if better signage for parking is needed. Mr. Grenier agreed. There are two big private lots (Giant lot) owned by the Washington Real Estate Investment Trust on the NW side of the intersection. Montgomery County would need to buy land for public parking.

A TF member asked if the brick apartment buildings would be redeveloped. Mr. Grenier mentioned there is a 2013 CR zone sector plan for the area.

TF members brought up pedestrian safety improvements, potential uses of the Manna lot, and Purple Line Arliss Station use projections (available from University of Maryland), and thoughts about angled parking on Flower Avenue (which might slow down traffic, increase pedestrian safety, impede Ride-On buses). There was additional discussion on facades and the Green Street plan. A TF member made the point that while only the southeast corner of this district is in Takoma Park, development there may push parking issues into Takoma Park.

There was discussion on pedestrian and cyclist safety in the area as construction continues along Flower Avenue; this may temporarily block parking entrances and pedestrian access.

The general consensus was that the area is ripe for improved walking access, and the Arliss Station is expecting mostly walkers.

5) New business.

- Direction of the TF with COVID-19 delays: Based on input from Jim by email, the TF discussed whether the delay of TF business imposed by the pandemic and the upcoming council elections would change the deadline and or the relevance of the task force. Roz will ask the city manager and council. A TF member said that we should continue and perhaps only provide a partial report by the original deadline. A TF member recommended continuing to look for Community input and organize virtual community neighborhood outreach.
- The next meetings will focus on Old Town business association parking input (guest Ms. Barclay) and then the subsequent meeting will be a review of residential parking permit recommendations.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.