



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of October 19, 2016

Follow-Up from Last Council Meeting

SHA property at Carroll and University

After initially saying that the Carroll Avenue right-of-way near the intersection with University was not their property, SHA investigated more carefully and acknowledged that it is indeed theirs. Staff has asked that SHA representatives provide residents with a response regarding requests made for improvements in the area. From a staff perspective, we believe several different types of improvements could be made on this segment of roadway. While the City could facilitate the work, it should be financed by SHA or the County. It should also be noted that there is a new County-led planning process for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area (BiPPA) comprising the Takoma/Langley and Long Branch sector plan areas. Staff has flagged this section for the County's consultants, especially as it relates to Purple Line improvements, and will continue to work with the County to ensure it is part of the planning.

Update on WAU project on Maplewood

Councilmember Smith asked for about the status of the WAU construction project on Maplewood. We checked in and construction is progressing with no outstanding permit issues with the City.

Replacement crosswalk signs at Wildwood and Carroll

Councilmember Schultz noted that the crosswalk signs at Wildwood and Carroll Avenues, which were taken out as a result of a vehicle accident at the site, have yet to be replaced. Staff has reported the issue to SHA (Service Request #SR-0292200).

Water leak at Park and Carroll

Councilmember Kovar reported a water leak in the vicinity of Park and Carroll. Staff has investigated the issue and reported it to WSSC. WSSC has been to the site and is awaiting the results of a water sample test to try to determine the source of the water.

Information to Share

Dog Park permit received; construction to begin!

At long last, the City finally has the MNCPPC permit necessary for dog park construction and construction is scheduled to begin Thursday morning. Construction is expected to take six to ten weeks and a Grand Opening date will be set soon.

Parkmobile now active in Takoma Park

Parkmobile signs and stickers went up late last week and residents and visitors may now pay for parking at Takoma Park parking meters using their mobile phones for a \$0.45 transaction fee. We are getting the word out via social media currently, plan to do a blog post within the next week, and will also include something in the November newsletter. More information is available through Parkmobile:

<https://parkmobile.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/230008908-Takoma-Park-MD-Parkmobile-Info>

International visitors

It seems that the City of Takoma Park has piqued the interest of representatives of foreign governments of late, largely due to our environmental/sustainability and community development work, but also as a local government that is easily accessible to visitors to Washington, D.C. Today, staff met with Mr. Jan Symon, the Mayor of Ostopovice of the South Moravia region in the Czech Republic, per his request to learn more about our sustainability efforts. Additionally, we have been asked by the International City/County Management Association to host a group of international professionals from south and east Asian countries in November to discuss the City's policies and operations, and were also selected to host a "community conversation" in December with Mr. Miguel Fraga, the First Secretary of the Cuban Embassy.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Update

On November 2, the Council will be asked to consider the use of CDBG funds for yet to be defined streetscape improvements in FY18. A call for proposals for capital projects was issued by staff earlier this summer. Unfortunately, we did not receive any proposals that satisfied the requirements of the program. As such, staff has proposed allocating the funds, estimated at \$91,000, for future streetscape improvements. Specific projects would be identified during the budgeting process and would be located in low and moderate income areas as required by HUD.

Anti-Littering Initiative

On Friday, approximately 90 Takoma Academy students spent their Fall Service Day doing Litter Clean Up in and around Takoma Park, organized by HCD staff member Lucy Neher. They picked up over 34 bags of trash, and 14 bags of recycling.

Diwali Festival

The 2nd Annual Takoma/Langley Diwali Festival was held Saturday, October 15, to celebrate the annual Hindu Festival of Lights. The event was a bi-county initiative, sponsored by, among others, Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority, the City of Takoma Park and Prince Georges County. It was a great success with Indian dance, music, poetry, food, and cultural programs co-produced by the Hindu Temple of Metropolitan Washington and Sri Siva Vishnu Temple and over 700 people attending.

Long Branch 5K

The Long Branch 5K race, to raise money for the victims of the Silver Spring fire was held on Saturday, October 15. City staff volunteered to help with the race, which had approximately 130 participants.

Public Art Update

Mural: Work has begun on the mural located at the corner of Prince Georges and Conway Avenues. The design of the project was finalized by the artist, Michael Kirby, earlier this summer with input from neighborhood residents. His progress will be tracked on the City's various social media tools including a planned Facebook Live interview and an Instagram storyboard.

“BirdCalls”: A multi-media work being undertaken by local musician David Schulman and sculptor Howard Connelly is also underway. The project provides for the reworking of an abandoned telephone booth at the corner of Erie and Flower Avenue and includes an audio component of bird calls in addition to a three dimensional sculpture of a stylized bird. Once completed, you will be able to hear a rooster, recorded by local resident Siena Cimmino.

We anticipate both projects being done this fall and are planning to celebrate their completion with a ribbon cutting event.

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