



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of February 22, 2017

Information to Share

Reminder: Takoma Junction Community Meetings – FIRST MEETING TOMORROW

I understand that some Councilmembers have heard concerns expressed from residents about the short notice (8 days) given in advance of the first Takoma Junction Community Meeting. I appreciate the concern, and it has been relayed to the Takoma Junction Community Consultation Process Committee. Please note that the date for the first meeting was selected by the Committee based on a number of factors, including availability of meeting space and coordination of schedules of Committee members, NDC representatives, and City staff. I also understand that a mitigating factor in the selection of the first date was that a second identical meeting was also scheduled for late afternoon the following Sunday. We immediately started getting the word out when the dates were established, through my announcement at last week's Council meeting, the website, and social media. I have seen that a number of Councilmembers have also been sharing the information.

As previously noted, two identical meetings will be held this week to solicit community input on specific design elements for the Takoma Junction redevelopment project. The first set of meetings will look at the topics of the type of architecture, materials and massing desired and the types of retail uses residents would like. The two meetings will have the same content and opportunity for feedback. They will be held on:

- Thursday, Feb 23, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the community meeting room at the Fire Station, 7201 Carroll Avenue
- Sunday, Feb 26, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the Azalea Room at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue

The second set of meetings will look at how people will access the site and move around and through the property and also what types of improvements are desired for the streetscape and the public spaces of the site. The meetings will be held on:

- Thursday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Azalea Room at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue
- Sunday, March 12, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the community meeting room at the Fire Station, 7201 Carroll Avenue

If you are interested in following the progress of the planned development and the Committee, please check the project page on the city's web site. The site is update regularly and includes a variety of information about the project: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/takoma-junction-redevelopment/>.

Passports Services

The City accepts U.S. Passport Applications Monday through Thursday on a walk-in basis. With the concerns about immigration law changes, the numbers of applicants has skyrocketed for our one Passport Agent, Sofia Visurraga. Last year, the number of applications submitted for January and the entire month of February was 470. This year, for January through February 21st, we already have had 552, creating a heavy work load. Today, a U.S. State Department auditor dropped by, and the auditor was amazed at the line and began helping process applications. As always, Sofia received high compliments for her professionalism from the auditor so I'm sending a shout out to Sofia Visurraga for her good work.

Save the Dates!: Montgomery College and Takoma Park Community Consultation

While we are still nailing down some of the details for the meetings, we have settled on meeting dates for the upcoming Montgomery College and Takoma Park community consultation process. The series of meetings is designed to provide the community with information about the College's facilities planning process in the context of County and City processes, and give community members an opportunity to engage in discussion and share feedback. The meetings will be held on the evenings of **March 21, May 9, and June 6**. Specific times and locations will be announced in the next couple of weeks. The meetings will be advertised through a variety of sources, including postcards sent to residences within a half mile of the College.

Montgomery College Presidential Dialogue Series

We recently learned about the following event, which I thought residents might be interested in attending. The City will be helping the College get the word out about the event.

Montgomery College Presidential Dialogue Series: "Civility in Action: Dialogues across Difference"

The meeting features Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President, Montgomery College and Pastors Chris and Dennis Wiley, Covenant Baptist United Church of Christ. It will be held Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Cultural Arts Center.

Dr. DeRionne Pollard will join the Wileys in a conversation about reconciliation, civility and ways to improve communication to enhance understanding. The Wileys have decades of experience in theology, ministry, and counseling, and have led countless conversations about the intersections of racial difference and reconciliation. They are active in the struggle for justice for all people, with a special focus on the places where difference —around race, class, gender, or sexual orientation— has created barriers to communication. The Wileys dialogue will bring a special focus on how communities that have been divided by difference and incivility can move beyond bitterness to improved trust and potential understanding.