



# **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK**

## **City Manager Comments**

**Report for City Council Meeting of May 10, 2017**

### ***Follow Up to Last Council Meeting***

#### **Obscured Stop Sign at Kansas and Westmoreland**

Councilmember Qureshi reported that a stop sign at the intersection of Kansas and Westmoreland was obscured by overgrowth of vegetation. Staff addressed the issue earlier today.

#### **Pothole on Carroll near Westmoreland**

Councilmember Qureshi noted the large pothole on Carroll at Westmoreland, which I am sure many of you have personally noticed. In conferring with SHA, we learned the pothole formed due to a utility cut in the street performed by Washington Gas. It was patched – a temporary fix – the evening of the last Council meeting. We have a call in to inquire when we can expect a permanent fix, which we of course hope happens very soon.

#### **SHA Crosswalks at Takoma Junction**

Councilmember Male requested an update from SHA on the status of the crosswalks at Takoma Junction. Staff has multiple calls into the project manager about this crosswalk and signal, among others. We were told that the signalization at Piney Branch and MD 410 should be completed by the end of next week, but we have not been able to obtain information on the status of the crosswalks at the Junction.

#### **Newsletter Story on Lobbyist**

Councilmember Male had a great suggestion for a story (or Q&A) for a future Newsletter about the City's lobbyist and the types of services the firm provide. He rightly pointed out that many people in our area get so mired in DC politics that what happens in Annapolis can be overlooked. Of course, Council and staff pay very close attention and are active in Annapolis during the legislative session, largely working through our lobbyist. We look forward to including something in a future Newsletter, and have already connected the Newsletter Editor with our lobbyist.

### ***Information to Share***

#### **Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**

We learned this week that the City of Takoma Park has once again received Government Finance Officer Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award. The award is given to state and local governments who go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure. A special thanks to Susan Cheung, Finance Director, and Alisa Trammell, Budget Specialist, and the entire Finance team for their hard work which led to this recognition from GFOA.

## **Police Atrium Work**

We received the quote requested to fill in the atrium floor/ceiling, which totals \$227,518. This would include some renovations in the first floor lobby area directly below what would be the new ceiling such as an extended dispatch area, interview room, and bathroom. Since Council has tentatively approved \$140,000 and specified that it needs to be used to fill in the atrium, we have requested a new quote for just the floor/ceiling. If the new quote falls within budget, we will plan to proceed with filling in the atrium in FY18. We may need to identify additional funding, do a budget amendment (which would deplete reserves) or wait until FY19 to improve the new space created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

## **Fast Charging Stations Installed!**

As you may know, fast charging stations (“level 3”) have been installed at the Community Center. But you may not know what they can do. First, they are very fast. Cars can charge to 80% in about 20 minutes or fully charge in under an hour. Also, unlike the existing charging stations, the new ones collect data on energy use, how many times it is used per day and when, etc. This data will be very helpful as we evaluate adding more stations in the future. Lastly, this new station will be able to require payments. We will have that system up and running in the next 3-4 weeks. Once it is up and running we can require commercial vehicles like taxi cabs that have been using the free stations only use the fast charger and pay for the service. The fee will be no more than \$2 per charge, it will be on-par with what other stations charge and is meant to cover our costs of operation and to free up the level 2 stations for residents.

The Electric Vehicle Institute estimated the cost of the station, installation, and everything included to be about \$100,000. The cost to the City has been only the staff time to coordinate.

## **Ethan Allen Project**

We opened bids and have a recommended low bidder which came in at a cost of \$2,259,230. We also received pricing for construction management/contract administration for \$187,093. These costs are above what was previously estimated and will increase the cost of the project by almost \$125,000, assuming there are no change orders or other unforeseen costs during construction.

The current CIP includes:

- City Fund - \$1,000,000
- MD Bikeway - \$66,000
- TAP - \$1,255,500

The City Fund portion will need to be changed to \$1,124,823.

## **Housing Tour**

The Housing and Community Services Division continues to conduct its first-ever Housing Tour of the City's multifamily rental sites. The second installment of the tour took place on Monday, May 8th at Victory Tower. During the event, residents of Victory Tower had the opportunity to interface with City staff around any housing issues they

may be facing including maintenance concerns, building safety, and creating partnerships with property management in order institute "wellbeing checks" for neighbors. Thirty constituents spoke with City staff during this event. June's installment of the Housing Tour will take place at Essex House.

### **Takoma Park Safe Routes to School 5K Challenge**

Perfect conditions brought out 1458 registrants for the Takoma Park Safe Routes to School 5K Challenge (TKPK5K) on Sunday, May 7. The 5K had a record 1030 runners cross the start line. The race was supported by Public Works, Recreation, Housing and Community Development, Takoma Park Police, and Finance. The Race Committee and over 30 volunteers contributed time and effort to the well-organized event. The Sponsor Fair featured tables with activities and give-aways related the safety, health and fitness. Next year will mark the 10th Anniversary of the TKPK5K. The event raises funds for PTA safety activities at the five local schools that participate in the Safe Routes programs: Takoma Park Elementary, Piney Branch Elementary, East Silver Spring Elementary, Rolling Terrace Elementary, and Takoma Park Middle School.

### **Blender Biker:**

Takoma Park Safe Routes to School is delighted to have a very "healthy" relationship with the Wellness Committees at the SRTS participating schools. We recently formed a working group to share information and best practices to encourage safety, health, and fitness among families at the schools. The blender bike featured at this year's TKPK5K was born out of this collaboration with support from Takoma Park Sustainability, Takoma Bicycle and our talented **John Lupari**, the bike was debuted at the race this year. After taking a turn pedaling, riders were treated to a delicious smoothie. The bike will be used at school and city events moving forward. Next stop: Bike to Work Day, Old Takoma Pit Stop on May 19th.

### **Bike to School Day:**

Today marked another successful Bike-to-School Day. Over 200 children rode bikes to school, with approximately 80 children riding to Piney Branch Elementary and 60 at Takoma Park Middle School.

### **Bike to Work Day**

A reminder that this Friday, May 19 is Bike to Work Day. Thousands of regional bike commuters are expected to participate in the celebration of bicycling as a clean, fun, and healthy way to get to work. There will be two "pit stops" in Takoma Park again this year. Registration is free. Visit <http://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/>.

### ***Kudos***

Kudos and thank you to **Captain Dan Frishkorn** for his hard work over the last two months serving as Acting Chief. He did an excellent job, in collaboration with the other Captains, to ensure that the Police Department operated smoothly during his tenure. Beginning tomorrow, Captain Tye Collington will begin his two month rotation as Acting Chief.

As noted above, kudos are due to many staff members from across the organization for their work that made the TKPK5K a great success. In particular, I want to give a shout out **Lucy Neher**, Safe Routes to School Coordinator, who spearheaded the effort.

### ***Hiring Update***

We have not yet prepared the Request for Proposals for a County lobbyist. However, it is in the works and we hope to have it finalized and posted in the next few weeks.

We are currently advertising for the IT Manager position and have a few other open positions, most of which are part-time Recreation positions for the summer. Other positions include a Public Works Right of Way Crew Leader, several internships, and the always-advertised position of Police Officer. An announcement for a new Police Chief is not expected for several weeks.

### ***My Schedule***

I plan to be out of the office beginning on May 11 through June on FMLA leave. During that time Jason Damweber will be Acting City Manager. He will continue to provide the weekly City Manager comments at Council Meetings while I am out of the office.

Suzanne R. Ludlow, AICP CPM  
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