



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

Acting City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of May 24, 2017

Follow Up to Last Council Meeting

Traffic Signal at Tulip and Carroll

Councilmember Kovar asked whether SHA had plans to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Tulip and Carroll. He noted that it can be confusing and potentially dangerous for drivers approaching Carroll from Tulip. In addition to pedestrian crosswalks and signals, SHA does plan to install a new traffic signal at the intersection. We do not know exactly when this work is scheduled to occur, but have been told it should be soon.

Crosswalk at Philadelphia and Park

Councilmember Kovar inquired about the status of a potential crosswalk going in at the intersection of Philadelphia and Park. Staff had requested funding for a project at this intersection in last year's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant application. We were not awarded sufficient funds for all the projects we requested, and ended up combining that allocation to the previous year's allocation to complete the Lincoln Avenue sidewalk construction. However, we have included the Park and Philadelphia Ave project in this year's request for the next funding cycle through SRTS and believe there is a good chance that we will be awarded the funds. We should know in or around September.

If SRTS does not fund the project, we could include it with ADA sidewalk work along State routes. Funding for that program will begin next fiscal year and continue for many years after. We have not yet determined where we will start or how we will prioritize sidewalk repairs along State roads, but note that there are numerous locations in need of repair along State Highways, especially Philadelphia Ave and sections of Carroll Ave.

New Hampshire Avenue Bikeways Plan to SHA Administrator

Mayor Stewart requested that we make sure that the new SHA Administrator was aware of the progress being made on the New Hampshire Avenue Bikeways plan, and about resource needs related to the project down the road. We have passed along information on the 30% design and requested support "from the top" moving forward. We are also preparing an application for the FY18 Maryland Bikeways Grant which, if awarded, could be a source of funds for further work on this project.

Piney Branch and Philadelphia Signal Work

Last week's report noted that the SHA would be working on the pedestrian signals at Piney Branch and Philadelphia. Because the work will require traffic control measures, we wanted to make sure you knew that, due to inclement weather, the project was postponed to May 31.

Information to Share

Washington-McLaughlin and John Nevins Andrews

We understand that with the recent tax sale notice on the Washington-McLaughlin property and the recent closure of the John Nevins Andrews school, there is a lot of speculation and anxiety about the future of the properties. Staff has been in regular contact with the County, MCPS, and representatives of JNA about the properties and will continue to gather information and share it with Council and residents as it becomes available. Regarding the Washington-McLaughlin property, while the City will be keeping close tabs on the outcome of the sale, given the complexities of a tax sale and the years it can take to establish ownership, it is too soon to know the range of possibilities for the future of the property. Following the tax sale, we will certainly reassess as appropriate. It should be noted that it could be many years before any possible transition of ownership of the property. More information about the tax sale is available on the City's website: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/public-notice/montgomery-county-tax-sale/>.

Regarding JNA, we understand that MCPS has indicated that it could be a potential site for a new elementary school. At this time, given the need for an elementary school in the area, MCPS is investigating the site's potential and capacity along with several other sites. Similar to the Washington-McLaughlin property, the JNA site is not currently for sale, although they have indicated that they have sought assistance with a real estate professional to determine what to do with the property. Staff, along with some Councilmembers will be meeting tomorrow with JNA representatives to learn more about where things stand.

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day – June 3

The City will be holding our annual household hazardous waste disposal drop-off event on June 3 from 10:00am-2:00pm at the Public Works yard. This event is a great opportunity for residents to get rid of various types of hazardous chemicals (like lawn herbicides they are no longer allowed to use) as well as additional hard to dispose of items like thermostats and fluorescent lights. Residents can also bring their small electronic equipment and computer components for drop-off for electronics recycling.

The Car Free Challenge

The City is launching a new challenge that will be open to everyone who lives or works in Takoma Park. The Car Free Challenge officially started on Friday May 19 and lasts until October 19. It's a five month challenge to form new habits around using your car less and biking, walking, sharing rides, or using public transportation more.

The challenge will help Takoma Park meet its goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and it might also help us all get a little extra exercise during your commutes and errands. There was even a study that showed biking and walking to work makes you happier! You can earn miles for biking, walking, carpooling, metro, train, and bus for any trip you'd normally take by car. You can count your commute to work, errands, even your trip out to dinner on the weekend.

More information, including registration details, is available here: <http://carfreetkpk.com/>

“Rolling” Detour for Sidewalk Work on Poplar

Last week’s report noted that ADA sidewalk work would be getting under way, starting on Poplar Avenue, near New Hampshire Avenue and working our way north. That work has commenced and it was determined that the road needed to be closed to through traffic in order to complete the work. As a result, a detour will be in place while the crews are working from New Hampshire to Sligo Mill, down Orchard to Fourth, and back onto Poplar. The work should take about five days, but will be dependent on the weather.

Zika Update

Mosquito season is upon us once again. The Zika virus is a major concern of many who [travel](#) to current areas where the Zika virus can be found and to areas of the [United States](#) where the mosquitos that could potentially spread the Zika virus breed. Women who are pregnant or expect to be pregnant should consult with their physician before traveling to an area where the disease is active in mosquitoes. Residents are reminded to do their part by checking around their homes after a rain and dump out any standing water. Montgomery County Health and Human Services has a website with additional information and direction on the different viruses and mosquito control at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mosquito.

We will be getting information out on Zika through the Newsletter, website and social media.

Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan

Work on the FY18 Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan continues: stakeholder interviews are underway and the analysis of various data resources is being completed. On Monday, an online survey, designed to solicit input from community members on a variety of housing and economic development topics was issued and will be open until June 19. The feedback collected during the stakeholder interviews and the survey will be used to inform the development of the strategic plan.

We encourage the Council and residents to take a moment to complete the [Takoma Park Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan Survey](#).

Montgomery College Takoma Park Community Conversation – Takoma Park Silver Spring Campus

The last of three planned community meetings co-hosted by Montgomery College and the Takoma Park City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, June 6. Residents who were unable to attend the March 21 or May 9 meetings, or who would like to provide

additional feedback on the discussion are encouraged to submit their comments using the [Comment Form](#). Online comments will be accepted through June 1. The feedback provided by participants in the earlier conversations can be viewed on the [Montgomery College Facilities Master Plan](#) on the City's online project directory.

The June 6 conversation will be held from 7:30 p.m. to 9:03 p.m. in the Science North Building, Room 100 on the Montgomery College Takoma Park Silver Spring Campus.

Takoma Park Recreation Center – Letters of Interest Solicitation

The deadline for submission of Letters of Interest for a potential partner for the redevelopment of the Rec Center was Monday, May 22. A total of five submissions were received in response to the Housing and Community Development Department's solicitation. Responses are currently under review with staff recommendations tentatively scheduled to be presented for Council consideration in late July.

Additional information on the [Takoma Park Recreation Center Development Project](#) can be found on the City's online project directory.

First-Time Homebuyer Efforts

The City continued its commitment to meeting the housing needs of its residents with this year's first installment of the First-Time Homebuyer Class. Sponsored by the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) and the Housing and Community Development Department, participants were given an industry insider's perspective on understanding and navigating the home-buying process. Twenty-one (21) potential homebuyers attended the 6-hour session. The next course is scheduled to take place this fall in the Community Center.

Kudos

Kudos to staff from across the City and in particular Recreation Department staff for their hard work in making the Celebrate Takoma festival held on Saturday a great success. Attendees enjoyed a variety of music, dancing, food, and entertainment that celebrated the cultural and ethnic diversity of Takoma Park.



Hiring Update

We have prepared a draft Request for Proposals for a County lobbyist and submitted it for review by the City Attorney. We are still awaiting their review and feedback. Once we receive it, we will finalize and post the RFP.

We are currently advertising for an IT Manager, Sanitation Driver, PW Equipment Operator, and Planning Intern. An announcement for a new Police Chief is not expected for several weeks.

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