

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

MINUTES

Minutes adopted Sept. 6, 2023

Present: Mayor Searcy, Councilmember Fulcher, Councilmember Dyballa, Councilmember Gibson, Councilmember Seamens, Councilmember Honzak,

Absent: Councilmember Small

Also present: Acting City Manager Eubanks, Planning & Development Manager Grigsby, City Clerk Carpenter

The City Council convened at 7:30 PM in the Community Center Auditorium, 7500 Maple Avenue.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA / AGENDA SCHEDULING UPDATE

Ms. Searcy provided an update on future agendas.

FOR THE RECORD

Proclamation of June 2 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day

Mayor Searcy read the proclamation (attached).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jessica Landman, Ward 1, asked the Council to ensure that the budget process will be different. She urged the Council to move beyond policy advice and to move to ordinances requiring action. She said she was still waiting for changes on traffic calming. She suggested adopting a moratorium on new traffic calming, vehicle, sidewalk, and street replacements until there was a new process in place.

Paul Huebner, Ward 3, commented on the resolution establishing policy objectives associated with the FY 2024 budget and Mr. Gibson's amendment. He urged the Council to change the budget process.

Jackie Moore, Ward 2, commented on the selection process for the new City Manager.

Tom Gagliardo, Ward 1, commented on the minor master plan and listed housing needs in the City. He suggested ideas for achieving the housing needs including the Washington and Adventist Healthcare site.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Small commented on permitting issues with M-NCPPC. He said the youth baseball teams play on fields not properly maintained. He said that the quality of facilities in Prince George's County was much better.

Ms. Dyballa stated that the resolution was not intended to be a budget reform. She said that resolution was to establish policy. She announced that today was the first anniversary of the Uvalde shootings. She commented on meetings she attended.

Mr. Seamens announced that the Piney Branch Pool would not be open on Sundays until school started again in the fall and that the pool would be closed on Memorial Day.

Mr. Gibson stated that he was grateful for the hard work of the commenters.

Ms. Honzak commented on the upcoming June 3 Ward 5 community event. She thanked CHEER and Montgomery Housing Partnership. She said that she appreciated staff reaching out to her on the Minor Master Plan.

Ms. Fulcher thanked the residents for coming out to the Council meeting. She commented on the opening of Motorkat, a new business in Old Town.

Ms. Searcy thanked the audience for coming out to the Council meeting. She commented on the impacts of gun violence. She commented on meetings she attended. She reminded everyone about the Crossroads Market.

Ms. Searcy noted the passing of Erwin Mack. She announced that Erwin Mack's life celebration would take place on June 17.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

The comments are attached.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

Mr. Seamens moved to adopt the minutes of January 25, February 1, and February 1. Ms. Dyballa seconded the motion. All in favor.

VOTING SESSION

Single Reading Ordinance Awarding a Contract for Rental Housing Licensing Software

Mr. Small asked the Mr. Eubanks to give a brief overview on the contract.

Mr. Eubanks explained that the City staff was in the process of purchasing a new licensing system as the current system was outdated and inefficient. He said that the contract would allow staff to provide more convenient services as well as efficiency and cost savings. Mr. Small moved the ordinance. Mr. Seamens seconded the motion. (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small)

Ordinance 2023-11 (attached)

Resolution Establishing Policy Objectives Associated with the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget

Mr. Small moved the resolution. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion.

Mr. Small stated that the would like to add the addendum that Mr. Gibson drafted to the resolution.

Mr. Small moved the amendment to the resolution. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion.

Mr. Small stated that in reading the resolution, it made sense and was consistent with all the thigs he campaigned on. He said that he was in support of the resolution and the amendment.

Ms. Dyballa thanked Mr. Gibson. She stated that there was mention of a subcommittee in the resolution with no additional information. She suggested taking out the section on council subcommittee.

Mr. Small and Mr. Gibson agreed to strike out the text on subcommittee in the resolution.

Ms. Honzak asked Mr. Eubanks to give his thoughts on the resolution.

Mr. Eubanks stated that it was an appropriate step to take. He said that he had some concern about the eight-month timeline.

Mr. Small moved the amendment to the resolution. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Small moved adoption of the resolution as amended. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion. (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small)

Resolution 2023-15 (attached)

PRESENTATION / WORK SESSION

3. Montgomery Planning Presentation – Minor Master Plan

Ms. Grigsby introduced the presentation. She explained that a resolution would be presented on June 7 stating the Council's opinion to the planning board. She informed the Council that they were not being asked to adopt the plan at this time. She said that a final report would be presented to the Council in the fall.

Melissa Williams of Montgomery Planning gave a presentation of the working draft of the minor master plan.

Minor Master Plan – Council Discussion

Mr. Seamens stated that he was co-chair of the 2000 Takoma Park master plan advisory group. He said that he reviewed the this draft plan and was inspired by it. He said that people need to know that the plan was not a plan for what would be done but a plan that would guide future development.

Mr. Small asked if they could discuss other options for mixed use zoning in those areas. He asked if there were anticipated uses that would be public use, such as an open space at the Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) site. He stated that the community needed local fields for kids that cannot travel elsewhere. He said that the plan did not address the socioeconomic realities of the youth in the area.

Ms. Dybala asked for more information on the uses of the open spaces on the former hospital site. She asked about the possibilities under the proposed zoning. She noted that the zones referred to moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs). She said that she wanted to know what that looked like in Takoma Park which has rent stabilization.

Lisa Govoni of Montgomery Planning replied that MPDUs were the Montgomery County's landmark inclusionary zoning program that include moderately priced dwelling units required in 12.5% of any developments of 20 units or more, whether it was homeownership or rental, to be set aside for qualified occupants earning not more than seventy percent (70%) of the area median income.

Ms. Dybala asked about the zoning in the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Elza Hisel-McCoy of Montgomery Planning explained that there were mixed use zones CR (Commercial/Residential), CRT (Commercial/Residential Town), and CRN (Commercial/Residential Neighborhood) and they require different levels of process. He said that CRT was for larger properties; CRN were for smaller properties; and CR was for the campus. He explained that the number following the CR were density that reflected the size of the site.

Ms. Dyballa asked about standard method development.

Ms. Williams replied that the standard method developments did not need to provide public amenities and benefits. She said that all of the CRN properties were standard method.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy stated the CRT and CR had a limit for standard method. He said that if more height and density was requested the optional method would be used.

Ms. Dyballa asked when would the climate analysis be available.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy replied that they were hoping to have the public hearing in July and a work session for the planning board in the fall. He said the report should be ready by then.

Ms. Dyballa asked that there be a mechanism in place to submit additional questions as there may not be enough time to get to all the question the Council may have tonight.

Mr. Eubanks replied that the Council can send additional questions to Ms. Grigsby and she would forward them to Montgomery Planning.

Ms. Williams explained that the testimony received during the public hearing forms the direction of the Planning Board work sessions. She said that all the testimony received would be batched into topics, helping to determine how many work sessions would be needed. She stated that if the Council did not get all their questions on the record right now, there was still additional opportunities to do so to influence the direction of the plan.

Ms. Searcy asked about the resolution process.

Ms. Grigsby replied that the resolution had a whereas clause that allowed to Council to add any specifics considerations and concerns. She said that the Council had two weeks to put the resolution together.

Ms. Dyballa asked to have a conversation about who would pay for the capital improvements.

Ms. Searcy said that a lot of infrastructure work that may not squarely fall on the city to implement without additional resources. She asked who determined which entity was the lead and how would some improvements be brought to fruition.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy replied that the City would be the lead on most of them because they are on City streets. He said that improvements were not required. He said that if the City did not want to invest on a particular improvement it would be taken off the list.

Ms. Honzak said that she had some concerns and some things needed for more emphasis. She said that the school issue remained unresolved in the plan. She said that the colocation of community services needed more emphasis. Ms. Honzak said that the people in Ward 5 were

interested in having more City services in the area on or near the campus. She stated that the pool was important and the community needed more places for youth and adults for recreation. She said that food forest was a luxury and that it was not solving the food problem in the community.

Ms. Fulcher asked how the plan would help with townhomes and duplexes.

Ms. Govoni replied that the R40 was a duplex zone and single family. She said that there were not a lot of tools in zoning for missing middle. She said that the CRT zone could accommodate townhomes as well as duplexes.

Ms. Fulcher said that she would like to see the plan address missing middle housing to establish expectations.

Mr. Small asked the connection between the university and hospital site and the plan.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy replied that both the former Adventist hospital and the university have goals and plans. He said that the minor master plan was intended to provide them flexibility and enough density to give them a lot of potential.

Mr. Small commented on the proximity to Purple Line and asked if there were transit-oriented development requirements.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy replied that there was a lot of excellent transit in the area.

Ms. Searcy stated that there were priorities that needed to be highlighted such as mental health care in our community. She said that schools and parks were mentioned by the Council and residents. She commented on the missing middle and said that missing middle was a gap, and that the Council needs to use language in the resolution that makes it clear to the Planning Board. She said that she aligned herself with Ms. Dyballa and wished for additional information. She said that it would be helpful to provide additional context to help people understand our environment so that the wish list was more feasible in order to be implemented.

Ms. Grigsby said that she would aggregate comments and suggested that Council send her potential language for the whereas clause in the resolution regarding the specific things that Council wanted to flag.

Ms. Searcy asked the Council to have edits to the resolution ready to send to Ms. Grigsby by May 31 to give time to prepare the resolution for Friday.

Ms. Searcy stated that Ms. Grigsby and Mr. Eubanks would explore the option of holding the public hearing at the community center.

ADJOURNMENT

The City Council adjourned for the evening at 10:56 p.m.