

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

**Wednesday, August 2, 2023**

**MINUTES**

*Minutes adopted Sept. 6, 2023*

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Mayor Searcy, Councilmember Fulcher, Councilmember Dyballa, Councilmember Gibson, Councilmember Seamens, Councilmember Honzak (on Zoom), Councilmember Small

**Also Present:** Acting City Manager Eubanks, City Clerk Carpenter, Finance Director Cheung (on Zoom)

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM in the Auditorium of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Karen Elrich, Ward 5, noted that the Takoma Junction development remains unresolved. She commented in opposition to the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) and asked where is the common ground?

Sue Miller commented that the Minor Master Plan Amendment is not equitable. She asked how the Maple Avenue got added to the MMPA and when do the protections for affordable housing on Maple Avenue expire.

Paul Huebner read a statement from Ward 1 resident Paul Chrostowski regarding the climate impacts of demolition of the Hospital and construction of new buildings.

Jacqueline Moore spoke in support of affordable housing on the WAH site and expressed concern about the potential loss of affordable housing. She said that community input is not the same as community engagement.

Tom Gagliardo, Ward 1, urged the Council to 1) engage property owners in discussion about their plans and explore issuing tax free bonds to assist them; 2) more fully engage the community, and 3) ensure that the public receives specific information on the proposed zoning changes and what would be permissible in the zones.

Susan Comfort, Ward 2, commented on the power of public art and expressed puzzlement as to why the City Council would not support the work she did to create a movement (painted) sidewalk. She proposed a pilot project for each ward to have more movement sidewalks.

Indigo, Smith College rising senior, helped with the movement sidewalk creation during the pandemic. She said it was hard to see the painting power washed. She asked the Council to consider Susan Comfort's proposal.

Richard Masterson, Roanoke Avenue, said he wants all people to thrive. The MMPA will set guidance for building in the community. What is in the document will have broad impacts.

Margaret Cyr, Ward 2, urged the Council to recommit to the climate emergency framework in considering the MMPA.

Jim Barnes, Ward 5, asked the Council to oppose the MMPA. He does not want to see high rise buildings.

Mary Jane Muchui, Boyd Avenue, commented that people with developmental disabilities are the most disadvantaged.

Troy Jacobs, Ward 5, reported that the Planning Board Chair said that speakers can testify at the MMPA public hearing in any language. Five days' notice is needed for special accommodations. Written testimony can be submitted in any language and comments will be translated. The deadline will be noon the day before the meeting.

Dennis Flynn, Ward 5 homeowner and business owner in the Washington Adventist Professional Building said he thinks the plan will help to attract businesses. He did wonder what the plan is for the Professional Building on Carroll Avenue.

Steven McGary, Flower Avenue, expressed concern about the MMPA because it does not address the congestion that will occur on local streets.

Glenda Kapsalas commented that she uses Sligo Creek Park and does not want development to negatively impact the park.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilmember Small remarked on flyers being distributed that are not accurate. He said he appreciates the interest in the MMPA and potential increased traffic, since Ward 6 has been dealing with cut through traffic since Purple Line construction began. He learned that 17,000 cars pass through Wildwood Drive weekly.

Councilmember Gibson thanked the commenters and announced a scheduled listening session.

Councilmember Seamens thanked staff for the National Night Out event and thanked Pat Rumbaugh for the popup play event at Heffner Park.

Councilmember Dyballa asked the City Manager to address the Belford Avenue sidewalk schedule. She urged residents to send MMPA comments to the Planning Board so that they will be added to the public hearing record.

Councilmember Honzak thanked commenters. She commented that equity is important as is climate resilience and indicated that her goal is to explore how we can get to yes on the MMPA.

Councilmember Fulcher said she would hold a Ward 1 virtual meeting on the MMPA. She announced a Ward 1 play day and a social event to take place in August.

Mayor Searcy echoed thanks to the commenters. She offered to attend any meetings on the MMPA that she is invited to. She thanked staff for the Ward 6 traffic meeting held to discuss the tremendous traffic impact that results from the Purple Line construction. She announced that Taylor Johnson, Takoma Park's Poet Laureate received an award from the Academy of American Poets.

#### **CITY MANAGER COMMENTS**

The comments are attached. Mr. Eubanks did provide an update on the Library construction permits still to be issued. Regarding the Belford Avenue sidewalk, he said that there are not funds in the FY 2024 budget to complete the work on the sidewalk because another project still to be finished did cost more than expected.

In response to a question about the trees to be removed at the Library site, he said they will be repurposed into furniture for the Library.

#### **VOTING SESSION**

Councilmember Dyballa made a motion to convene as the Stormwater Management Board. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Second Reading Ordinance Approving FY 2024 Stormwater Management Budget Amendment No. 1**

Councilmember Dyballa moved to approve the stormwater budget amendment. Councilmember Gibson seconded. The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small).

#### **Ordinance 2023-18 (attached)**

#### **Second Reading Ordinance Approving FY 2024 Budget Amendment No. 1**

It was noted that the language of the ordinance was changed to remove the word “carryover” and replace it with “reappropriate.” The substance of the ordinance is unchanged.

Councilmember Small moved adoption. Councilmember Fulcher seconded the motion. The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small).

#### **Ordinance 2023-19 (attached)**

#### **Single Reading Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Sign a Contract for an Executive Search Firm to Administer the Recruitment of the New City Manager**

Councilmember Dyballa moved adoption of the ordinance. Councilmember Honzak seconded. The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak; ABSTAIN: Small).

Mr. Small noted it was a collaborative selection process. He said he would abstain because he would prefer to appoint the current Acting City Manager rather than conducting a search.

#### **Ordinance 2023-21 (attached)**

#### **Resolution Establishing the City Council’s Goals and Priorities for the Management of the City**

Councilmember Small moved to adopt the resolution. Councilmember Dyballa seconded.

Mr. Gibson moved to amend the resolution by adding the words “healthy debate” to the resolution as follows: understand the importance of consensus and healthy debate.”

The amendment passed with five in favor.

The amended resolution passed (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small).

#### **Resolution 2023-21 (attached)**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilmember Honzak moved adoption of the consent agenda. Councilmember Seamens seconded the motion.

Councilmember Dyballa noted that no reappointments or new appointments are being made to the Nuclear Free Committee, but that the City continues to be committed to remaining a Nuclear-Free Zone.

Councilmember Gibson recognized the Committee members for their past work.

The consent agenda was adopted. (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small.)

**Resolution 2023-22 Providing for the City Council Summer Recess (August 3 – September 6) (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-23 Providing for Appointments/Reappointments to the Arts and Humanities Committee (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-24 Providing for Reappointments to the Board of Elections (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-25 Providing for Reappointments to the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-26 Providing for Appointments/Reappointments to the Emergency Preparedness Committee (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-27 Providing for Reappointments to the Grants Review Committee (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-28 Providing for Appointments/Reappointments to the Recreation Committee (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-29 Providing for Appointments/Reappointments to the Sustainable Maryland Committee (attached)**

**Resolution 2023-30 Providing for Reappointments to the Tree Commission (attached)**

**Motion Regarding the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee**

Councilmember Dyballa moved that the City Council seek the City Attorney's guidance on City Code language for assigning the still relevant tasks of the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee to other municipal functions. Seconded by Councilmember Small.

The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Seamens, Honzak, Small).

## **WORK SESSION**

### **Quarterly Financial Report (Fourth Quarter)**

Mr. Eubanks presented the report. (Report attached.)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Council adjourned for the evening at 10:20 PM.