



# CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

## City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of February 6, 2019

### *Information to Share*

#### **City to Conduct Emergency Preparedness Exercises**

During the week of February 11, City staff in Takoma Park will be conducting emergency preparedness exercises. Exercises will take place at the Community Center, Public Works facilities, and the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center. Notices will be posted on exterior doors and shared widely.

#### **Hiring of Deputy Police Chief**

We are pleased to announce that Chief DeVaul has selected Andrew W. Powell to be Deputy Police Chief. Mr. Powell is a 23-year law enforcement veteran who currently serves as the Commander of the Bureau of Support Services for the Riverdale Park Police Department. Powell holds a Bachelor's Degree with Honors in Management and a Master of Science Degree with Honors in Organizational Leadership, both from The Johns Hopkins University. He has completed a number of prestigious law enforcement programs and has received numerous awards and commendations. Mr. Powell's first day with the City will be March 4, 2019 with the ceremonial swearing in scheduled for March 6, before the City Council meeting.

The City's previous Deputy Chief, Antonio Williams, resigned for personal reasons just five weeks after being hired.

#### **Departure of HCD Director**

Monday was Sara Daines's last day with the City of Takoma Park. As the Housing and Community Development Director for 17 years, she contributed greatly to the organization in many ways. She helped set the course for appropriate zoning, infrastructure development, and marketing of the Takoma-Langley area and New Hampshire Avenue Corridor; she professionalized planning and housing services; and she helped create and brand Takoma Park as a vibrant community for the arts and humanities. Within City government operations, her financial management was exemplary and strongly contributed to the reputation of fiscal excellence that the City has earned. We are very fortunate to have had her service for so many years and wish her the best in her future activities.

While the position is vacant, the three Community Development Managers will continue to work closely together as a team, reporting directly to the City Manager.

#### **410/Philadelphia Avenue Bill**

Despite several Councilmembers making calls to Montgomery County Delegation members advocating for MC 15-19, the State bill that would prohibit the possibility of ever adding a vehicular lane to Ethan Allen or Philadelphia Avenues (MD 410), it did not have the support needed to move forward and was withdrawn.

At this point, we need to get behind the efforts to block the Beltway widening, which would be bad for the entire region and will impact the number of cars on streets in Takoma Park -- such as MD 410, Carroll Avenue, Piney Branch Road, University Blvd, and New Hampshire Avenue. We plan to draft and submit testimony regarding the beltway widening proposal.

### **Recreation Camp Registration**

Recreation Camp registration opened on Monday for City residents. Out of 1,120 total spaces, 701 residents filled camp slots within the first 4 hours (62%). Approximately 10% of Monday's camp registrants received scholarships. Non-resident registration for summer camp is Monday, February 11th.

### **Alternative to Curb Painting**

Since the City stopped painting curbs to dissuade parking in certain areas, particularly near driveways, we conducted a pilot with pavement markings (as opposed to yellow curbs) that seemed to work well. To that end, we plan to develop a process for identifying areas where we believe there should be pavement markings and to allow residents to make requests for such markings. While more details and information will be forthcoming, I wanted to make sure you were aware that we planned to move on from the pilot and broaden the effort.

### **Opportunity Zone Bus Tour**

The Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond hosted a "workshop" and bus tour on Montgomery County's Opportunity Zones on Tuesday, February 5. The all-day workshop was intended for investors, developers, and others with potential business interests in Montgomery County, as well as economic development professionals in local government. The primary goal of the workshop was to educate attendees on how to benefit from Opportunity Zones and complementing legislation from leading national experts, tour local eligible communities, and connect with potential investment projects.

All three of our Community Development Managers attended AND served as subject matter experts. Samira Cook Gaines did a great job highlighting the opportunities in the Takoma-Langley area and along New Hampshire. We believe the appropriate seeds have been planted and look forward to working to realize the opportunities presented by the Opportunity Zone designation within the City.

### **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Notice**

Staff is becoming aware of a number of multifamily properties that are being put up for sale. As part of the sales process under City and County law, tenants have the opportunity to purchase the building, and Montgomery County and the City of Takoma Park also have the opportunity to purchase the building, rather than it being sold to a private party. The City has a limited number of days in which to decide to act on the opportunity to purchase. Staff has put into place a system of review, including making a recommendation of whether or not the City should purchase the property. I will share the information of these notices promptly through these City Manager Comments or other format and, if the Council wishes to consider purchasing a property, the matter may be added to a future Council agenda.

*7905 Lockney Avenue, 4 unit building, Sales Price \$505,000.*

*Staff Recommendation: Decline to Purchase*

### **Hiring Update**

We are currently advertising and/or interviewing for a number of positions including Recreation Program Leaders, Recreation Program Assistant, Sanitation Driver, Contract CDL Driver, Police Officer, Police Intern, and Sustainability Intern.