



# CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

## City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of November 13, 2019

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

#### **Montgomery County Development Review Process – Clarification**

The Montgomery County Planning Department Area One Chief, Elza Hisel-McCoy, confirmed that project applicants usually have only one Development Review Committee (DRC) meeting where agency representatives provide comments on a given project. The DRC meeting is a technical review coordination meeting. The meeting is open to the public to attend, but there is no public comment or input. Following the DRC meeting, the applicant responds to comments with the appropriate staff person. Unless a project has changed dramatically (for example, so much that it is unrecognizable from an original submittal) or has had a long dormant period, a second DRC meeting is not usually held.

For the Takoma Junction project, there is unlikely to be another DRC meeting before the project goes to the Planning Board, when there is a public hearing. NDC is still waiting for SHA to complete the Takoma Junction Vision Study and then give substantive comments on the Takoma Junction project before they proceed. SHA has stated they will complete the Vision report this fall.

#### **Permit to Install Telecom Equipment in City Right of Way – 902 Merrimac**

The City has determined that the application for a telecom antenna at 902 Merrimac Drive has met all conditions, and a permit is being issued. The permit conditions, consistent with the associated Administrative Regulations, require that the applicant notify City when installation is complete so required RF testing can be completed. Within 15 days of permit issuance, the applicant must provide payment of the Right of Way Maintenance and Administrative Fee of \$500 (this is in addition to the \$1,000 application fee). Annually, between June 1 and July 1, the facility owner must provide an affidavit to the City certifying that approved facility remains in use, is covered by insurance, and is the current industry standard.

#### **Update on Bikeway Projects**

Last week, Councilmember Dyballa requested an update on the City's bikeway projects, specifically asking for additional information about the New Ave Bikeway Grant. Information on the City's Bikeway program is available here: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/community-development/bikeways-program/>. And information specifically on the New Ave Bikeway, for which the City received \$235,000 in grant funding from the Maryland Bikeways program, is available here: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/new-ave-bikeway/>. The grant moves forward design work for the conversion of the southbound service lane on New Hampshire Avenue into a two-way separated bike lane. The City has previously received funding from both Maryland Bikeways as well as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for preliminary and semi-final designs for portions of the bikeway. The realization of the bikeway will help to support multi-modal transportation on New Hampshire Avenue and will connect to the future Purple Line station.

Budget Amendment #2 includes an item recognizing receipt of funds for the current fiscal year, as well as the City's required 20 percent match.

### **Tree Removal on City Property**

In late September the Council authorized a contract for the removal and maintenance of trees in the City's rights-of-way (33 removals and 65 maintenance pruning). Since that time, we have identified additional trees in the course of the contractor's work that need immediate attention. Nine trees need to be removed (four in Forest Park, one in Heffner Park, one on Circle Path, one at Hudson Ave and Eastridge Ave, one at New Hampshire Ave and Holton Lane, and one on Lancaster Road) and four trees require pruning. The Public Works Director is seeking quotes and will assign work based on pricing. It is likely the quotes will exceed \$10,000, but the work needs to be completed in short order. Given the timing, it is not likely that we will be able to bring this item before Council before the upcoming recess. Pursuant to the City Charter's provision on emergency purchasing, we will share information on costs when it becomes available.

### **Right of First Refusal Properties**

When rental properties are placed for sale in the City of Takoma Park, the tenant(s), the City, and Montgomery County all have the opportunity to purchase the property under City and County law. The owner of the property must follow the applicable laws and provide notice. City staff ensure that the correct processes are followed and notices given. Staff also provide advice as to whether or not the City may wish to exercise its right to purchase the property. If a property looks like it might be appropriate for City purchase (guided by City policy and goals), information on the property will be shared with Council for a decision. Recently, the following properties were determined to not meet the criteria for City purchase:

- 7333 New Hampshire Avenue, #501N – One condo unit (Ward 6)
- 116 Lee Avenue, Unit 507 – One condo unit (Ward 4)

### ***Hiring Update***

We are currently advertising and/or interviewing for a number of positions including Budget and Accounting Manager, HR Coordinator, Audio/Visual Technician (part-time), Photo Enforcement Specialist, Economic Development Intern, Landlord – Tenant Mediator, Mechanic, Recreation Program Leader, Police Officer (entry-level and lateral), Crossing Guard - Substitute, and Youth Success Program Leader (Contract position).

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