



Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

Annual Report

September 2011-July 2012



The Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC) was created to advise the County Executive and County Council on matters affecting the revitalization and the economic and physical development of the Wheaton Urban District area. The Committee works closely with the Wheaton Urban District on activities and issues associated with the commercial business area. The Wheaton Urban District works to complete the following tasks:

- Maintain streetscape and streetscape amenities on public rights-of-way and any property used by the general public;
- Promote and programming public interest activities that benefit both residential and commercial interests;
- Provide additional streetscape amenities and façade improvements as possible;
- Monitor activities to enhance the safety and security of persons and property in public areas.

Hence, the purpose of this Committee is to advise the County on the public services and facilities necessary to implement the purposes of an Urban District. The WUDAC fulfills this purpose in various ways but not to be limited to the following:

- Advising the Director of the Mid-County Services Center of priorities and methods of tailoring services to meet the need of the urban district;
- Making recommendations and providing input into the planning and goal setting functions of the various Montgomery County government agencies and authorities working in the urban district;
- Collaborating with other government and community organizations and Advisory Boards;
- Being visible, accessible and accountable to the businesses in the urban district;
- Monitoring current legislative issues affecting the urban district and taking an active role in legislative advocacy where appropriate; and
- Monitoring the County budget process to assure that urban district needs are reflected and by communicating those needs to the Center Director, County Executive and County Council at appropriate and private forums.

The Committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902 at 5:00 p.m. This year, the WUDAC established five (5) standing sub-committees including: Advocacy; Business Development; Communications/Promotion; Community Building; and Budget.

Subcommittee goals include the following:



Advocacy Committee deals with issues that require policy to address. Some examples of this include: panhandling, the use of signs by businesses, mobile food trucks, etc.

Business Development Committee deals with issues related to doing business in the CBD. The committee seeks to bring groups together to help address matters that impact businesses. The committee also seeks to educate businesses on the resources that exist to improve their businesses and comply with permitting regulations.

Communication/Promotion Committee seeks to strengthen the Urban District's existing methods of communication to draw people into the Wheaton CBD. It works to accomplish this by creating a communications plan to organize existing efforts, maximize all possible resources including the other subcommittees as well as the media to disseminate positive information.

Community Building Committee seeks to build communication with the Wheaton community through existing neighborhood groups while working to create community through the development of events geared to resident interest.

Budget Committee seeks to prepare the Urban District with the resources needed to carry out the vision for the CBD.

There are eleven members of the WUDAC which include two members from the Wheaton Kensington Chamber of Commerce, two members who represent large businesses, two (2) members who represent small businesses, one member who represents the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board and four members who represent the community. The WUDAC will be required to add additional members now that there are optional method developments in Wheaton.



Members are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by County Council to serve for a term of three years and can apply for a second term of three years. The WUDAC Members serve without compensation. The officers of the WUDAC consist of a Chair and a Vice Chair. The Chair presides over all meetings and, in his or her absence, the Vice Chair presides.

This past year, the following people served on the WUDAC committee:

Name	Standing Committee	Representation
Linda Amendt	Community Building	Resident
Matt Barry	Budget	Large Business
Jeannette Feldner, Chair	Community Building	Small Business
Marian Fryer, Vice-Chair	Community Building	Small Business
Devala Janardan	Advocacy	Resident
William Moore	Communications	Large Business
Ken Nelson	Advocacy	Chamber of Commerce
Jim Onder	Communications	Chamber of Commerce
Henriot St. Gerard	Advocacy	Resident
Janet Yu	Business Development	Resident

The WUDAC serves as an open forum for local concerns which can lead to our advocacy on their behalf to the County Executive, County Council and other County agencies. We have invited elected officials and key players in Wheaton's redevelopment to come to our meetings so that members can educate themselves as well as the community on what's happening in Wheaton and take steps to inform and advocate. And since Wheaton will be experiencing many changes as redevelopment impacts its core, it will be important for the Urban District and the WUDAC to maintain ongoing communication with the community, businesses and residents to ensure a smooth transition for all.

Additional examples of the work the WUDAC members carried out this year include:

- Conducted an organizational retreat for the WUDAC members;
- Participated in the planning of the World of Montgomery Festival
- Prepared testimony regarding the vicinity sector plan, bringing business into Wheaton and supporting budget enhancements to the Urban district;
- Outreached to merchants and community groups regarding urban district activities;

Some of the documents produced over the last year include the following:

- **March 2010:** the WUDAC wrote to Council in support of Costco coming to Wheaton.
- **October 10, 2010:** the WUDAC wrote the Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Board to strongly endorse the Patriot Realty/Safeway project located at Georgia Avenue and Reddie Drive.
- **March 1, 2011:** the WUDAC joined with WRAC to support proposed pedestrian improvements to median treatment to portions of Reddie Drive and Georgia Avenue.
- **February 28, 2011:** the WUDAC sent a letter of thanks to the Clean and Safe Team for excellent team work during the bad snow storms.
- **May 17, 2011:** the WUDAC member served on the Roadside Solicitation Task Force for two years prior, culminating in a letter to Council urging them to ask the State to enact comprehensive enabling legislation so that Montgomery County can decide to ban or regulate roadside solicitation.
- **May 27, 2011:** the WUDAC asked the County Executive to consider establishing a Task Force on Mobile Unit Operations (Food Truck Vendors) to study the situation in depth and recommend what, if anything, is needed to keep a healthy business community and a vibrant atmosphere in Wheaton.
- **December 15, 2011:** the WUDAC sent comments to Council regarding Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) proposed legislation.
- **February 22, 2012:** the WUDAC wrote to Council regarding the Council Staff Recommendations requesting support for the Wheaton redevelopment CIP proposal and requesting open communication with the Wheaton community.
- **March 21, 2012:** the WUDAC wrote to Council to oppose the implementation of the Council Staff Recommendation on the Wheaton Redevelopment Project.
- **May 11, 2012:** the WUDAC submitted a report of its work to the Committee for the Evaluation and Review Board.

The WUDAC expects to continue the work begun this year through subcommittees. Specifically, it is expected that the following goals will be addressed in the next fiscal year:

Advocacy Subcommittee

- Address specific issues impacting the CBD such as Panhandling, , etc.
- Provide legislative review of bills.
- Investigate – County Procedures – State laws
- Conduct more one on one contact with council members/staff.

Business Development Subcommittee

- Inform businesses on how the WUDAC represents and wants to assist them in their development.
- Act as a catalyst to convene groups working to assist business development in Wheaton.
- Provide education to small businesses as appropriate.

Communication/Promotion Subcommittee

- Strengthen existing methods of communication through our website, www.wheatonmd.org, Facebook, twitter, the WUDAC blog.
- Interact with each subcommittee to facilitate information sharing.
- Work with the media to generate accurate and positive stories but also to share information.
- Facilitate education to businesses and residents using current communication methods.

Community Building Subcommittee

- Develop a list of Wheaton community associations, list serves, identifying point of contact.
- Send regular communications.
- Conduct a survey.
- Provide speakers at community meetings.
- Provide resource information at all Wheaton major events.
- Use media for supporting efforts.

Budget Subcommittee

- Create a 5-year budget.
- Develop and recommend proposals for budgets and advocate to the County why the Urban District needs additional resources.
- Analyze the operating budget for FY12.
- Educate the WUDAC about other county agencies and groups and how they affect Wheaton.
- Review forecasts and make recommendations.