**Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee**

Mid-County Services Center, 2424 Reedie Drive Wheaton MD 20902

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday May 13, 2014

APPROVED

**Members Present:** Henriot St. Gerard (Chair), Devala Janardan (Vice Chair), Mirza Donegan, Rick Kessler, Marian Fryer, Jeannette Feldner, Tom Stanton, Dan Thompson, Nadia Sesay

**Members Absent:** Luis Bonilla, William Moore

**Staff Present:** Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Services Center, Catina Tyson, Regional Office Assistant

**Guests:** Mike Smith, **Wheaton Resident**, Chris Gillis, **Senior Legislative Aide to Council Member** Leventhal, Gigi Goin, the **Wheaton Farmers Market**

**Call to Order:** 6:07pm by Vice Chair Devala Janardan in the delay of the Chair, followed by introductions. A motion was made and passed to approve the april meeting minutes with added changes. Vice Chair asked that names of the Wheaton & Kensington winners be inserted into the APRIL meeting minutes. Devala then turned the meeting over to Guest Mike Smith, a Wheaton Resident to discuss community concerns.

**Community Concerns:**

Mr. Smith expressed his intense interest in the redevelopment of Wheaton and made a request of WUDAC to exclusively focus on the Wheaton Urban District and also encourage MCCAB to focus on dealing with issues related to Wheaton’s Recreational Center, Regional Park, Youth Center, and Library etc. Per Mr. Smith’s opinion it is very hurtful were the community center is located because it is not very walkable to where he lives/resides. Mr. Smith added that he really wants to see similar projects like the ones stated above come to the downtown Wheaton area. Mr. Smith would like to see WUDAC advocated for great projects to come to the downtown Wheaton area.

Discussion opened up with an opinion of the understanding of the committee’s mandate, which is the Urban District. Committee members responded by discussing related issues of connectivity between the Urban District and some of the outlying/tentacles of greater Wheaton such as: the weighing in of the committee in such things like the Recreational Center Project and Historical Preservation issues; also noting the committee’s focus on promoting a Walkable Wheaton that’s Metro centered. Discussion cited more soon to come Urban District Projects and the need for Arts & Entertainment Projects.

Gigi Goin spoke on her efforts to have vendors and market food available for the Walking Wheaton Tour. Ms Goin also expressed a need to fundraise for the Wheaton WIC Program due to its lack of money and wanted to know what WUDAC could do to further her efforts in fundraising for this cause. Goin handed out information on the Montgomery County Strawberry Festival and Mid –Summer Wine Fest she is promoting.

**Community Comment:** Wheaton Citizens Coalition holding a community-wide meeting in June. This will be a semi-annual meeting that would bring to the community information re: ALL THINGS THAT IMPACT WHEATON there will be more to come soon on this meeting.

**Chair Report:** Henriot St. Gerard expressed how he would like to see the Chamber Awards Annual Event continued. Chair also gave a reminder regarding the Bike Workshop on the 28th and the Walkability Study Conducted by Northwood High School students on the 22nd the Northwood High School. The Chair hopes members will attend these events.

**Directors Report:** Ana Lopez van Balen announced that the Wheaton Redevelopment Project CIP Budget passed. The budget was approved at 144.million dollars and Ana was very grateful to see council approve budget at the end of April. Some of the things mentioned in packet: WMATA has agreed to an easement on the green space next door and is now working on M.O.U with them. The adjacent building will have 230 units of which 20% will be considered affordable at 50% area median income; parking spaces under project increased to 400 spaces. Ana discussed the need for more community meetings to address issues such as the greening of the square and the design phase of the building getting underway, and the different scenarios/impact addressed by the Deputy Director of DOT to be considered in a traffic study regarding the closing of Reedie Drive. Ana gave positive feedback surrounding the Wheaton redevelopment Project and is getting phone calls from potential businesses wanting to relocate, franchise, and open new businesses in Wheaton.

In addition, Ana outlined different efforts that the Urban District is working on: new welcome packets (new folder); new resource page to website; adding new Arts & Entertainment section focusing on incentives around Arts & Entertainment District as while as other related events and opportunities. Packets are also being assembled with the Department of Permitting Services unique to the retail space here in Wheaton in effort to Facilitate/expediting and educating old and new businesses considering making changes, growing or expanding their efforts. Time slots for the manning of the WUDAC table discussed for the Taste of Wheaton Event. Ana discussed the next WUDAC Subcommittee Meeting being scheduled on Memorial Day and asked the members to approve moving the next meeting to the following day which would be May 27th all members agreed to the date change. Director added information re: Office of Consumer Protection’s visit to the MCCAB to talk about the bill Congressman Moran introduced at the federal level regarding taking away the federal preemption of towing.

**Council Staff Report:** Chris reported good news for the Arts and Entertainment District regarding an Arts Grant being passed for Wheaton for $90.thousand dollars. Chris also mentioned that this $90k would help match funding from the National Endowment to the Arts for Creative Placemaking in Wheaton if awarded this fall. Chris gave some guidelines that encompass grants for the Arts & Humanities-related activities.

**Subcommittee Reports:** Economic Development Subcommittee handed out a report document from April’s meeting regarding exploring how to make Wheaton more bike friendly. Also a draft document regarding information to be distributed for the Wheaton October 2014 Festival.

The Design Subcommittee discussed draft language for the brochure for businesses in Wheaton. The Chair asked that members provide feedback by Friday.

**New Business:** Chair reported on the agenda for The Wheaton Walking Tour in great detail and opened the floor for questions. Chair also expressed the need to confirm lead and co-leads for each groups in the walking tour and would reach out to individuals of the group.

**Adjourn:** 7:52pm