**Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee**

WVRS, 2400 Arcola Ave, Wheaton MD 20902

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday September 12, 2017

**Members Present:** Leah Haygood, Chair; Tami Axelrod, William Moore, Dan Thompson, Ron Franks, Megan Remo

**Staff Present:** Luisa Montero-Diaz, Director, Mid-County Regional Center

**Guests:** Keith Compton, Project Manager, MCDOT; Richard Cisneros, LEDC; Pete McGinnity, MOCO Dept. of Finance; Filippo Leo, Filippo’s Italian Specialties; Maria, BM Accounting; Bertha Flores, aide to Councilmember Navarro; Andrew Rollo, resident

**Call To Order:** 6:41pm by Chair Haygood

WUDAC then paused for a moment of silence in honor of the late Marian Fryer, a longtime member of WUDAC. Several members shared remembrances. William Moore suggested WUDAC advocate to name New Town Square in honor of Marian.

Discussion then turned to what constitutes a quorum due to late arrival of members and vacancies on WUDAC.

**Community Concerns:** Dan Thompson, speaking as a parade organizer and not as a WUDAC member, updated WUDAC on the progress of the Wheaton Arts Parade. Westfield is opening the bays to the old Circuit City to assemble floats. We even have a float coming from Takoma Park! Dan went on to note the work of organizing partner Jim Epstein and then shared news on the participants and events as well as some of the financing details.

Maria from BM Accounting shared her concerns over the parking near her business at Veirs Mill and Reedie Drive and the difficulties it was imposing on her customers. Keith Compton, Project Manager of the Wheaton Revitalization stated there would be no further reduction in parking and that there was parking nearby. William Moore, WUDAC member, suggested Public Parking signs, like those found in other downtown urban areas, might be helpful. Keith indicated some have been posted.

**Revitalization Update:** Keith Compton updated WUDAC on the construction progress. They are about 7% complete. The geothermal wells are almost finished. They are beginning to install the supports for the excavation. They will request the county to close off the east sidewalk for safety. The west sidewalk will remain open.

The developer for the private apartment building slated for Lot 13 did not get financing. The parcel will now revert back to the county. The County Executive will have to decide how to proceed. Keith presented WUDAC with a flash drive on amenities that had been slated for that building. Keith stated that there would be a public process to weigh in for the use of that space.

Keith then went on to share information on use of the web portal for revitalization news. He noted a phone number to use for complaints or concerns on redevelopment, 240-777-8740.

He stated there has been a high level of parking enforcement of the reserved spaces on Lot 13 with 59 citations and several cars towed. Keith also followed up on concerns from the last WUDAC meeting and stated that there were 17 one hour meters on west side of Grandview but MCDOT was not interested in having any 20 minute meters since they would be difficult to enforce.

Discussion then turned to signage. Neil Greenberger, PIO, updated members and guests on specifics of where and what kind of signs will be placed, including some in English and Spanish slated for Georgia Ave and Veirs Mill Rd. They will also have 4x6 signs on every corner with a map of the businesses. They are considering signs in and on Ride-On busses and inside the Metro and logoed bags. They will try to have all in place before the start of the holiday season.

Dan Thompson asked for a lighted crosswalk at Capital One synchronized with Reedie that aligns with the stairs to the Triangle. More member discussion followed.

**Review July 2017 minutes:** Having now obtained a quorum, the July minutes were reviewed. A motion was made and passed to approve those minutes with a small typo change.

**Council Update:** Bertha Flores, aide to Councilmember Navarro, updated WUDAC on the Council’s work. There is funding for a consultant to study the feasibility for a cultural center. The process will begin in October for public input on what they would like to see. She went over that process and member discussion followed.

**Chamber of Commerce:** William Moore reported on a couple of mixers presented by the Chamber, one a talk on emotional intelligence cosponsored with Block Advisors and also a speed networking event cosponsored by area Chambers held August 17th.  They also have another mixer on September 27 at Panera Bread. The topic will be Wage and Hour Business Regulations.

Lastly he reported on the Westfield Safety Task Force from September 11th. Some topics covered included ideas on rebranding Wheaton’s image, crime statistics, and results on a survey about sources of information people receive on happenings in Wheaton. Member discussion followed.

**Director’s Report:** Luisa Montero-Diaz updated WUDAC on the Regional Center’s move from the building on Reedie Drive to the old Rescue Squad building on Grandview. The new space is tight so to visit please let her know in advance. People still may show up at the old location so it is important to get the word out as to where all the services have relocated. She noted two upcoming events, a WheArtHere car wrapping event sponsored by Fitzgerald at Westfield on September 29 and the Wheaton Jazz Festival at Veteran’s Park on Septembr 30.

The County is recruiting for a Financial project Manager to handle impact assistance under Bill 6-12 as they have started accepting applications for that assistance from impacted businesses. Pete McGinnity further explained the qualifications they were looking for.

**New Business:** Chair Haygood led discussion on the upcoming retreat and handed out a Swot analysis. The doodle poll indicated that Nov.4, 11am-2pm would be acceptable to most members. Dan Thompson asked about the status of a proposed letter on A&E funding. Leah will try to have it out for review a week before the next meeting.

Luisa stated the need to write an annual report on A&E efforts. Discussion followed on who should be responsible for that report.

**Adjourn:** 8:30pm