

East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB)
Eastern Montgomery Regional Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present: Fisseha Adugna, Elisse Barnes, William Bentley, Samantha Blizzard, Christopher Bolton, Sharon Brown, Kenneth Flemmer, Donald Hague, Margrue Hall, Wendy Johnson, Kristina McConnell, Kimberly Price-Evans, Pamela Ruiz, Jerold Samet, John Smith, Hildergarde Sylla

Guests Present: Catherine Mahmud, Susan Jones, Dan Wilhelm, Sebastian Smoot, Rogers Stanley, Kristina Ellis, Margie Goergen-Rood, Ed Weiler, Cynthia Bolton, Sara Flynn, Genet Telehun, Robert Duncan, Brandon Bedford, Margaret Poore, Yvette Piasek, Mensah Adjogah, Agum Rice, David Lorenvo, Mark Phoraoh

Staff Present: Jewru Bandeh, Linda Cooper

Welcome: The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Community Introductions: Guests and members of the community introduced themselves and a few made comments on community issues. Fatmata Barrie, Councilmember Will Jawando's office and Brian Anleu, Councilmember Tom Hucker's office were introduced by Jewru Bandeh.

Approval of the January 2, 2018 Meeting Summary: A motion was made to approve the January 2, 2018 summary. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Presentation by Special Guests: A presentation was made by **Rogers Stanley**, Chief of Neighborhood Revitalization; **Catherine Mahmud** and **Kristina Ellis**, Senior Planning Specialists, Montgomery County Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs; and **Brandon Bedford**, Research, Planning & Policy Analyst, Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. Topic of discussion was: Montgomery County Economic Opportunity Zones and Façade Improvement Programs.

Catherine Mahmud – Burtonsville and Colesville Revitalization Façade Improvement Programs

- Assisted property owners in Burtonsville, including Chapala and Domino's Pizza restaurants to improve appearance
- Commercial Revitalization Program – Demolition and replacement of five dated and worn pylon business signs, including Seibel's Restaurant
 - Possible future projects in Burtonsville – Mattress Discounters/Bedding Barn and Animal Hospital
- Burtonsville Gateway Signage is being explored

- Colesville project was completed. There is a new project at Meadowood Center on New Hampshire Avenue.

Catherine Mahmud answered questions/comments from the board and community regarding:

- Incentives offered besides cash
- 15-year easement
- Consideration for partnering with service providers to improve cell service
- Property owner's capacity to qualify
- The Burtonsville fuel building
- Improving safety along Route 198?
- Revitalization of the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center?

Presenter Kristina Ellis – Montgomery County Opportunity Zones (OZ)

- Opportunity Zones Programs is new program at the Federal level
- Idea is to target low-income census tracts to invest in to spur economic activity
- 15 key geographical tract areas submitted for OZ consideration
- Most of what was suggested was accepted by the governor—now have 14 OZs
- Only 11% of country is considered OZ
- 3 different stages of tax credit benefits/investor tax incentives
- OZ locations include: Silver Spring Central Business District, Wheaton Central Business District, White Oak, Germantown, Montgomery Village, Parts of Gaithersburg, Parts of Long Branch and Takoma Park, Part of Rockville Pike
- Provided additional resources

Presenter Brandon Bedford – Opportunity Zones in General

- OZ's are more focused on private sector investments
- Completed two workshops recently
- Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond has been instrumental in helping to make connections

Brandon Bedford answered questions from the board and community relative to:

- OZ designation by real estate or based on geography
- OZs as census driven
- Establishment of OZ regulations
- Enclave eligibility for OZ designation

Additional comments followed:

- Presenter thanked community member for tuning in to live stream of presentation. Recording will be released to the public
- Community member statement on the County's Subdivision Staging Policy as related to the White Oak Planning Areas

Updates/Reports:

Chair of the Planning and Economic Development and Quality of Life/Services Committees, Bill Bentley – Last committee meeting was cancelled for the FY20 Operating Budget meeting, which went well.

East County Regional Services Office Director's report covered:

- The Annual Board Survey needing all members to complete
- Need for broad attendance at the next ECCAB committee (FY20 Budget) meeting
- Construction on government lots (Park and Ride entrance and Regional Center lot)
- Working with Home2 Suites to do a recruitment fair.
- White Oak Medical Center will open August 25, 2019
- Working with the Department of Health and Human Services on a national search for a job development services provider under the East County Opportunity Zone initiative
- 100% inspection completed for Enclave apartments completed (includes 2,000+ notices of violations); management has hired additional maintenance workers, Renters Alliance is helping form a Renters Association.

Police Department**Commander Montgomery, 3D**

Double homicide on Steward Lane reported and suspects are apprehended and being charged.

4th District Report highlights included:

- The shooting at Wheaton Plaza on Nov 18, 2018 is now solved
- There are a slew of crimes targeting Latino taxi drivers
- There was vandalism at the mosque on Briggs Chaney Rd—the police worked with them to increase security with cameras
- There was a murder in the Wheaton area whereby a son killed his mother
- There are many parking complaints, especially on the New Hampshire Avenue corridor. Call the non-emergency phone number first (301-279-8000) and report on Next Door later highly encouraged

The police department addressed comments and questions from the community:

- People are driving with expired tags.
- Abandoned vehicles on streets.
- Ethnically related vandalism on the mosque

County Council Offices:**Councilmember Tom Hucker's Office**

- Councilman Hucker passed the bill on lead levels in drinking water— 86 of 200 school had levels higher than allowance.
- Meeting will be on the February 26, 2019.
- State Legislature mandated the tests for the school. MCPS spent about \$500,000 just to complete testing.
- Still trying to get hands around the schools and will seek to address other public buildings. Washington, DC is already at 5-parts-per-billion and going down to 1-part-per-billion.
- Working on Enclave issues.

Councilmember Will Jawando's Office

- Councilmember Jawando introduced his very first bill on Jan 15, 2019: In the case of police shooting that results in a death, there is an outside agency that brings findings back to the county. Open to public to sign up to testify.

New Business: Discussion/ECCAB Recommendations - FY20 Operating Budget Priorities

Chair Christopher Bolton – Opened the floor to board members to discuss priorities for the Executive letter. Topics and Issues discussed included:

- Economic Development, maintain grants that are alive for events like White Oak signage, grants for Bus Rapid Transit System implementation
- White Oak Transit Center – modernization of it, maintaining Galway/Greencastle summer programs
- Creating a sense of community/place in White Oak with marketing and signage
- Availability of summer programs that are affordable and available (9am-6pm and over the full 12 weeks of summer)
- General transportation programs including bike paths
- Community based Workforce Development programs with wrap around supports in East County, including medical pathways training for the White Oak Medical Center – skills training for adults as well as students
- Maintain senior programming at recreation centers
- Stronger mental health services
- Review/follow up on what has been accepted from our past letters to the County Executive
- Stick with/keep 5-6 key themes (priority areas).

Old Business/Additional Community Comments/Input – None

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.