**Nighttime Economy Task Force**

The Montgomery County Nighttime Economy Task Force met in regular session on Monday, September 16th, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. in Germantown at the Black Rock Visual Arts Center with the following present:

**Board** **Staff**

Heather Dlhopolsky, Chair Ana Lopez van Balen, Lead

Henriot St. Gerard, Vice Chair Dan Hoffman

Kristina Bigby, Transportation Kathie Durbin

Andy Chod, Public Space and Amenities Gabe Albornoz

Mike Diegel, Arts and Entertainment

Miti Figueredo, Transportation
Evan Glass, Quality of Life
Will Jawando, Quality of Life
Alice Nappy, Venue Operations and Safety
Megan Pagado, Arts and Entertainment

Alan Pohoryles, Venue Operations and Safety
Dan Reed, Transportation
Jonathan Sachs, Business Engagement

Holly Sears, Business Engagement

Doug Wrenn, Quality of Life

**Absent**

Erica Leatham, Public Space and Amenities

Vanessa Rodriguez, Business Engagement
Will Smith, Public Safety

Gam Wijetunge, Public Safety

**Proceedings:**

**5:05 pm:** Chair, Heather Dlhopolsky, called meeting to order, approved August meeting minutes, and discussed next steps including:

-Presentation of draft recommendations to all 5 Citizens Advisory Board

-Final recommendations discussed at the Oct. 21st meeting

-Final meeting will take place at the EOB in Rockville

-Discussed celebration afterwards

**5:10 pm:** Presentation – Montgomery County Department of Economic Development Strategic Plan by Tina Benjamin, Chief, Special Projects Division.

Key points included:

-Federal agencies comprise 25%of our jobs in Montgomery County

-Businesses are not relocating, not taking risks, especially during the recession. They are slowly seeing this change but consequently, they are focusing efforts on improving retention.

Questions:

-What are the incentives for Arts and Entertainment districts? Answer: no one is really taking advantage of it. Developed for artists. A and E district is a state program

-Does the county have live/work programs? Answer: we have in the past

-Texas trying to persuade people to move there. The county could be doing more...targeted relocation for small business as well as large businesses

-What are some of the disincentives for businesses in the county or state? Answer: Maryland tax structure. The MD chamber is looking to reevaluate state tax structure

-Has the county looked at targeted redevelopment areas...in DC they incentivize small business to open on certain streets? Answer: There are programs in Montgomery county as well like the Enterprise Zone credits to help businesses locate in depressed areas.

-What is the county doing around nighttime economy? Answer: currently economic development does not focus on the nighttime economy.

**5:45 pm:** Presentation – Video – Live Music in Silver Spring by Mike Diegel

Silver Spring Arts and entertainment

Comments:

-Overall, a great way of letting people know about offerings in Silver Spring. The intended purpose was to highlight live music venues every day of the week. Several other videos will be produces focusing on other aspects of the arts scene in Silver Spring including large events. Recreation Dept. has video of jazz festival to use for future videos.

-Dan Reed- commented on being careful not to label everything in the video..'hip' 'cool'.

**6:10 pm:** Presentation of Committee Draft Recommendations

\*\*\*\* Draft recommendations from committees- the group needs to let associations know when the recommendations will be presented. How do you present to the municipalities - mayor and council?

**Arts and Entertainment**

Conducted survey of A & E districts around the country

Draft recommendations include:

1. Charge the Department of Economic Development with educating property owners and artists on the resources available through the Arts & Entertainment District Tax Credits-they are not clear as to what the tax credits provide

2. Explore alternate, more attractive incentives for developers to include suitable, affordable performance spaces for small and emerging arts groups

3. Busker program...organizing street performances and developing guidelines in your community. WMATA program has collapsed...we are trying to learn from mistakes as well as best practices.

4. Build capacity to effectively manage marketing and execution of large-scale, public, free, hospitality zone-wide events and initiatives

5. Noise ordinance- how do you allow things to happen past 8pm, there sure be some flexibility so that street fests can go on later into the evening

6. Develop and implement a program to publicly recognize and promote venues that pay musicians to perform, and create a sunsetting tax credit to encourage small venues to support musicians by paying them a reasonable wage.

**Business Engagement**

 1. Active steps are required to improve business’ perceptions of Montgomery County focusing on providing positive customer service to businesses who need help in opening up new business.

2. Develop a targeted strategic plan for attracting new companies to the County, fostering entrepreneurship and growing our existing businesses based upon the target markets.

3. Simplify and streamline the process by which business people must go through in order to open an arts and entertainment venue or hold an arts and entertainment event

4. Create, Develop and Implement a Marketing Program for the County

- Marketing! We should suggest the marketing program be countywide across agencies and chambers not just in economic development. Create marketing brochures. Discussion emerged that this task should take place outside of county government. This then led to conversation around supporting existing programs to endorse like MBDC.

-Brief conversation emerged around the new legislation to raise minimum wage. Alan Pohoryles mentioned how this would be devastating to small business.

-Another brief conversation emerged around the success of small spaces. There was mention that zoning code rewrite has some provision for this and that they need to ensure it remains.

-Lastly, there was discussion on incubators for small business...hospitality...community kitchen concept..entrepreneurship. U Street is easy in and easy out...we need to do things ON PURPOSE.

**Public Use and Amenities**

1. Urban Park Guidelines to achieve (1) activation of public space through design elements, (2) enhance the greater community and (3) multi-use to appeal to multiple demographics at various times

2. Amend zoning standards to provide flexibility in meeting open space requirements-this is specific to requirements around pocket parks. They believed that this should be eliminated to instead support common open spaces in urban areas.

**3.** Looking to extend nighttime hours for food trucks. This should compliment the work the county is doing to provide spaces for food trucks around the county. There was concern about allowing venues to close kitchen at 10pm to support food trucks-something many venues would support.

4. Allow significantly more density in the County’s urban areas

5. Maintenance of public spaces should be professionally managed by the private sector or by public-private partnerships (similar to BUP)

**Quality of Life**

1. Protecting the urban community with the BUP model.

2. Provide a mix of housing options.

3. Discussing adding a recommendation around “Living Close To Work Program”. This program would encourage residents to live near transit as an incentive to attract folks to live in county. A discussion ensued about also including incentives for renters 30% of county population and might ensure we reach the target demographic of young millennials.

**Transportation & Public Safety/Venue Safety**

Recommendations will be presented next week at 5pm during subcommittee meetings.

**6:55 pm:** Community Input

Are we creating problems by trying to be cool. Will it require funding, legislation? Are we looking at implementation change?

**7:00 pm:**

**Meeting Adjourned**

Minutes submitted by Kathy Durbin, DLC