



Friends of White Oak Minutes

September 15, 2020

8:00 to 9:30pm

Online via Zoom

- Members present were June, Kim, Elisse, Ken, Shane, Dave, Rachael, Shana, Rob, Brian, Barry, and Pete (staff). Fatmata, Chris, and Bruce were necessarily absent. In addition, there were fifteen members of the public attending including representatives from the Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, Senator Cardin's Office, and Congressman Sarbanes' Office.
- Elisse and Dave welcomed everyone.
- Noted the minutes from the May 13, 2020 were approved via Email.
- General Updates - Prior to the meeting, to save time with the later start time, Pete sent an email to the Board with the following updates:
 - Farmers' Market for White Oak – efforts on market continue with location, sponsorship, and date; meeting with Fresh Farm, who specialize in organizing and managing farmers' markets, will be held next week.
 - Funding Update – an account has been setup in County Budget for FOWO; funds are to be used for marketing and placemaking.
 - At-Large Council Member Chats – Board has met privately with three of the four Council Members; fourth meeting will be with Council Member Hans Riemer.
 - Regular FOWO Meeting Schedule (Board did not get to this topic)
 - Reopening MoCo Efforts – Pete is assisting a County team to facilitate the small business grants approved by the County Council; he asked the Board to share the latest grant program (Reopen Montgomery) with their networks.
- Police Update (Bruce) – Lieutenant Cole submitted a report via email to the Board.
- From the Board
 - Viva White Oak Update - Meeting with Jonathan Genn of Global Life Sci (Dave & Elisse) – Elisse, Dave and Pete met with Jonathan Genn last week for a general update on the Viva project. While there is no news on any development prospects, Jonathan discussed how important he believes the proposed Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP) draft, currently under consideration by the County Council, is to the future of Viva. Pete noted the history of the SSP with developers usually in favor and community members opposed. The core issue is impact taxes for the funding of schools and transportation projects – specifically for areas like White Oak that are part of an Opportunity Zone. County Executive Elrich and County Departments oppose the draft because it cuts revenue for future infrastructure projects;

some to the County Council Members support the SSP because they feel it will jumpstart economic development. Pete noted he is remaining neutral in the discussion. Rob noted his support and agrees with Council Members; Barry has concerns over the immediate cost to the County and would seek a guarantee the County would be able to make up the difference in losses; Shana sees both sides of the argument, but is willing to take a chance on the new SSP; Shane supports the SSP, but mentioned the years of neglect in East County and how the infrastructure improvements are necessary; Brian commented on how complicated the SSP can be and how the change may impact roads and schools, but impact will be small portion for White Oak.

Comments on the SSP from the public were taken. Peter Myo Khin supports the SSP and noted “we have been hearing this for years” with reference to change for White Oak. Pete reminded the Board of the LATIP, which is exclusive to White Oak.

Rachael agreed a letter of support should be sent to the Council. Both Barry (by email) and Shana made motions to send a letter of support, however Barry’s motion had the caveat as noted earlier in the meeting for funding source. Since Barry’s motion was first, the Board voted with only June, Kim and Barry indicating “aye” for the motion. Shana’s proposal was to allow impact tax to be waived for Viva if the County engages with developers to pursue funding for infrastructure. Barry questioned why only Viva and not the entire White Oak Opportunity Zone, as outlined in the Planning Board's recommendation? So the motion was amended. Board voted with support from Kim, Rob, Rachael, Ken, Elisse, Shana, Shane, Brian, and Dave; Barry opposed the motion.

Rob encouraged everyone to read the SSP carefully.

- Hillandale Gateway Update (Shane) – The Duffie Company continues to await word from DOT on the LATIP study for Hillandale. Project is moving forward and will be one of the highest levels of green/environmental efficient buildings in the County. Community will have dozens of electric vehicle charging stations as one example. Shane and his team have experienced issues with change of leadership at DPS as well as Covid19.
- From the Public – No comments
- Time Permitting – From the Board
 - Board Member Assignments (Dave, Elisse & Pete) – list of proposed assignments for Board Members was developed by Elisse and Dave (Pete shared list later) and members were asked to review the list and accept or make any suggested changes. The purpose is to share responsibilities
 - Incorporating the FOWO and New County Group (Dave, Elisse & Fatmata) – Dave is working closely with Fatmata on the articles of incorporation and with Pete on forming an official County group.
- Adjourn (9:40)