

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC)
Tuesday | September 9, 2025 | 1:00 pm-2:30 pm
Hybrid Meeting

In Attendance:

Tanya Baskin, Kit Wood, Pedro Matamoros, Philip Daley, Andrea Hernandez, Rob Fox

County Officials: Mid-County Regional Services Director Luisa Cardona: WUD Operations Manager Crystal Ruiz; Community Projects Manager for Mid-County Regional Services, Talia Beaulieu-Hains.

Guests: Kathia Chévez (Office of Natali Fani-González), Officer Marcus Jones (MCPS), Steven Neff (MCPS)

Public: Maren Hill, Hillary ?, Lillian Blom, Jenny Santos, Wendy Howard, Jim Epstein, Kenneth Nelson, Alan Levin, Shannon Rush-Lake, Andy Bobrow, Jeremy Souder, Peter Kelyman, Jose Thommana, Scot Reinmann, Rina Aranda, Kerry Reyes.

I. 1:15 pm Call to Order - Tanya Baskin, Chair

II. 1:16 pm Review and Approve July Minutes, Approval of Agenda - Approved

III. 1:18 pm Community Concerns -

Keiry (Front Line Driving School) - concern is construction happening “in front,” which obscured whole front of business, with no notice. Would like a heads up, as this affects clientele. *WUD is working to improve communication with SHA and DPS regarding constructions schedules.*

Jim E - Glenmont Forest Neighbors Civic Association block party Sunday 9/21 10-2 - many non-profits there, free food, activities for all.

Also commenting:

Rina Aranda from Terra Mar restaurant

Jenny Santos from DHHS.

IV. 1:22 Elected representatives in attendance -

Kathia Chévez for Council Member Fani-González -

University Blvd Corridor Plan (UBCP) is an active issue right now.

Many recent conversations about Viers Mill BRT and safety improvements; no, no homes will be taken.

Oct. 16 at 5 PM - event in Fryer Plaza featuring MS and HS students, also sponsored by Creative Wheaton.

V. Presentations - 1:26 PM -

Steven Neff, Student Support Services, MCPS

Attendance is down last year from the year before, perhaps due to half days at end of year. Schools are disproportionately suspending Black and Latino students, but fewer students overall than other districts.

Positive messaging and early outreach are tools. They analyze root causes. Families are involved. Punitive measures are not as effective as cooperation/support of families.

See slides on this website, also MCPS Community Resource Guide.

Q: Have the recent programs helped chronic absenteeism? Yes. A small number of students are impacted. Maybe 30 students per school are affected. Capacity is limited, though the philosophy is solid. It's partly budgetary.

Q: From Chamber of Commerce: What incentives are given to students, and how does this impact Black and Brown students? For academic and co-curricular programs, school connectedness is the most important factor. Looking at showing students they are *seen*, helping them feel safe and engaged. Creative programing and scheduling.

Chief Marcus Jones, MCPS

Chief Jones has oversight of safety, in-school security (unarmed) and compliance. Officers do not go into the community to address unexcused absences. Collaborate with Police, counselors, principals.

Q: Were all suspensions on slide presentation related to school absences (no, not at all; most suspensions are for other violations), and what are the percentages of students by ethnic group?

Something the community wants to understand is how do we help. There used to be school liaisons to call, for info/visibility, not punitive. Partnership is important in any way it

can happen, and Schools appreciate it. Chief Jones will reach out to MCPS to ask how else cooperation can happen.

July town hall parking update: Jose Tommana.

Preliminary data shows we will have to raise parking fee rates in 2028 if there are no parking changes. Do we want to decrease or eliminate parking fees?

Some possibilities: Free after 6 and weekends, free weekends, and free garages.

Currently there is a program for businesses to subsidize patron parking. That is separate.

Parking District is requested to get financial implications for each option to WUDAC. Will business taxes be raised? We need to know what the trade-offs are. There are also trade-offs between making parking affordable and creating turnover in front of businesses.

Q: having all long-term parking in front of businesses blocks spaces that can be 15-minute for loading, pick-up, etc. We also need better signage to point people to garages, including Metro garage. Also, once an officer starts writing a ticket, you can't interrupt that; there should be a grace period. Parking enforcement officers have a job to do. They are trained to not stop writing a ticket once started.

Can there officially be a 2 or 5 minute grace period, and the ticket writer honor that before writing a ticket?

We need instructions in Spanish (which does happen in Wheaton). Maybe some instructions in Spanish given to businesses would help. We also need signage in Spanish and English that makes clear whether payment happens before parking or at the end.

VI. Reports and Updates 2:20

1. Wheaton & Kensington Chamber of Commerce - Ken Nelson

Going to support some major issues with advocacy.

Passed: that the Wheaton–Kensington Chamber of Commerce adopt in principle the identified small business concerns—redevelopment pressures, rising rents, mall instability, public safety, infrastructure and parking challenges, diverse community needs, fostering sustainability initiatives, and access to resources—as our working priorities for advocacy. These priorities will guide our communications with Montgomery County government, WUDAC, and other partners.

2. Committee Reports -

- *Economic Development: Kit, Pedro*

Working toward Small Business Saturday event. Encourage shopping locally. Perhaps vendors and coupons will be involved.

Streeter event every third Saturday, coordinated with OMG.

- *Public Safety (Youth Crisis and Transportation/Pedestrian Safety): Nina, Rob, Philip, Kit*

Virtual meeting sponsored by MCCAB will be held on 9/18/25, focused on pedestrian safety issues. State representatives will attend.

- *Outreach And Communications (Social Media Presence): Tanya, Andrea, Will*

We proposed a small business workshop designed to help increase visibility of the businesses in Wheaton - we offered to highlight the businesses etc and also work with them individually- but with the organizational changes currently happening - I think we are on hold.

3. Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) - Rob Fox

CM Glass's and Sayles's offices gave updates.

Wheaton Ag reserve info from County Ag office, renewable energy conversation (solar vs agricultural use of land).

MDOT invited to September meeting.

4. Mid-County Regional Services Center/ Urban District Report -

Luisa is stepping into new role in office of County Executive. A new person in her WUD role will be announced soon.

Hispanic Heritage month: suspending festival for this year b/c of sensitivity during this time. But funding is being offered to celebrate Hispanic Heritage within organization's individual spaces. Wheaton totes with "know your rights" and A&E info printed on them will be given out. "Arte y alma."

Q: Can attendees here help connect county resources to community groups? Outreach is widely done.

Old Business - none.

New business - future meeting MCCAB (Sept. 18), virtual only. Please attend.
See link on MCCAB website.

A mural winner was selected for Wheaton Plaza South. The theme is
“Seeds of Hope.”

VII. Adjourn 2:41 pm

NEXT WUDAC MEETING: Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 1 - 2:30 PM