



MID-COUNTY REGIONAL SERVICES

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Luisa Cardona
MCRS Director

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC)

Tuesday | March 14, 2023 | 7:00 pm-8:30 pm

Hybrid Meeting

Join in Person

2nd Floor Mid-County Board Room

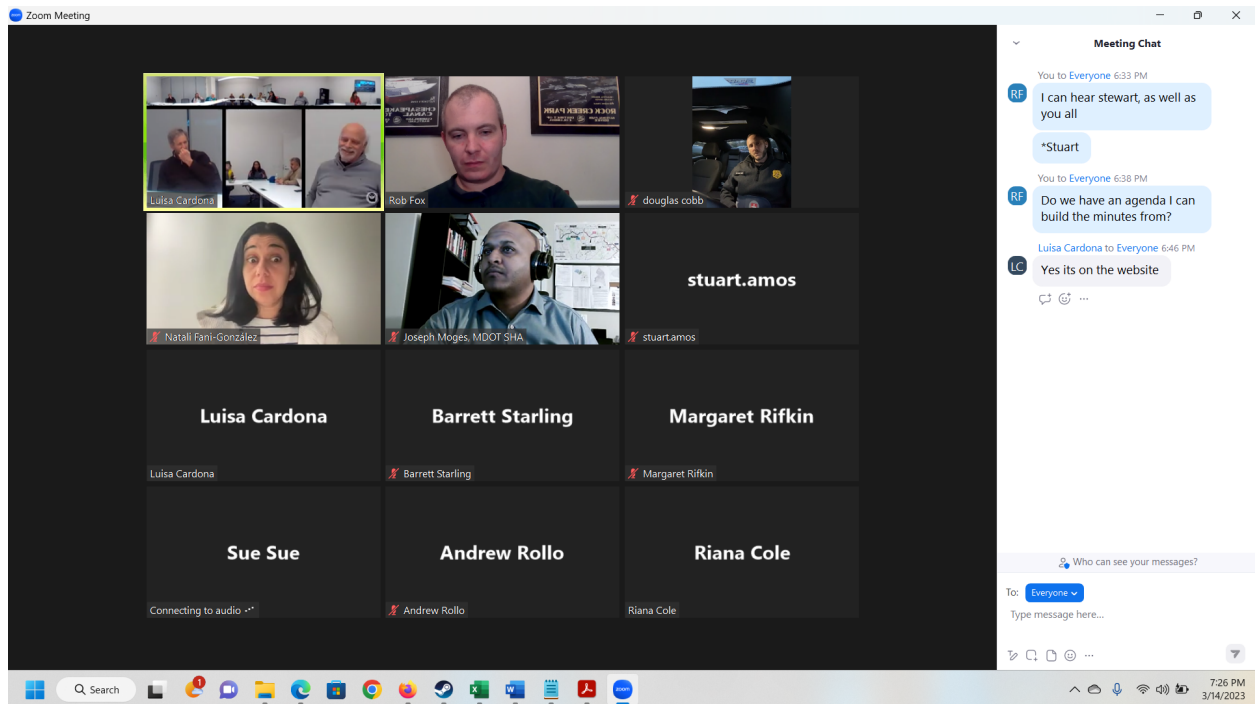
2425 Reedie Drive, Wheaton MD 20902

Join via Zoom

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83246233594

Meeting ID: 832 4623 3594

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)



I. Call to order 7:00 pm

II. Review/Approve minutes (Pending New Members) 7:07 pm

All prior new minutes from July to February 2023 approved

III. Community Concerns 7:05 pm

Limited to 2 minutes per speaker

Dan Thompson – Saturday the opening reception for the WAP gallery, 5-7, meet the artists, see new shows, see art, refreshments available

3/24 for the final designs for the elvis mural

Bread and puppet fundraiser

Continue to speak with businesses and the community about signing a petition for the relocation of the arts center

IV. Reports/Updates 7:15 pm

a. Elected representatives in attendance

Natali Fani-Gonzalez – On arts and entertainment center, we agreed last week to having an in person meeting, it'll most likely be in April, and will be outside the CIP forum. If we just talk about it in the forum it'll be lost in the items. Transportation – we are going to have a meeting with the county DOT on the long list of items from people, uploaded all the information they gathered on a map, that map is practically done, want to run it by Chris before putting it on her website, after spring break probably. Sign up for her newsletter. As chair of economic development for the county, meeting with the new director of DPS, touring places in the county with issues with DPS, key businesses in Wheaton with challenges with DPS. Tomorrow is when the operating budget from the county executive is coming out. Stay tuned for more on that.

b. Wheaton & Kensington Chamber of Commerce, Ali Oliver-Krueger

On March 8, the Chamber had a successful 5th Annual Biz Expo, with 32 business tables and 4 large tables for guests. The event, which included free food tastings and a jazz combo, was very well attended. The Chamber is planning a happy hour networking event in the last week of April; more information will be forthcoming.

c. MCCAB, Rob Fox

MCCAB update on the public safety discussion.

d. Mid-County RSC, Luisa Cardona

Hope everyone has on their calendars the St. Patrick's day festivities, both Friday and Saturday, and then the gallery opening on Saturday. Hoping for a spring fling this year as well. TGIF summer concert series and shop Wheaton loyalty program that they're going to try to revitalize again. Tomorrow is the day for the county executive to release the county budget proposal. We are seeing COVID numbers in the county going down, and we're starting to examine what the impacts of loss of COVID and SNAP funding would be. If you see or know anything flag it.

Crystal Ruiz – Wheaton is the largest intersection of bus transfers so they're working to increase pedestrian safety.

There have been multiple accidents that have damaged the Wheaton sign. We don't have enough pieces to restore all of it, so we're working through the process to get the sign fixed/replaced.

Lt. Doug Cobb – 7:31 pm

Crimes against person down 2.8 percent

Crimes of property are up, 200 more events occurring

Burglaries – 22->28, thefts 450-> 620 – MV thefts, 24 -> 45, robberies from 24 ->31 events

Barrett Starling – Are the changes in Wheaton comparable to other parts of the county?

Cobb - Crimes against persons in the county are actually up, so Wheaton being down is good in light of that. Assaults are up, homicides are down, larcenies and thefts are up, robberies are up 15.1%.

Karen Cordry – how do we compare to the pre-COVID days?

Cobb – The 2022 numbers are closer to the 2019 numbers, when things completely opened up again.

On Saturday we had a dangerous situation, a suspect involved in a shooting down in DC, the individual boarded a metro train, shot at a passenger, left the station, carjacked a vehicle, ended up a distance away, hopped on the train, came up to Wheaton, was in the mall for a short time, wandering around the parking lot. Attempted to carjack 5 different vehicles, had a 40 caliber handgun, unsuccessful in all of them, he did shoot at one person and not strike and one person who was hit on face and neck. She's in serious but stable condition at the hospital. After that he ended up on the 2900 block of Faulkner place, tried to use the butt of his handgun to break into a residence, broke the glass, came around the front, scared the resident. Then our officers from the time they were dispatched was approximately 6 minutes. It was very chaotic. The woman that got shot in the face, there was some difficulty talking with her because of her injuries but also because she was an ASL user. Our patrol officers handled it with outstanding professionalism, they circled him and got back around, got him and the weapon into custody. Charged him with carjacking, attempted 2nd degree murder, possession of a firearm in commission of a felony. We've been working with Westfield to increase police presence, they're greatly improving their camera system, pulled one of the camera trailers over to Westfield. They've increased their budget a bit for how much time they can have officers on property.

Rob Fox – Do you have a sense of when the call came in to deploy you all relative to the timeline of events?

Cobb – I don't have that information available.

Wheaton plaza shooting – On two separate incidents at 2-4 in the morning we overall had 3 individuals that were shot, police responded out, we found a security guard from one of the local businesses with a gunshot wound to the leg, he at this point found out that he went over to investigate a disturbance across the street from a business, ended up shooting himself accidentally in the leg. We also had 1 unknown suspect shoot 2 individuals with non-life threatening issues and the hospital told them of it. They are non-cooperative with the investigation, camera evidence was inconclusive, so we don't have any leads.

Margaret Rifkin - What about the attempted carjacking Thursday eve at Costco? And suspicious activity Friday eve? Is there enough staffing for the police?

Cobb – We are as a district down 35 officers, we've lost 8 for the year in 2023 so far. For staffing, that's never going to affect our minimum staffing numbers per shift that we go out with. For the Thursday item, a woman was getting into a vehicle, one of the four suspects (women) hit the women with an expandable baton, police were already nearby and on scene within a minute. Ended up developing probable cause and charged one of them with a carjacking, they were a juvenile but charged as an adult. The two adults were arrested, not charged with the carjacking but still under investigation.

V. Presentations 8:01 pm

MDOT State Hwy Administration | Joseph Moges, Assistant District Engineer

Happy to follow-up on updating the county crosswalks to continental. I don't want anyone to be uncomfortable walking to the library.

Jim – Part of the problem is it takes forever to study, design, and implement. There's so much concern about different areas.

Joseph – No turn on red at Arcola is something we have in our plans. Pave marking's a separate animal. I'll check on the LPI progress.

Jim - GA and price signal – is that out of SHA hands and it's on MCDOT to implement?

Joseph – I spoke with several delegates today on issues, and spoke to delegate Solomon on this. MCDOT unfortunately came across a nightmare scenario for utilities, stormwater drains, vault, property fronting sidewalks. I don't know the answer.

Jim – Trying to turn left from university to GA issue, what is SHA's responsibility at the intersection of GA and Blueridge to change that intersection and signal?

Joseph – The way it's worded is difficult, no one entity has sole responsibility. Both MCDOT and SHA would need to be involved. We can't redesign the intersection without having a meaningful change to make. SHA can't dictate what MCDOT's priorities are to them.

Joseph – We're interested in doing lane redesigns or bike lanes on the University west lanes if community support for that is made.

Andrew Rollo – I live a block away from University west as we're describing it, I'd be very pro-bike lane on that corridor. I also have concerns about some of the dangerous intersections in the area.

Joseph – We're going to be supplementing crossings with improvements to increase safety.

Rob Fox – What's the timeframe for the lane striping-narrowing for GA avenue?

Joseph – I don't have a set date, but sometime this construction season we'll be doing it, this summer.

Jim – we were told could only have one curb cut for the WMATA property redevelopment project, could it be two?

Joseph – it could be two, people can interpret it differently but it should be feasible to do two.

VI. Old Business/Board Recruitment Updates 8:10 pm

VII. New Business 8:25 pm

VIII. Adjourn 8:32 pm

NEXT WUDAC MEETING: April 11, 2023

Text conversation

19:35:49 From Andrew Rollo to Everyone:

Is crime in this area seeing higher rates of growth than the rest of the county?

19:41:41 From Andrew Rollo to Everyone:

MoCo PD did a great job at apprehending the suspect. I live one block away from where the suspect was apprehended.

19:42:19 From Andrew Rollo to Everyone:

The cops were also very nice to describe what happened when myself and other neighbors asked what happened

19:49:32 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

Thank you to police

What about the attempted carjacking Thursday eve at Costco? And suspicious activity Friday eve?

20:00:49 From Natali Fani-González to Everyone:

I'm going to log off, but Sylvia from my team will stay on. See you all around.

20:06:39 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

Thank you Joe for coming!

20:28:52 From Andrew Rollo to Everyone:

Just to confirm, the left from Univ Blvd to St. Paul will be prohibited in the near future?