

## Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton MD 20902

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**APPROVED**

**Members Present:** Henriot St. Gerard(Chair), Devala Janardan(Vice Chair), Tom Stanton, Dan Thompson, Marian Fryer, Jeannette Feldner, Richard Kessler, Nadia Sesay, William Moore

**Members Absent:** Jim Onder, Luis Bonilla

**Staff Present:** Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Regional Center

**Guests:** Jay Wilson, CERT. Fred Lees, Chief, Traffic Engineering Studies. Karen Klein, SCRAPDC

**Call to Order:** 6:05pm by Chair Henriot St. Gerard followed by member and guest introductions. A motion to approve the May Meeting Minutes with minor changes was approved

**Chair Report:** Henriot thanked everyone for making the Walking Tour a success, and William for the Blog entries and photos. He reported on feedback that we should have more experts and better voice amplification. He suggested we start implementing ideas presented during tour so that future tours will show tangible progress. Tom recommended that we file a report to County Council and also thank the council members who attended. Henriot will task Economic subcommittee to do this.

Henriot went on to report that it appeared that attendance at Taste of Wheaton increased over previous years and that many people signed up to receive our newsletter but we had only one comment card returned. He briefly mentioned an upcoming Redevelopment hearing at the Library on June 12<sup>th</sup>, a June 24<sup>th</sup> Library/rec center development meeting to be held at the library and upcoming COSTCO hearings in June and July.

Henriot noted that he had a conversation about the budget with Joe Callaway at the Taste of Wheaton. The Chair felt that we rushed budget deliberations this year and that budget discussions should take place at first meeting in September or at our retreat.

**Directors Report:** Ana informed the committee that Marian Fryer will be leaving WUDAC and we need a small business representative.

Ana reported that a grant for Façade Improvement was doubled by the County Executive. She also will have more information soon on the solar compactors.

The two new apartment communities, Solaire and The Exchange, have expressed a desire to get involved with the community.

Einstein fireworks will be on July 4<sup>th</sup> with rain date July 5<sup>th</sup>. There will be a shuttle bus at Westfield.

**CERT Presentation:** Jay Wilson from the Montgomery County Community Emergency Response Team introduced WUDAC to the program and gave a brief history of CERT and then led a discussion on the value of this training and other safety and emergency topics. This was accompanied by a handout detailing the history of CERT and info on their services and training. WUDAC members also received a

brochure on Family Preparedness from the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS)

**Redevelopment Update:** Fred Lees, Chief of Traffic Engineering Studies, DOT, told the group that he was impressed with the Walking Tour and that he would follow up with transportation issues. He noted the new Streetscaping project right outside the front door of the Mid-County Center as an example of their work to improve downtown Wheaton and make it more pedestrian friendly. He then opened up his presentation to questions from WUDAC.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

Economic: Nadia Sesay reported on their contacts with Strathmore and Strathmore's involvement in a public/private partnership in building a new music venue in White Flint. Tom Stanton has been in contact with their Executive and Marketing Directors and will connect them with Jan Goldstein of Arts on the Block on a possible effort here.

The subcommittee also discussed corporate sponsorship of an A&E District in Wheaton by both direct funding or through reduced rents. Tom Stanton met MD Del. Craig Zucker on the Walking Tour and discussed an A&E District in Wheaton. He will follow up with Del. Zucker

Nadia also briefly mentioned that June 4<sup>th</sup> was the annual Maryland Arts & Entertainment District meeting and was held at the Patterson in the Highland Arts district in Baltimore, an area revived through an A&E focus. This can be a model for the Urban District.

Nadia reported that Devala has been designated the marketing representative for the Economic subcommittee. The subcommittee discussed how the Urban District businesses can benefit from shared marketing opportunities with the new apartment communities in Wheaton. Devala will work on inviting apartment representatives to WUDAC with the aim of having a WUDAC marketing packet in the leasing office of each building. Devala will collaborate with Luis Bonilla on this effort and Ana will meet with Solaire.

Design: Dan Thompson reported that at the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting the subcommittee discussed the upcoming Taste of Wheaton and members volunteered for time slots to staff the WUDAC booth. There was much praise from members for the Walking Tour and the presentations made there by members. The subcommittee discussed how to maintain and encourage community interest in light of the large community turnout at the event. The subcommittee will work with Urban District staff to develop "tips" for improving storefronts, beautification, greening and lighting. Members responsible for these areas will use resources to compile a list of low cost ideas incorporated into a handout developed by WUDAC and the Urban District that businesses can use to encourage a walkable Wheaton. Draft "bullets" will be prepared for the next meeting.

Dan also stated the Design subcommittee's desire to discuss further in full committee the question of WUDAC's role in the redevelopment process as the process moves toward the selection of a developer before December.

**Other business:** Karen Klein from SCRAPDC gave a brief overview of her organization to WUDAC. She described it as a "Goodwill for Artists". They are looking for a Maryland location and hope to find a suitable vacancy in the Urban District to sell supplies.

**Adjourn: 7:38pm**

