

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday June 13, 2017

Members Present: Leah Haygood, Chair; Ali Oliver-Krueger, Vice Chair; Dan Thompson, Derry Goberdhansingh, Mirza Donegan, Devala Janardan, William Moore Tami Axelrod, Meghan Remo

Staff Present: Luisa Montero-Diaz, Director, Mid-County Regional Center

Guests: Peter McGinnity, Montgomery County Dept. of Finance: Marcelo Cortez and Keith Compton, MCDOT; Nick Augustine, 4th District Police Dept, Bertha Flores, Aide to Councilmember Navarro; Molly Scott, Resident

Call to Order: 6:35pm

Review May 2017 Minutes: A motion was made and passed to approve the May 2017 Meeting minutes without changes. This was followed by introductions of members and guests

Wheaton Revitalization Update: Marcelo Cortez briefed WUDAC on the progress of the revitalization project. They have conducted a meeting with Triangle business owners. Parking spaces have been angled to improve functionality of those spaces. The meeting was attended by 4 council members and touched on issues of impact assistance, parking and other issues of business access.

Keith Compton, the new on-site Project Manager, stated that sediment and erosion control measures have begun and contractors have mobilized trailers to the site. Luisa Montero Diaz noted that there is a project website up and running. Member questions and discussion followed. Keith will follow up to provide answers to three principal issues/questions: (1) place a stop sign be placed at exit of the north part of Lot 13 onto Triangle Lane; (2) correct the crosswalk on Reddie; (3) when the excavation begins, what queuing plan is there for the trucks and other heavy equipment on the streets.

Reports:

County Council Update: Bertha Flores, aide to Councilmember Navarro, reported that the County Council approved a \$ 68 million BRT plan today. Approved was a hybrid between two previously discussed options and runs along Veirs Mill Rd from Rockville to Wheaton. Improvements to the existing route will create 12 stations. Next up will be a preliminary design and a funding plan

Chamber of Commerce Update: William Moore announced an upcoming mixer sponsored by the Chamber and the Wheaton Arts Parade to be held on June 21st at Ana Mendez University. It is an opportunity to get information on and see the progress of the Parade, scheduled to be held on September 24th.

William also shared details on that afternoon's Chamber meeting and the discussions on the experiences of Chamber assistant and local artist Vicky Surlles on finding and maintaining a gallery for artists

Director's Report: Mid-County Regional Director Montero-Diaz shared copies of a Business Directory that was handed out at the Taste of Wheaton, featuring businesses that will be impacted by the revitalization. The Wheaton Urban District is partnering with the Public Information Office on a campaign to draw customers to affected businesses in the area

On Saturday June 17th there will be a Bike Ride around the Wheaton area to highlight biking conditions in the area with a discussion afterward. Members were provided a handout with details.

Members also received a handout with information on an upcoming July 10th budget forum at the Mid-County Community Recreation Center on Queensguard Road.

The Director also noted an award from the Maryland State Arts Council for Outstanding Achievement given to the Wheaton Arts and Entertainment District. In addition she reported on upgrades to the parking garages at Westfield Wheaton and to a parking area off Shorefield Road at Wheaton regional Park

The Taste of Wheaton was slow at first but seemed to pick up later and was successful. We had a Groundbreaking ceremony for the Wheaton Revitalization Project

Westfield Safety Task Force review: Mirza Donegan reported on a Safety committee meeting held at Westfield on May 22. WMATA has replaced burned out bulbs in their garage. A discussion followed.

Officer Nick Augustine from the 4th District Police Dept shared crime statistics. There is a need for an educational campaign to fight misconception that Wheaton is a high crime area. Officer Augustine noted they will be holding a “coffee with a Cop” event at Westfield on June 22 and again on September 6th.

Bertha Flores, aide to Councilmember Navarro, noted that the Council has funded 3 additional officer to the 4th District

Business And Action Item Updates:

A. A&E District subcommittee

Ali Oliver-Krueger thanked members for the A&E support letter for funding for police support for Arts Parade. At the suggestion of the County, Luisa Montero reached out to the Dept of Recreation which lead to a commitment of up to \$5,000 for the parade, pending official departmental procedural approvals.

We will try to leverage the Arts Council Award. On June 23rd the subcommittee will meet to see what actions volunteers can take to help Luisa with an A&E plan implementation. Leah Haygood stated we should attend July budget forum to talk up our needs for an A&E venue

B. Wheaton as a Destination subcommittee: Tami Axelrod reported on her research on our history with A&E. She reviewed an existing Wheaton A&E binder. She noted that although Wheaton is focused on traditional art, people surveyed are interested in Music. A lot of proposals didn't happen because of the recession. She also noted activities of DC Space Finder, a searchable database of arts venues and facilities in the Washington DC area. She wants to see how they are funded and how we could get them here. She hopes to interview them and other shareholders to share ideas for the Urban District

New Business:

Chair Haygood led a discussion on the nominations for FY18 officers. The election will be in July. Leah, Ali and William are interested in continuing their positions

Adjourn: 8:39pm