

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

11701 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton MD 20902

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday November 12, 2019

Members Present: Bill Jelen, Chair; Chelsea Johnson, Vice Chair; Jim Epstein, Chris Pyon, Stuart Amos, William Moore, Leah Haygood, Crystal Myers

Staff Present: Luisa Montero-Diaz, Mid-County RSC Director; Shawn Morris, Aide

Guests: Neil Greenberger, MCPIO; Alexandra Samaniego, LEDC; Shane Pollin and Tim Kamas, Duffie Companies; Meg Morrow, Robert Parker, Marcus Ervin, Rob Fox, Chip Py, Margaret Rifkin, and Kimblyn Persuad, residents; Luke Borwegan, aide to Del. Shetty

Call to Order: 6:33pm by Chair Jelen

Community Concerns:

Tim Kamas and Shane Pollin from the Duffie Companies updated WUDAC on the Gateway Project. They are partnering with HOC and Willco to develop the Lindsay Ford/Ambassador site. The demolition of the Ambassador has begun. However, asbestos and other materials need testing so further demolition is delayed. Hope to resume shortly. Sidewalks and lane closures will be necessary for three weeks in December and then again in February and March. The Mattress company and Gymnastics buildings will come down. In the Spring they will have completed drawings for Park and Planning to review.

Member discussion followed.

October Minutes review: A motion was made and passed to approve the draft of the October minutes with minor spelling corrections.

Community Concerns (Continued): Margaret Rifkin, Margaret K. Rifkin LLC, a specialist in urban design, art, and walkability, gave an overview of her proposal for Art Intervention in the Price-Fern Lot 17 Parking Lot. Through a handout to WUDAC members she identified several areas for Art and other enhancements. She is seeking approval of her proposal for art on the bases of light poles on the Lot. She is testing colors so that the project is visible day and night. She hopes that this is the first of many seed projects to create an inviting focal point to the district. She is seeking WUDAC's help to build excitement and possibly a letter of support to the County Executive. Member discussion followed.

Jim Epstein, on behalf of the Glenmont Forest Neighborhood Civic Association, announced that at 10:00am this Saturday they, along with their partners Civitan Club and MHP, are holding a ribbon cutting for their Community Free Library on Judson Street.

Kimblyn Persuad, resident, asked about the progress of pedestrian barriers on Georgia Ave. Luisa replied that the County Executive asked for more options. MCDOT should have those by December.

Reports:

a. Chamber of Commerce: William Moore, on behalf of the Wheaton & Kensington Chamber, reported on a "Why Local" lunch event held October 30th at FAsMarketplace, attended by the County Executive and other county officials. They also partnered with the Civitan Club for a networking event at Urban Thrift on November 6th. Upcoming events include: the Holiday on Duty drive where collected funds are

used to provide holiday meals for first responders, a Friendsgiving event with partner Kensington Park Senior Living to collect food for MUM on Nov. 21, the kickoff mixer at Los Chorros on Dec. 4th for the Angels for Children Toy Drive with collections at area merchants through Dec. 22nd, delivery of those toys on Christmas Eve, and their 4th annual Business Expo on Jan. 29th.

b. Mid-County RSC

Alexandra from LEDC updated WUDAC on continuing efforts to promote Triangle businesses. They are launching a social media campaign with 30 businesses participating so far. They will have weekly offers and also an event on December 15th from 10-2pm where there will be kids activities while parents shop door to door, along with raffles and prizes. They are seeking gift card donations from Triangle area businesses.

RSC Director Luisa Montero-Diaz announced that the Taste will be at the Fern street area again next year.

There will be another public forum concerning the budget to be held at Leisure World on Dec. 09th.

On November 18th at 7:30pm there will be a community event at the Wheaton Library/Rec Center concerning the WMATA garage. In addition to WMATA representatives, Councilmembers Navarro and Hucker will attend as well as State Representatives Waldstreicher, Carr, Shetty and Solomon.

On December 7th there will be a Family Resource Fair in the Social Hall at the Wheaton Library, sponsored by District 18 delegation.

The 4Business Charrettes will be returning to meet with the business community to get their input on proposed changes and solutions to make Montgomery County a better place to do business. The meetings will be held: Wed. 11-20, 7-9pm at the Upcounty Regional services Center in Germantown and 12-09, 6:30-8:30pm at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center.

WorkSource Montgomery has moved from the Westfield South building to the old IRS location at 11510 Georgia Avenue.

The Sunday Funday on November 3rd was a huge success with 400-500 people attending.

c. Small Business Assistance Program:

Neil Greenberger updated WUDAC on the SBAP. \$900,000 has been spent so far on assistance. It has been helpful. Of the starting 100 businesses, 80 are still in business two years later but only 26 needed assistance for losses. Aide will not end on 5-31 when the building opens. County continues to promote the businesses.

Old Business & Action Item Updates:

a. Wheaton Safety Walk Follow Up Letter with PBTSAC: No safety follow up letter available yet for review

b. Follow up on annual planning retreat: Chair Jelen led a review of a draft letter to the County Executive concerning the extent of the Reddie Drive closures. Member discussion followed. There was concern about being able to advise with no data available and this letter asks for the data. Luisa stated that MCDOT will be presenting their analysis to the County Executive in mid-December. Some changes were made to wording and a motion was made and passed to approve sending the letter.

c. Update on FY21 Budget Process:

Luisa led an update on our previous discussions on budget needs. She met with the new budget analyst. They will be asking for two new administrative positions and 5 Clean and safe team members. Some of this will have to be submitted as a proposed program enhancement. Jim Epstein agreed to draft a letter for a vote at our December 10th meeting.

Chair Jelen then distributed a recap from our Retreat held October 19th. He noted that we have set up two committees. Member discussion followed. Chris will take the lead on Lot 13 use and Omar will be our point person on retail plans.

New Business: Stuart Amos, on behalf of Westfield, announced that there will be a Grand Re-Opening celebration of the Wheaton Arts Parade Gallery on Nov.21st, 5-7pm on the lower level next to entrance 11. Live music will be provided by students from Einstein High School.

William Moore reminded everyone of a “Java with Jared” event at IHOP tomorrow morning 8:30-10am

Adjourn: 8:20pm