

MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, September 22, 2020
7:30 p.m. – 10:32 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this was a virtual meeting

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Brennan, Dennis, Day, Rigg, Mackie and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Jim Miller, Parking Enforcement Manager; Katie Hart, Community Development Planner; Gary Fields, Finance Director; Adam Rosenbaum, Student Liaison; Julia Nihkinson, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the virtual Regular meeting at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Kabir discussed last week's Town Hall with the Department of Public Services; thanked staff for recent paving on Edgewood Road; said there will be a backpack and school supply giveaway tomorrow at Hollywood Elementary School; and that we are one week away from 2020 Census deadline.

Councilmember Kennedy said County Council Member Dernoga will host a meeting tomorrow night re the future of Stone Industrial Site.

Councilmember Dennis announced the Prince George's County Police District 1 Coffee Club tomorrow at 9 a.m. via zoom. These meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

Councilmember Rigg reported on the findings of flooding damage survey he did: 70 homes reported sewer backflow. He suggests that WSSC install backflow preventers for houses that have documented damage and meet with the community to tell us what they plan to do to solve the problem.

Councilmember Day added that people who experienced damage should complete the County's tracking system form to make sure the county and our representatives are aware of the extent of the problem.

Councilmember Mitchell thanked staff for their participation in the Town Hall last week. She announced another Town Hall for D. 1 and D. 4 next Wednesday with 21st delegation.

Mayor Wojahn said this is Councilmember Brennan's last meeting and acknowledged we are unable to give him an appropriate send-off due to the virtual circumstances. The Mayor made personal remarks to Councilmember Brennan on his departure from Council.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Somers reported on the CBE's virtual Rain Barrel event on Saturday 10/3; the Special Election; Small Business Assistance Grants; the County's reporting tool for stormwater flood damage; the October clean up events; and the next strategic plan meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was approved with a motion by Councilmember Mitchell, second by Brennan, passed 8-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Mary Cook, resident: She likes being able to see everyone who is on the Zoom session. As an attendee, she can't see herself or anyone else who is on the meeting.

Carol Macknis, resident: She can't see anyone either, and thinks it's the way Zoom is set up.

Lisa Fischer, resident: She would like the opportunity to meet with the Council about the continuation of the Veterans Memorial Committee.

Ronald Cameau, resident: He asked if the upcoming Strategic Plan meeting is open to the public.

Mary Cook, resident, speaking as a member of Veterans Memorial Committee: Only recently learned that the Chair moved out of town, and would be dismayed if there was a decision to move the VMC events in-house.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Petition request for permit parking on 48th Avenue between Pontiac Street and Berwyn Road

Parking Enforcement Manager Jim Miller said this is a Public Hearing on the petition request for permit parking on 48th Avenue between Pontiac Street and Berwyn Road due to overcrowding of the streets when school is in session. A partial petition submitted in 2017 did not meet criteria. Another petition received in December 2019 did meet standard. The requested hours are Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Public Comment:

Lily Fountain, resident: The number of non-residents parking on street has increased. There is often a standoff with cars of opposing directions meeting without a way to pass. She attributes the increase from people who work nearby or are going to campus. There is reduced visibility coming out of driveways; dangerous for walkability. She would be OK with M-F instead of M-S, and would be OK with a 3 hour window.

Ron Cameau, resident: He served as a Census enumerator on 48th Avenue, and agreed it is not safe to walk with both sides of the street fully parked because there are no sidewalks.

Larry Wenzel, resident: He is opposed to permit parking and said 5 of the names on the petition should be removed. Students were parking on the street during the day, but since March that hasn't been the case because fewer students have returned to campus. This is the new normal.

Chad Stern, resident: He supports permit parking. In last decade the UMD has eliminated 6,000 parking spots, plus construction workers are parking on our streets. The COVID changes are temporary, parking problems will return in future.

Brian McAllister, resident: Signed the petition last year but sent an email requesting their names be removed. Opposed to permit parking. Submitted pictures. If it's a safety issue we should be talking about sidewalks. The new normal doesn't require parking permits. Revisit the question in a year.

Beth McAllister, resident: She sees a lot of UMD staff parking on the street, and a majority of the staff are not back. She has a problem with Saturday daytime restrictions.

B. Ordinance 20-O-10, An Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating and Capital Budget of the City of College Park, Maryland (Amendment #1)

Mr. Fields said this Ordinance was introduced on 9/8/20 to provide for additional COVID revenue reductions. Some capital expenditures will be deferred such as pavement and replacement of vehicles to offset the expected revenue shortfalls.

Councilmember Kennedy asked when we will know if capital projects like Hollywood Streetscape will be deferred? Mr. Fields said there are no plans to delay projects at this time; Duvall Field, Hollywood Dog Park, and Hollywood Streetscape are planned to move forward.

Councilmember Kabir asked what the hiring freeze mean? Mr. Fields said it is a vacant position and the reference just reflects the savings that have already been realized.

Councilmember Mitchell asked if we expect revenue from A&A tax to come back since football games are resuming? Mr. Fields said it is too soon to say what the impact will be.

There were no comments from the Public. Mayor Wojahn declared the Public Hearing as having been held.

CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Councilmember Dennis and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to adopt the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following:

20-G-150	Approval of Minutes from the August 4, 2020 Worksession and the August 19, 2020 Special Worksession.
20-G-155	Approval of a request for extension of a construction dumpster permit for 4622 College Avenue until January 16, 2021.
20-G-156	Approval of a letter to Gov. Hogan expressing concern about construction delays on the Purple Line.
20-G-157	Approval of a letter to WSSC urging them to reimburse residents who have incurred damages due to the flood.

The motion passed 8-0.

ACTION ITEMS

20-G-151 Council action on the petition request for permit parking on 48th Avenue between Pontiac Street and Berwyn Road

A motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Dennis to establish a residential permit parking zone in the 8400 & 8500 block of 48th Avenue as a permanently restricted parking zone, with no cost being assessed for residential permits and visitor passes, with enforcement Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, with a 2-hour allowance, to be consistent with the zones on Tecumseh and Potomac Streets.

Councilmember Brennan said this has been a longstanding issue. We are not a parking lot for the UMD or local businesses. We want to know that the cars parked on our streets belong to our residents. He recognizes that COVID has decreased current parking loads but the streets are still heavily parked. He respects that residents want to have visitors in evenings and weekends without dealing with visitor permits. These hours are not set in stone and can be adjusted as needed. You don't need to go to City Hall if you are having group gatherings; just call parking.

Councilmember Kabir inquired if staff had noticed the parking reduction due to COVID. Mr. Miller replied yes, but we don't know how long it will last. Councilmember Kabir questioned whether we should table this until the pandemic has passed since there is no problem now.

Mr. Ryan responded that construction workers for US 1 reconstruction and the apartment development across the street also park on here. He added that we hope to eliminate hang tags by end of this year to make residential permit parking more convenient for our residents.

Councilmember Dennis agreed about the problem of construction workers parking on our streets. He said other adjoining areas should be attentive to and consider the need for parking permits because the tendency is to push the problem from the permit area to adjacent areas. He suggested residents raise the concerns as they are seen so we can take quick action.

Councilmember Rigg said the City's parking permit program is well executed. It's easy to get exceptions when you have a party. Will will need to consider this for many of our other neighborhoods. He would be happy to consider sidewalks to address safety concerns.

The motion passed 8-0-0.

20-G-152 Recommendation to the Prince George's County Planning Board of approval, with conditions, of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (4-20014) and Detailed Site Plan (19054) for The Hub at 4210-4220 Knox Road (Mixed Use Student Housing project), and approval of a Declaration of Covenants

Ms. Schum outlined that this item is for the approval of two development applications for this student housing project. She reviewed the plans for stormwater management in light of recent storm impacts.

Matthew Tedesco, representing the developer, CORE Spaces: The Applicant is in full agreement with the conditions as presented and in agreement with the Declaration of Covenants. There is currently no control of stormwater quality or quantity on these parcels; the new development must meet current standards for both, through a green roof, bioretention and a treatment vault on site. Had this project been in place it would have helped, not hurt, during the storm event we experienced.

David Bickel, Soltesz, said the total land area is close to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, which is comparable to two single family lots. Although they have increased the impervious area, the runoff is decreased because of the way the water filtrates through the devices on site. For the 100 year storm, the amount of runoff would be equivalent to if there were no development there and it were a meadow.

Pursuant to Council rules, Mayor Wojahn stated that he met with this developer before the project came to Council.

Councilmember Mackie asked about the rental costs for the different units. Mr. Tedesco said that information is not available yet.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Day that the City Council recommend approval of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-20014 and Detailed Site Plan 19054 with conditions, and subject to the Applicant entering into a Declaration of Covenants and Agreement in substantially the form attached.

Councilmember Rigg expressed his support for high density student housing where it makes sense, and it makes sense here. He urged the University and our partners to look for opportunities for affordable student housing.

Comments from the audience:

Mary King, resident: At least it borders campus, but parking will be inadequate, and traffic will be worse at US 1. Tall buildings on US 1 crowd you and will bring more density and cars. The presentation went too quickly; how can you influence any changes when it moves so quickly from the Worksession to the Regular Meeting?

Councilmember Kabir expressed concerns about affordability. It has more amenities than some of the other developments. What kind of message do we send our student residents when we approve development with high rents? We support student housing close to campus but only students from wealthy families can afford the opportunity to live there, which he finds frustrating.

Councilmember Mackie is conflicted: we need more affordable housing and need to consider over development.

Councilmember Mitchell said we want walkable housing close to the University and feels this is a sound project.

The motion passed 7-1 (Mackie opposed).

20-G-153 Discussion, and possible approval, of College Park 2020-2025 Strategic Plan Vision and Mission

Mr. Somers said this is a follow-up to the Strategic Planning session held on September 12 at The Hotel where PBI (Performance Breakthroughs) facilitated a discussion on the City's mission. The goal tonight is to discuss and possibly approve the Vision and Mission for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. He introduced facilitators Jeff Parks and Jessica Brown. Mr. Parks said they made good progress on 9/12 but didn't quite finish with the language for the Mission and Vision.

The Mayor and Council reviewed and discussed the options, and developed the following language for the Mission and Vision for the new Strategic Plan:

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to approve the Mission and Vision as drafted:

Mission (Why we exist): We provide excellent services, transparent and inclusive governance, and advocate for our residents to enhance the quality of life for our diverse community.

Vision (What we want to be in 3-5 years): College Park is a vibrant forward-thinking City with a welcoming community that celebrates our history and diversity and strives for innovation, connectivity, and sustainability.

There were no comments from the audience.

Councilmember Kabir said if we approve this tonight, we are missing an additional opportunity to ask our residents for their input; he would prefer to wait until next week.

Ms. Brown said the qualitative survey that was done by PBI that did get input from residents. She added that this should be seen as a living document and Council can decide to revisit it in the future if desired.

Councilmember Mitchell said we have to be very thoughtful about how we engage residents throughout the entire process.

The motion carried 7-0-1 (Councilmember Brennan abstained, respectfully removing himself from the discussion and vote because he is leaving the Council).

Next Strategic Plan meeting is Tuesday Sept 29 at The Hotel.

20-O-10 Adoption of Ordinance 20-O-10, An Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating and Capital Budget of the City of College Park, Maryland (Amendment #1)

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to adopt Ordinance 20-O-10, An Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating and Capital Budget of the City of College Park, Maryland (Amendment #1).

Councilmember Rigg said this is tough budget cutting, but strong fiscal management by Mr. Somers and Mr. Fields has put the City in better fiscal shape than other municipalities.

The motion passed 8-0.

20-R-22 Adoption of a Resolution clarifying the way to assign membership terms to advisory board members

Mr. Somers said this item is in regard to how terms are going to be assigned to newly appointed and existing members of advisory boards. He reviewed the options and said we can do either one.

Councilmember Kennedy offered an alternate suggestion – an Option #3. A two steps process where the newer members get the 2- or 3-year terms, and the returning members get 1- or 2-year terms. This is the only year we have to do this.

Mr. Somers said it's hard to get the math to work to achieve well-staggered terms.

Councilmember Kabir asked what happens if someone leaves in the middle of a term. Mr. Somers replied that the vacancy is filled for the unexpired portion of the term.

Councilmember Rigg said we may be over thinking this. Different arguments can be made about each option and who is most deserving of longer terms.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Day to approve Option 1 as presented in Resolution 20-R-22 as a method of assigning membership terms to the upcoming advisory committee appointments.

There were no comments from the audience.

The motion passed 8-0.

20-G-154 Appointments to City advisory boards

A motion was made by Councilmember Kennedy and seconded by Councilmember Brennan to approve the appointments to advisory boards as presented, and to add Jane Hopkins to the Ethics Commission (D. 4) and to Robert Baum to the MLK Committee. This includes reappointing the members of the Veterans Memorial Committee.

Councilmember Kennedy said this is the culmination of many years work and she has been encouraged by the conversations with incoming members.

Mayor Wojahn said he hopes we can have a reception to thank our volunteers next year.

The motion passed 8-0.

COMMENTS

Councilmember Brennan [this is his final meeting]:

- He had intended to extend permit parking to Pontiac Street between Osage and 49th Avenue, as well as Osage itself; it is hard to get petitions for those blocks, but with the action taken tonight, it may become necessary. A motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Dennis to add this item to the Master List for future consideration. The motion passed 8-0.
- He requested that Council reconsider the item of Council term-lengths and staggering terms (four-year terms, educating our residents, and giving them the opportunity to vote). He said the question failed by a small margin last time. A motion was made by Councilmember

Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to add this to the Master List for future consideration. The motion passed 5-3 (Kabir, Mackie and Mitchell opposed).

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn the Regular Meeting and to enter into a Closed Session. The motion passed 8-0 and the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION
September 22, 2020

Pursuant to the statutory authority of the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article, Section 3-305, the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park met in a Closed Session on Tuesday, September 22 for the following purposes:

1. To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto;
2. To discuss the performance evaluation of an appointee (the City Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation).

At 10:32 p.m., at the end of the regularly scheduled Council meeting, a motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn the Regular Meeting and enter into a Closed Session. Mayor Wojahn read the Closing Statement and said the City Council would not return to public session after the Closed Session. The motion passed 8-0 and the Regular Meeting was adjourned. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Closed Session was held virtually. Mayor Wojahn was designated Open Meetings trainee.

The Mayor and all Councilmembers were present. In addition, the meeting was attended by City Manager Scott Somers. Assistant City Manager Bill Gardiner; City Clerk Janeen Miller; City Attorney Suellen Ferguson; Planning Director Terry Schum; and Planner Katie Hart attended the first portion of the meeting.

The Mayor and Council discussed the potential acquisition of three properties in the City, the pros and cons of each property, and possible funding options.

The Mayor and Council conducted the City Manager's performance evaluation.

No action was taken.

ADJOURN: The Closed Session adjourned at 12:30 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION
September 15, 2020

Pursuant to the statutory authority of the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article, Section 3-305, the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park met in a Closed Session on Tuesday, September 15 for the following purposes:

1. To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business to locate in the State;
2. To discuss the appointment of individuals to advisory boards.

At 10:53 p.m., after the regularly scheduled Council Worksession, a motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn the Worksession and enter into Closed Session. Mayor Wojahn read the closing statement and said the City Council would not return to open session tonight. The motion passed 8-0, and the Worksession adjourned. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Closed Session was held virtually. Mayor Wojahn was designated Open Meetings trainee.

The Mayor and all Councilmembers were present. In addition, the meeting was attended by City Manager Scott Somers; Assistant City Manager Bill Gardiner; City Clerk Janeen Miller; City Attorney Suellen Ferguson; and Assistant City Clerk Yvette Allen.

The City Manager and City Attorney advised the Mayor and Council and answered questions about the status of a lease agreement.

The City Council reviewed applications and made recommendations for appointments to their advisory boards.

No action was taken.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Kabir and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to adjourn the Closed Session, and with a vote of 8-0 the Closed Session was adjourned at 11:54 p.m.
