

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
Town Council Meeting
October 9, 2006

PRESENT: Debbie Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Eve Arber, Councilmember
Dan Macy, Councilmember
Steve Matney, Councilmember
Cathie Polak, Clerk

ATTENDANCE; Rene Springuel, Resident
JoAnne Murray, Resident
Jim Shaut, HVAC
Phyllis Fordham, Resident
Phyllis Daen, Echo Reporter
Diana Hudson-Taylor, Resident
Betsy Carpenter, Resident
Maryse Rhein, Resident
Jamie Platt, FSGW Family Dance
Kirsten Roddy, Future Resident

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:05

It was noted that October 9 is a federal holiday; neither Kym Elder nor Lt. Jacobson, U.S. Park Police, were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2006-23 to approve as amended on page 1, Glen Echo Park Report, the August 14, 2006, meeting minutes:

- Councilmember Long reported the Labor Day art show will begin with an opening reception on the evening of September 1, and will continue through the Labor Day weekend. ~~The art show will be held in the Arcade building on the second floor and feature the works of students.~~
- C & O Canal National Historical Park and the Potomac River.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion 2006-24 to approve as amended on page 5, National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the September 11, 2006, meeting minutes:

- Councilmember Macy assured residents that insurance and mortgage rates will not be affected by ~~living in a flood plain~~ the municipality joining the NFIP.
- Mayor Beers requested that follow up emails on the NFIP be included with the September 11, 2006 minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

GLEN ECHO PARK

Councilmember Long reported that construction on the Yellow Barn is progressing well.

ORDINANCE #06-02

Mayor Beers asked for final comments on ordinance #06-02, to amend Articles 3, 17 and 21 to provide building permits and street and sidewalk permits of the Town's code.

Councilmember Matney stated that the violations need to be the same for all articles and recommended:

- page 5, paragraph A., line 6 should read: same from the Clerk or ~~the Mayor~~ and or Council;
- page 7., paragraph C. 4., line 9 should read: shall be issued by the Clerk or Mayor ~~and or~~ Council;
- page 8, paragraph C., line 1 read: At the request of one of the following:
applicant,

Resident Phyllis Fordham asked where the ordinance addresses inspections; Mayor Beers explained that Montgomery County is responsible for inspections. Glen Echo did not accept zoning authority because the Town did not have the resources necessary to manage administration of a zoning code. Building permits are required by Montgomery County and then the Town. If there is a concern, a resident or Councilmember complains to County inspectors, who inspect and deal with the violations. Mayor Beers noted that the reason for the violation changes is to make the ordinance a municipal infraction that can be enforced. Ms. Fordham asked what one gets for the application fees; Mayor Beers explained that it is an over-sight layer; the Town reviews plans and serves as a notice function.

Diana Hudson-Taylor expressed concern about following the requirements for acquiring Montgomery County building permits, inquiring if residents come to the Town for help can the Town assist. Mayor Beers emphatically stated that it is up to the resident to find out what permits are required.

Ms. Hudson-Taylor inquired what would happen if Montgomery County issues a building permit that it not acceptable by Town regulations; Mayor Beers stated that it is up to individual homeowners to comply with the Town's ordinances.

Rene Springuel recommended the following suggestions:

- The application fee be \$10.00 or 10% of the Montgomery County permit fees, whichever is greater, noting that a \$100 application could be more than County permit fees for smaller jobs.
- Residents should be required to submit photo documentation of the condition of adjoining streets and sidewalks prior to beginning construction. Council agreed to add this to page 6., #8.

- The amount of a bond, Page 8, paragraph F., should be tied to damage to town property. Mayor Beers explained that the bond would be issued before construction could start; the intent here is directed to large construction projects that require heavy trucks driving over town streets/sidewalks not smaller renovation projects. Jim Shaut suggested a bond of double the cost of possible repair. There was further discussion about what and how bonds are handled. Joann Murray suggested requiring a builder to submit photographs of the surrounding streets and sidewalks. Mayor Beers will add language requiring photographs to Article 17, Section 17.2 (A).
- Concern about the \$100 application fee, Page 11, paragraph (B), when Montgomery County does not have any responsibility for Town's streets and or sidewalks. Discussion followed about conforming to state specifications, curb cuts for sidewalks, curbs, driveway aprons and streets. Councilmember Matney feels the fee should stay at \$100 because the streets and sidewalks belong to the Town; Montgomery County does not permit or inspect the Town's streets and sidewalks.

Mayor Beers thanked Mr. Springuel for his careful and thoughtful recommendations for changes to the proposed ordinance. Mayor Beers reviewed the suggested changes and asked for more comments.

Councilmember Long asked what the term certification means as referenced on Page 6, item 6, a notarized statement? Apparently a notarized statement is not required.

Resident Jim Shaut asked about the requirement of notifying neighbors by an individual with renovation or new building plans. Mayor Beers explained that the reason is to keep neighbors abreast of renovations; neighbors are more familiar with existing structures and daily changes. The provision was suggested by the Town's attorney, Norman Knopf, as a way to possibly head off potential problems.

The Town will have to develop a new building permit application to include the new provisions.

With no further discussion, Mayor Beers asked for a motion to pass the ordinance with the changes discussed.

Motion 2006-25 to accept Ordinance #06-02 to Amend the Town of Glen Echo Code, Articles 3, 17, and 21 as amended.

Councilmember Long stated she would like to see the final amended document before voting. Mayor Beers asked other council members; there were no objection to accepting as amended. Discussion followed about amending after accepting. Mayor Beers referred to the Town Charter: an approved ordinance becomes effective 20 days after it is signed by the Mayor.

The motion was passed, with a review of the final document by Ms. Long, before signing.

TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE

HVAC Report

Resident Jim Shaut has been seeking bids for the HVAC project and presented a proposal from W.B. Maske for \$41,000. This bid includes approximately \$15,000 for additional, supplemental AC unit and walkway in the attic for servicing. The Maske proposal is the first bid that deals with heating and AC as well as addressing the environment where the furnaces are located and how it may affect the HVAC based on actual calculations.

Jim Shaut noted that the existing AC units are 12 and 14 years old. The Maske proposal is to put in two new AC units, adding an additional five (5) ton AC unit in the attic to supplement cooling. When asked if the project could be done in stages, Mr. Shaut said that it is not cost effective to do the work in stages; that the equipment should be designed together, to be efficiently compatible.

Councilmember Arber asked if there is a “greener” approach to updating the Town Hall’s HVAC. Joann Murray said if Council wants to be “green,” it should look at sealing the building’s leaks and smoothing the attic insulation.

Councilmember Matney would like to see a bid that shows the additional AC and attic work bided out separately. Mr. Shaut will ask Mr. Maske for a separate bid in two phases: replacing the existing HVAC and installing the new unit and walkway in the attic. Mayor Beers told council that she is still concerned about having to replace the existing units on an emergency basis; she proposed an emergency meeting to discuss and vote on the separated Maske bids.

STREET REPAIR PROJECT REPORT

When Councilmember Matney was called to report on the street repair project, he noted that he has been in contact with Takoma Park’s Department of Public Works (DPW). They are providing information on their bid packet. Mayor Beers again directed Councilmember Matney to contact A. Morton Thomas, who was hired to do an engineering street study for Glen Echo six years ago. The cost for the recommend work in 2000 was \$993, 889. Mayor Beers said that the study is available in the Town’s files for residents to see. Resident Jamie Platt asked if sidewalks were recommended in the 2000 study; the Town did not ask for a sidewalk survey.

Mayor Beers stated that the Town decision not to follow through on the engineering study recommendations was a huge waste of money. If council contracts for a new engineering street repair study, they must be prepared to follow through with the recommendations. Joann Murray suggested giving guidelines to the engineers to look at what the Town wants, not just turn the engineers loose to make unsolicited recommendations.

Ms. Murray also suggested the Town look into Community Block grants, available through Montgomery County, for sidewalks, curbs and gutters. Engineers may be able to help with a grant application.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT MEETING REPORT

Mayor Beers gave an overview of the walk-through meeting held on September 27. If Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) can get storm sewer study done in time to include Glen Echo in its April 2007 Capital Budget, work could begin as early as 2009. Councilmember Long asked if the DPWT will do anything to address the drainage problems outside the Town which contribute largely to the Town's problems. DPWT told Jim Shaut that they would scope the ditch at the east side of MacArthur Boulevard and Princeton Avenue to see if there is a blockage that can be cleared. Mayor Beers said she would call and make sure the DPWT follows through.

Betsy Carpenter noted a reference to the condition of the Town's streets. Councilmember Matney said he felt the DPWT will coordinate with the Town's street project.

TOWN HALL USE REPORT

Councilmember Long reported that there has been a request to continue the Sunday afternoon Family Dance program one Sunday a month from November through April, from 2-5:30 p.m. Jamie Platt reported that the Family Dance started in Glen Echo Park 12 years ago and has been held in the town hall for the last 10 years during winter months. The dances are held in the Bumper Car pavilion in warm months. Attendance is usually 30-50 people although not many Town residents attend. The dances are run through the Folklore Society of Greater Washington (FSGW). The fee for the Town Hall will be \$50 per use, which must be paid in advance. Parking has not been an issue. Councilmember Macy supports the program.

Motion 2006-26 to allow the FSGW repeat use of the Town Hall for the Family Dance, one Sunday per month from November through April. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Macy has proposed a candidates forum for October 29. Councilmember Long expressed concern about how attendance will be kept to a total of no more than 124 people, the Town Hall capacity, as determined by the Fire Marshall.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Mayor Beers presented a Resolution to adopt the Montgomery County Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan. Glen Echo must either adopt this resolution or write and adopt its own multi-hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for future FEMA funds. Mayor Beers sees this resolution as an advantage for the Town and its residents, but it must be adopted by October 31, 2006.

Resolution 2006-03 to adopt the Montgomery County, Maryland, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (MML) REPORT

Councilmember Arber reported that about 50 people attended the MML, Montgomery Chapter, meeting held at the Town Hall on September 21. There were speakers on housing price trends and county growth. Mayor Beers was curious how these topics could affect Glen Echo. MML is developing working groups on taxes and looking for

volunteers for the groups. Pedestrian safety, cars and traffic, were also discussed. The attendees then broke into smaller groups to discuss issues such as mansionization and Verizon cable. Councilmember Arber noted that the meetings are interesting because of the many different issues members bring to the working group meetings. Mayor Beers thanked Councilmember Arber for the report. Council members Arber, Matney, and Long attended this meeting.

PRINCETON AVENUE TRAFFIC

C/T Polak explained that residents on upper Princeton Avenue have been complaining about the volume and speed of traffic. They would like a “No Left Turn” sign placed at University and Princeton Avenues to minimize the amount of traffic leaving Glen Echo via Princeton Avenue. Maryse Rhein voiced concern about traffic, noting that “No Right Turn” sign was placed at University and Princeton Avenues in the 1970’s to slow traffic from the Park. Mayor Beers noted that Princeton Avenue is a public street; Glen Echo should not be blocking a public street. Princeton Avenue resident Betsy Carpenter believes that all the streets off MacArthur Boulevard are controlled but Princeton Avenue. Ms. Carpenter also feels people drive up Princeton excessively fast; Ms. Rhein agrees. Council declined the request to provide a “No Left Turn” sign on the south east corner of Princeton Avenue.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1. Annex parking: Residents have voiced complaints about cars parking on Harvard Avenue and University Avenue for events held at the Baptist Church Annex Mayor Beers will contact Mr. Meeks, from the Glen Echo Baptist Church, about the users parking in the Church’s lot on Vassar Circle.
2. Projector: Councilmember Macy noted that the projector used for the Saturday Movie Series has been on loan and soon will not be available. The Town will need to purchase its own projector. Councilmember Matney was directed make the purchase.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.