

GLEN ECHO TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2007

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

VISITORS: Kym Elder, NPS, GEP Site Manager
Sophie Keefer, Echo Reporter

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:10 and invited Kym Elder to give the Glen Echo Park Report.

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Ms. Elder told Council that a budget for 2008 has been presented even though there is still no budget for 2007 and noted that the 2008 budget looks good for the Park, including the new maintenance building. The existing maintenance shed demolition is scheduled for the end of February or early March. The Park is moving ahead with plans for the Candy Corner interior design to make it useable as an interpretive facility; the NPS is applying for a grant, with matching funds from GEPPAC to make this possible

Ms. Elder said the keys for old Yellow Barn have been turned over. She invited Council to come see the new spaces as well as the ghosting effect upstairs. Councilmember Long asked if, in advertising for artists, the reference to “studio space” means that the artist does not teach. Ms. Elder said that the ad is for two spaces in the Yellow Barn; the RFP states that the artist must have demonstrations and an educational component to the application.

Mayor Beers asked if the Park is trying to get the deed for the street car right-of-way (including the trestle over the Minniehaha Creek). Ms. Elder said the Park is close to finalizing the deal; the NPS will make a land swap with WMATA for the right-of-way. GEP is trying to make the exchange a win/win situation for both WMATA and the Park. Councilmember Long asked if the land exchange is an even exchange. Ms. Elder was unsure of how to classify the properties; the acreage is not the same and there is no money exchange involved.

Mayor Beers then inquired if Montgomery County is aware that the NPS is working toward finalizing the acquisition. Ms. Elder said that Yasmin Esmaili, the Bikeway project design contact for Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), knows that the NPS wants to acquire the land from WMATA; Ms. Elder did not think that the DPWT has made the connection that it is the same land.

Kym Elder noted that Sean McCabe, NPS Park Ranger who is the boundary and lands expert, mentioned that the Glen Echo Council attended the Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) on the MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway project on February 8. Mr. McCabe asked if the County has acquired the necessary land to build the new MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway; Ms. Esmaili said yes. Councilmember Arber disagreed. Councilmember Arber then inquired if Sean McCabe could be available to discuss the bikeway project with Council. Council members Arber and Macy feel that the project is much farther along than the 30% quoted at the February 8 meeting. Councilmember Long expressed concern that the County is only listening to the bike groups, not individuals and communities living along MacArthur Boulevard, noting that there seems a sense that the bikeway will facilitate commuter traffic. Cabin John is the only community that supports the bikeway.

Councilmember Long expressed concern over how the trees on the eastern palisades, including those that form an irreplaceable back-drop for Glen Echo Park, would be protected with construction of the new bike path. There are archaeological preservation and environmental studies that need to be done.

Councilmember Arber asked Councilmember Matney if he could acquire a map for the proposed bikeway. Councilmember Matney offered to try to locate the map.

Mayor Beers asked Councilmember Long to make additional comments on Glen Echo Park. Ms. Long said she would like to have Superintendent Vela come to Council to discuss the Discovery Creek request to expand to the Crystal Pool area of the Park.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2007-04 to approve as amended the Town Council Meeting minutes of January 8, 2007:

- HVAC SELECTION: rewording of this section to include historical facts;
- Page 2, paragraph 3: WAMATA;
- Page 4, strike first sentence: ~~There was no response when C/T Polak asked for someone to draft the letter for Mayor Beers.~~

Motion passed as amended.

Mayor Beers thanked Councilmember Long for presiding at the Council meeting.

HVAC REPORT

Mayor Beers returned a signed contract for Condon-Reed noting that all the requested changes are in the new proposal. C/T Polak will coordinate the installation scheduling with the Post Office and Town Hall use. Councilmember Long noted that, even though the Town Hall was not adaptable to a more environmentally friendly solution, she was glad that Council made the effort to research the most environmentally sound method of upgrading the HVAC. Council agreed.

PRINCETON AVENUE RIGHT-OF-WAY

Mayor Beers sent a letter sent to Bell Builders (attached) with no response received as of February 12. February 24 is the deadline for Bell Builders to comply with the Town's request to remove the bluestone from the right-of-way adjacent to 6109 Princeton Avenue. C/T Polak will then hire a third party to do the work.

STREET REPAIR PROJECT REPORT

Councilmember Matney reported no updates; Mayor Beers said that it is urgent that this project begin.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT REPORT

Mayor Beers wrote letter to DPWT reminding them that the Town's project needs be added to the Montgomery County budget. Michael Mitchell responded promptly that Glen Echo is in line for repairs to be added to the upcoming budget. Mayor Beers noted that the project may take several years, but Town's storm water management system repair appears to be moving forward.

Council noted that a project will have to be coordinated with the MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway and DPWT because many of the storm water management issues appear to begin at MacArthur Boulevard.

TOWN HALL USE REPORT

Councilmember Long provided the upcoming calendar (attached), noting several upcoming events:

- Chautauqua Series concert on March 4;
- St. Patrick's Day party on March 17;
- "Rabbit Proof Fence" film on March 10.

A Scandinavian group asked to use the town hall on Saturday, April 7. Since no resident had reserved the date, there were no objections.

Councilmember Macy attended the Family Dance on Sunday, February 11, stating he found it fun and entertaining.

Film festival

Councilmember Long's review of past town hall use of the 2nd Saturday of each month revealed that it is booked more than the last Saturday of the month; she asked Council if the film festival should consider changing back to the last Saturday of each month. Council agreed to continue the film festival on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

2007 LANSCAPING CONTRACT

C/T Polak presented the Chapel Valley Landscaping contact for 2007-08, noting that there will be no additional charges for maintaining the lot located at University and Princeton Avenues donated by Shirley Strong. Ms. Polak asked to have benches and a plaque added to the new park and offered to research the items. She also offered to research a landscaping plan for the new park.

Councilmember Long noted the planting around the flag pole needs to be filled out; there is too much room left for raising and lowering the flag. A stepping stone for that purpose should be provided with the rest of the circle filled with flowers. Councilmember Arber volunteered to provide a stepping stone.

Councilmember Arber asked that Chapel Valley use organic products for fertilizing and weed control. Mayor Beers agreed but only if the weed control products are effective in preventing damaging weeds between the sidewalk blocks and curbs

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1. GEPPAC contribution: Mayor Beers noted that the Town did not make a contribution to Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (GEPPAC) last year. Councilmember Long noted that free use of the town hall was given to GEPPAC for six Sunday evenings last year.

Motion 2007-04 to contribute \$1500 to GEPPAC. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Councilmember Long noted that Adrian Fenty, the new Washington, D.C. mayor, is proposing a master plan for pedestrians; she would like to see Montgomery Council follow with a similar plan.

3. Glen Echo will soon be featured in the Post's "Where We Live" section. The reporter, Andrea Rouda, will be attending Ladies Night at Mayor Beers' home later this month. C/T Polak will circulate a reminder email.

4. The town hall needs new round tables. C/T Polak offered to research the costs.

5. Councilmember Long provided a recent news article from the Washington Post about the loss of trees in Montgomery County, stating it is particularly relevant because of the upcoming bikeway development.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20.