

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2007

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

VISITORS: David Chitwood, Echo Reporter
Debbie Lange, Resident
Howard Gruenspecht, Resident

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:10.

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

When asked to report in Ms. Elder's absence, Councilmember Long said there was nothing new to report on Glen Echo Park. She then mentioned that the National Park Service (NPS) will be celebrating 100 years in 2016. There is a push to have large amounts of funding available in the next few years. Glen Echo Park (GEP), the Clara Barton National Historic Site (CBNHS) and the C&O Canal National Historical Park will have additional funds available. Councilmember Long then highlighted a full page ad in the Washington Post calling for donations from individuals and corporations to help with the NPS centennial celebration. The ad was placed by the National Parks Conservation Association, and was supported by 100 well known individuals.

Mayor Beers asked Councilmember Long to invite Discovery Creek representatives to come to a Town Council meeting. Councilmember Long agreed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2007-06 to approve as presented the Town Council Meeting minutes of February 12, 2007. The motion passed unanimously.

STREET REPAIR PROJECT REPORT

Councilmember Matney said he had no information to report. Mayor Beers reminded him that time is getting short to begin and complete the street project this year.

TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE REPORT

HVAC

C/T Polak reported that she reviewed progress of Condon-Reed on the new HVAC system. At the suggestion of resident Norm Bernhardt, an asbestos test was done on the Town hall ceiling. The test showed no asbestos; council agreed that it is good to know that the town hall is clear of asbestos for any future projects.

Tables

C/T Polak presented two proposals for replacement of round tables for the town hall. Extended discussion followed about different table materials, weights and the potential problems. Councilmember Macy offered to do additional research and present his proposals at the next council meeting.

ORDINANCE REVIEW/ARTICLE 3 DUMPSTERS

Mayor Beers explained that Montgomery County will no longer give permits for dumpsters on Glen Echo Streets because the County is not responsible for the Town's streets; permits are not required for dumpsters placed on private property. Knopf & Brown drafted the ordinance as an amendment to the street and building code ordinance. Comments were:

- Councilmember Arber asked what defines a dumpster.
- Councilmember Matney would like to have PODs (temporary movable storage units) included;
- Councilmember Matney suggested having photos of the street and sidewalks required if not already attached to the building permit application.
- Councilmember Matney suggested adding that dumpsters/PODs must not block sidewalk or foot traffic, should require reflectors or reflector tape and would have to be on the parking side of the street.
- Mayor Beers thinks the fine is high.

At Mayor Beers' suggestion, further discussion is tabled to the next Council meeting.

TOWN HALL USE REPORT

Resident Debbie Lange asked Council for use of the Town Hall again for Pilates class on Thursday evenings, from April 18 to June 14. The maximum number of participants will be 12. Mayor Beers asked about the previous payment arrangement. Councilmember Long said payment, whether by residents donating their personal uses to cover the costs or by cash, must be done in a timely fashion; the last session took three years to settle. Ms. Lange said she will have residents' contributions before the class begins and will use the form provided by Councilmember Long. Councilmember Long repeated that Ms. Lange must have a commitment before each use, by signature, noting that the first three classes will be credited to Debbie Lange. Any classes not covered by a resident's donation will be \$25, paid in advance. Mayor Beers asked how many residents will attend the classes. Ms. Lange explained that approximately 12 residents have taken classes sessions over the years, but not all at once. Debbie Lange did not know the cost for the 10 Pilates classes; that will be set by Diane Pettie, the instructor.

Motion 2007-07 to approve the Diane Pettie Pilates class, sponsored by Debbie Lange, paid in advance by residents' contributions or \$25 per class. The motion passed unanimously

Councilmember Long noted that Phyllis Daen's concert was postponed. The new date is April 22. Mayor Beers noted that Carlotta Anderson has requested better advertising to the surrounding neighborhoods for the Town's Chautauqua Series events. Councilmember Long noted that The Echo's computer network could be helpful in this effort.

Councilmember Long has approached Melinda Henneberger about a book signing, possibly in May.

The St. Patrick's Day party will be on March 17th, at 6:30.

Ms. Long then highlighted the upcoming events on the attached calendar.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (MML) REPORT

Councilmember Arber reported that she attend the MML, Montgomery Chapter meeting in Rockville with Councilmember Long. County Executive Isaiah Leggett was the guest speaker. Mr. Leggett was praising his policy and noted Maryland's upcoming deficit. Councilmember Long said the real value of the MML meetings is the contacts made with representatives from other Montgomery County municipalities. Ms. Long met Mayor Kathy Porter of Tacoma Park, who is chairman of the county task force on pedestrian safety; she requested information on the activities of the task force. Mayor Porter said that the task force was looking for places to hold public meetings; Councilmember Long offered the Town Hall.

Councilmember Arber reported that streetlight transfer was discussed at the MML meeting noting that MML and the larger towns appeared excited about purchasing and managing their street lights; Pepco anticipates an upcoming 40% increase on maintenance. She expressed concern that towns not joining a street light transfer could be doubly penalized. There was discussion and speculation that Glen Echo may be able to join with smaller, nearby municipalities to maintain and manage streets lights if necessary and economically feasible.

Before the meeting began, Councilmember Long spoke privately with Mr. Leggett about the Town's concerns over the proposed MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway improvement project. Councilmember Arber introduced Glen Echo's concerns on the MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway expansion, noting that it is "now on MML radar."

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Potomac Interceptor Sewer Line: Councilmember Macy mentioned the anonymous email (believed to be from a possible whistleblower) circulating about the Potomac Interceptor and asked if the Town may want to become more involved. Mayor Beers suggested Dan contact Burr Gray of the Cabin John Citizens Association; Mr. Gray has been very involved in the issue. There was further discussion about potential concerns and threats to the Town should the sewer line burst; the line runs along the berm side of the C&O Canal.

2. County Meetings: Mayor Beers reported that Montgomery County Councilmember Roger Berliner requested input from the Town on the MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway project office. Mayor Beers and Council members have a meeting scheduled with Councilmember Berliner on March 29, at noon in the County Council Office to discuss the MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway project, storm drain problems in Glen Echo, and Glen Echo Park. Mayor Beers had requested a meeting sooner but Councilmember Berliner

would not meet until after the County budget meetings. Mayor Beers asked Council to suggest other items to bring to his attention.

Mayor Beers will also meet with the new head of County permitting services March 29, at 3:00. Glen Echo may have conflicts with other municipalities, which are requesting municipal permits before County permits.

3. FY2007-08 Budget: Resident Howard Gruenspecht explained that he wanted to voice his concerns before the Mayor makes the proposed FY 2007-08 budget and the subsequent annual budget hearing. He first inquired about the Town's total funds; C/T Polak estimated the amount to be approximately \$600,000. Mr. Gruenspecht then asked the amount of the Irish Inn lease on Town-owned property facing Tulane Avenue: \$300/month. He would like to see the lease increased annually to an amount equal to the value of the lot. Mayor Beers said the last buildable lot was sold for \$300,000. The Town leases half of a lot to the Irish Inn for \$3600/year. Mr. Gruenspecht asked "What are we keeping the lot for?" When the Mayor responded that the lot is kept as open space, Mr. Gruenspecht asked if council prefers a car lot to a building. The Mayor responded that the parking lot benefits the Town by keeping cars off the streets and MacArthur Boulevard. Councilmember Long explained that the property was originally purchased to prevent the amusement park's growth. Councilmember Macy explained the process of Council's decision to lease the land to the Irish Inn. Mr. Gruenspecht asked Council to review their reasons for asking "a token rent" and consider having rent that is in relationship to value of the property. Mr. Gruenspecht said it is in the interest of residents to increase the lease substantially. Mr. Gruenspecht asked for a clarification of the Irish Inn's land in relation to the streets and right of way. He then asked if a stone arch entryway at Harvard Avenue is still in the budget. Councilmember Long explained that the structure planned is not an arch but rather a simply low-key stone entryway to identify the Town, particularly for emergency vehicles. Lastly, Mr. Gruenspecht explained that he feels the quality of life in Glen Echo is good based on what the Town is currently spending. Mr. Gruenspecht said that Council is not under spending the budget; it is more that the residents are being over taxed. He noted that these are the same issues raised several years ago. Councilmember Long noted that a healthy surplus should be available for potential legal fees.

4. Oxford Road: Councilmember Matney mentioned that water is draining onto Oxford Road; it appears to come from a sump pump from a home. Mayor Beers explained that it is not illegal to drain water onto the streets, only onto a neighboring property.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50.