

**TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
COUNCIL MEETING
February 10, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Debbie Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Steve Matney, Councilmember
Mark McCaffrey, Councilmember
Matt Stiglitz, Councilmember
Nicole Fraser, Clerk-Treasurer

VISITORS: Aaron LaRocca, Supervisory Park Ranger, GEP/CBNHS¹
Ellen Leary, resident
John Barrett, resident
Eleanor Balaban, resident
Phyllis Fordham, resident and The Echo editor
Thomas Manion, architect for 37 Wellesley Circle project
Gloria Levin, resident
Michael Bobbitt, resident and Producing Artistic Director of Adventure
Theatre-MTC
Andy Malmgren, resident
Aaron Hirsch, owner of the Baptist Annex
Sascha Haverfield, resident
Cris White, resident
Blair & Mads Anderson, residents
Edie & Renny Springuel, residents
Sally McGunnigle, resident
Patty Sieber, resident
Norman & Diana Hudson-Taylor, residents
Raya Bodnarchuk, resident
Forest Yang, resident
Eve Arber, resident

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Supervisory Park Ranger Aaron LaRocca reported that the playground equipment at GEP was being repaired and some pieces might need to be replaced. Mayor Beers suggested that CBNHS/GEP NPS look at the Cabin John playground equipment as options in case of replacement. Councilmember Long noted that the NPS did not choose the existing equipment. Mr. LaRocca asked if the Town would have the bamboo on the corner of Oxford Road and MacArthur Boulevard trimmed back; in icy weather the bamboo bends into the road blocking traffic. C/T Fraser said she would ask Mark Peyton to trim back the bamboo.

¹ Abbreviations in this document include AT-MTC (Adventure Theatre-Musical Theater Center), CBNHS (Clara Barton National Historic Site), GEBC (Glen Echo Baptist Church), GEP (Glen Echo Park), GEPPAC (Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture), National Community Church (NCC) and NPS (National Park Service).

Mr. LaRocca's notes are attached to the minutes.

37 WELLESLEY CIRCLE

Tom Manion of Manion and Martin Architects presented plans for a new residence at 37 Wellesley Circle. Due to the curve of the lot, the setbacks require that the home's façade be curved therefore the house is designed in segments. Some trees will have to be removed in the center of the site. Three sections of the house will contain 1800 sq feet on the first level, including the garage, the second level will be 1400 sq ft, the total square footage will be 3500-3600 sq feet. The base wall will be stone and the siding will be a mixture of cedar and stucco. The maximum height will be 35 feet high (average height will be 26 feet). No variances are required for the project. Councilmember Long stated that she no longer owns the land at 37 Wellesley Circle and feels that the house is too big

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2014-04 Council approved the January Meeting minutes with two revisions:

- 1) Under 2 Vassar Circle discussion, insertion of "Mr. Hirsch contacted NCC about possibly lowering the price to allow for a Town park. He said the NCC declined."
- 2) Under 2 Vassar Circle discussion, insertion of "Councilmember Stiglitz urged Mr. Hirsch to not delay his subdivision plans while the Town completed its surveys and collected information regarding road width."

ADVENTURE THEATRE-MUSICAL THEATRE CENTER

Michael Bobbitt, resident and Producing Artistic Director of AT-MTC, reported on the current financial status of AT-MTC due to the federal government shutdown in 2013; the theatre company lost close to \$20,000 which was not covered by insurance. Mr. Bobbitt noted that he has approached individuals, corporations, family foundations and other organizations to help with the shortfall. Mr. Bobbitt also mentioned that AT-MTC had received expressions of interest from Broadway producers, whereupon Councilmember Long asked what were future long-range plans for AT-MTC, and Mayor Beers asked if AT-MTC saw itself leaving the park. Mr. Bobbitt said that he could not speculate at this time given the growth of the program, the restriction of space and GEPPAC is currently considering a new ten year plan that could directly affect AT-MTC. Councilmember Stiglitz noted his concern that another organization that might approach the Town with a similar request for a donation from the town. Ms. Bodnarchuk noted that this is a special opportunity to support the arts in our town.

Motion 2014-05 Councilmember McCaffrey made a motion to donate \$1500 to AT-MTC. The motion failed for want of a second.

Motion 2014-06 Councilmember McCaffrey amended the previous motion to \$1000. Councilmember Long seconded. Councilmembers Long, McCaffrey and Matney voted for the motion; Councilmember Stiglitz voted against.

Motion 2014-07 to move \$300 from contingency to community contributions proposed by Councilmember Matney, seconded by Councilmember McCaffrey. Councilmembers Long, McCaffrey and Matney voted for the motion; Councilmember Stiglitz voted against.

GAS INSTALLATION PERMIT

Discussion was tabled on a draft permit to be considered for adoption in March.

TOWN HALL USE

Councilmember Long reported on the use of the Town Hall by residents and others. She asked Council to consider an increase in the fees charged for Town Hall rental (unchanged since 2001) and to reduce the number of free uses by Town residents from three to two. The uses will remain transferrable. Councilmember McCaffrey asked if the rates were comparable to other rental venues. Councilmember Long noted that they are but other venues use other means to calculate the rental cost (*e.g.* Bannockburn charges by the hour). Councilmember Matney proposed raising the rates a consistent 50% across the board (the only change from Councilmember Long's proposal was the private use from \$800 to \$750).

Motion 2014-08 to change the rates of the Town Hall as proposed effective July 1st. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Long also reported that the Family Dance program has moved to GEP and will no longer request use of the Town Hall as its winter location.

DISCUSSION OF 2 VASSAR CIRCLE

Council and Mayor reported that the land survey completed by Snider and Associates on 2 Vassar Circle has been completed, the lot is over 25,000 sq feet, therefore the requisite footage for four lots. However, Mayor Beers noted that she and Council are still concerned about the width of the street (for emergency crew access) and the Town will look into the necessary width for safer ingress/egress and parking. Mr. Hirsch asked if it was the Town's intent to take property away, *e.g.* an easement for pavement. Mayor Beers said that the Town will weigh in on the subdivision process whether by easement or grant of some kind but how the street will be widened will be up to Park & Planning. Mr. Hirsch asked what was the Town's position on the property. Council and Mayor noted that they would be talking to the Town attorney which was the appropriate legal vehicle to determine the Town's position. Council and Mayor noted that they would not be able to investigate the street width until Mr. Hirsch submitted his subdivision proposal.

Mayor Beers reported on the 1956 quit claim deed found by Mr. Hirsch's attorney, Erin Girard, released the 1939 non-commercial use of 2 Vassar Circle covenant. The covenant was released so that GEBC could refinance the property to develop the church.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Councilmember Stiglitz asked Mr. Hirsch if he planned to restore the street cut on Harvard Avenue soon. Mr. Hirsch noted that it was WSSC that made the street cut. Ms. Levin reported that Harvard was closed without notice during WSSC's street cut on the last Friday of the month resulting in heavy traffic for the post office. Another problem associated with construction is building material stored on the streets and contractors blocking intersection visibility. Council discussed the damage caused to streets by dumpsters and proposed posting a bond for all dumpsters stored on Town streets when the ordinances are revisited. Mr. White said that with the number of constructions and changes happening in the Town, it makes sense for the Town to get ahead in the future; he proposed a group of residents to look after zoning and parking issues.

Ms. Fordham said that it is essential for such a committee to have experienced, professional urban planning staff.

C/T Fraser reported that she was running low on copies of the Glen Echo history book written by Carlotta Anderson. She plans to have another set printed.

Councilmember Long reported that a Pepco representative, named Justin Evans, has contacted several residents and the Town about upcoming pole and wire replacement that will require tree trimming.

The April Council Meeting was changed from April 14th to April 7th to accommodate holiday schedules

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Fraser
Clerk-Treasurer

Deborah Beers, Mayor

Date

Attachments: GEP/CBNHS February 2014 park report by Mr. LaRocca
Councilmember Long's revision of the Town Hall Rental fees