

Olney Town Center

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Tuesday, June 24, 2008 – 7:30 p.m.
Olney Library, Large Meeting Room, Olney, Maryland

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) members in attendance: Jim Smith-Chair, Bob Beard, Joe Buffington, RE/MAX Realty Centre, Eileen Cahill, Mark Feinroth, Joe Fritsch, Paula Kahla, Dorothy Kane, Walter Lee, and Helene Rosenheim.

Others present:; Karen Rollings, Prudential Advantage Realty; Joseph Eagan, MCPL Olney Library, Jim and Mary Haddow, Hallowell HOA; Drew and father, Boy Scout

Call to Order/Acceptance of Agenda/Approval of Minutes/Announcements

Chair Jim Smith called the regular meeting of the OTCAC to order at 7:35 pm. The agenda was accepted with a change to add the outreach subcommittee report as letter G. The minutes of the May, 2008 meeting minutes were distributed for review.

Member and public comments session: None.

No announcements.

Guest Presenter: Karen Rollings, Olney Station Concept and Needs of Perspective Tenants.

Karen distributed a package showing the location of the properties, artist rendering and comparable properties in the Kentlands and Lakelands, Gaithersburg. She has received approximately 150 – 200 phone calls from the initial flyers, 150 were interested in owning something in Olney. Parking situation prevents what the public demand would like to see. There is a current waiting list of interested buyers. Some of the potential uses were a deli, a café, etc. and condos - upscale and investors. The envisioned pattern of ownership is condo ownership.

The potential rents for this type of property is approximately \$40 sf for retail space, \$22 sf for office space and would be built for the end consumer to buy. Currently it is a 2 acre parcel. Efforts were made to assemble the other parcels along N. High St. The total proposed square footage is not yet known. Eileen suggested checking with land use attorneys for developer leads. Ms. Rollings will keep the committee updated on progress.

Joe Buffington discussed the commercial interest in the Buffington Building. Doctors, attorneys, CPA, Real Estate offices, Physical therapy are the user types mostly interested in the space. Bob Beard has had many conversations with Karen Rollings regarding the interest in the Olney Station project.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Report – Jim reported on the Georgia Ave corridor/concept study meeting. The Beltway to county line north is Khalid’s area of focus. Near the Beltway and Glenmont is the focus area for future of residences/properties being added to or special exceptions requested. The corridor falls under 4 or 5 different master plans. 1 common issue is pedestrian issues /safety proximity of vehicles and people/sidewalks. There are currently largely single-family uses between commercial centers. Growth should occur at transportation centers – Wheaton and Glenmont.

Three future scenarios for Georgia Ave:

1. Leave the corridor as is and follow the master plan.
2. Rezone to a higher density. There currently is no real right of way for improvements like sidewalks, a greenway, buffer zones. Possible redevelopment through townhouses in lieu of single family detached. This approach takes time to assemble the parcels to redevelop.
3. Develop as a transit corridor, allowing accessory apartments within the same two story house, and restricting parking. Maintain property with improvements to property appearance. Not all Planning Board members favor this. More analysis on this and other development scenarios is needed.

A major focus of the Georgia Ave study remains pedestrian/transit-oriented directed growth. The county is considering MXTC zoning at the intersection of Georgia Ave and Connecticut Ave. Eileen asked Khalid to clarify “Transit Friendly”. Concept of keeping Georgia Ave moving with ICC and 28 intersection.

That is what is behind the no recommendation for change in land use pattern between Metro centers. If there is no green buffer, then the sidewalk is considered to be missing.

Jim also discussed the Hallowell HOA seat and reviewing of the Committee’s rules for turn over of HOA seats. All nominated and approved members are at-large members. Jim explained the process, and that there are ways to be involved with the committee without having a seat on the committee. Helene discussed the length of term as being for the life of committee. Hallowell found this unusual for Committee of this nature as it could discourage community members’ involvement in sub committee’s if there is no hope of a seat. The education process is long and involved. The membership listing on website currently describes members as “representing” their organization. It was proposed that we change the wording of HOA members to be ‘Nominated by’ or ‘Resident’ to clarify.

Revised Work Program: Jim presented a draft revised work plan for the upcoming year:
Proposed changes:

Added under activity 2 – template for proposal review.

Goal 2 added “public/private”

Activity 7 reworded to Master Plan goals. Eileen is Chair.

Added activity 8. DPWT is changing to separate the Transportation functions into the new Dept. of Transportation (DOT).

Activity 12 referenced the Georgia Ave concept study. County road code has been approved and these new standards should be reflected in our products. Violations can continue until new development occurs, unless it becomes a public safety issue. Then the County can step in.

Town commons/civic building programs of requirements. Jim cautioned members on verbiage/intent used in these descriptions so as not to mislead public/community on what will be provided. Change title to ‘Concept Paper’ per discussion of Laura’s email. Khalid discussed how some portion of the 20% open space can be traded for a more expensive amenity. For example a 6-acre public space versus 4-acres and building. Khalid clarified that interior public use space is allowed as part of public space requirement for lots (FAR).

Activity 11 – Property owners subcommittee – Joe Buffington is chair.

Activity 8 – Bob Beard suggested deleting “High-priority” from the name of that subcommittee making it the “Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee”.

Helene Rosenheim moved that the OTCAC approve the amended work program for 2008-2010. Bob Beard seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Jim is to present an update to GOCA. Khalid will notify us when the Committee will be scheduled to present the Concept to the Planning Board.

Mike Reilly with the Freeman Companies proposed meeting the week after the 4th of July at their location to review their status with a small group of the committee.

Eileen distributed the open meeting act memorandum to the committee. Mark Feinroth will read through and discuss at the next meeting of OTCAC. Executive Committee to review prior to Freeman meeting and get legal opinions of Ethics department and county attorney’s office. Helene may have contact information available for these offices.

Illustrative Concept Plan Subcommittee – The committee is to review the design guidelines for changes to reflect illustrative plan changes. Comments are due by July 16th.

The Concept plan will be comprised of two parts: Concept plan and design guidelines. Design guidelines separated out from current Planning Board submissions. This will become part of the template for developers. Khalid stated how the design guidelines support the plan and intent.

Rules Subcommittee – Postponed to July.

Outreach Subcommittee – Communication to property owners – Joe Buffington.

Found 20 people/property owners and left messages with 9. Joe sends website links and indication of a fall meeting / presentation. Email contacts obtained.

Discoveries:

- Concern over the privacy of the property owners.
- Development capacity and traffic test requirements will require planning board review if property owners were to redevelop.
- There was an interest in opening Mannequin Pis center to Saul center. This may not have to go through planning.
- Very little response from High Street.
- Good Earth property owner is interested in talking with neighbors, feels the garden center may not be the best use for property in town center.

Helene followed up on the Zlotnick's concern about the pothole between Jerry's Sub Shop and the 7-Eleven, and has referred the question to the Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs who will follow up on the issue.

Joe questioned if he was exempt from the do not call list, exempt because he is not selling anything.

Jim asked for an ongoing list of attendance at events, this will help guide the county on the efforts made.

Rotary rescheduled for July due to water main issues.

There will be future outreach dealing with the guidelines currently in development. Community outreach opportunity for Summer concert series, Kim offered a table for OTCAC.

Website Subcommittee – changing membership page to 'nominated by'. The page listing the Gazette articles is almost ready.

Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee – Helene Rosenheim report that the subcommittee met with property owners around shopping center. They reviewed the state highway recommendations. Prohibit left turn into shopping center per SHA. Joe, Helene and group brainstormed to send 3 recommended proposals, then these will be taken to associated groups. A letter is being prepared to go to SHA, that will hopefully be ready next month.

PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS

Library – Nancy will have draft by September.

Chamber – Paula submitted the draft at the meeting.

Mid County Satellite Office – Helene has completed.

Police substation – Paula, completed.

Teen center – Dorothy

Community meeting area – Helene, it will be ready for review at the next meeting.

Town commons – Helene

Jim will send the template to the committee.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was an article in the Gazette regarding the Clarksburg Town Center / Illustrative Plan on Wednesday, article on public private partnership workings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM

Submitted by Nancy DeLalio



Work Program
May 2008 through April 2010
Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Adopted: June 24, 2008

The purpose of this document is to outline a clear description of the goals for the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee proposed by the Executive Committee during the second term for officers—May 2008 through April 2010.

Below are four high-level goals comprising twelve specific activities that are designed to address the core objectives of our charter. These goals were presented to the committee in the May 2008 meeting for discussion. They were revised per discussion and are being presented for approval at the June 2008 meeting.

Goal I. Education of Committee (May 2008 – April 2010)

Activity 1: Orient new members to the information resources needed to accomplish our goals. Maintain a core set of materials that will be delivered to new members in the future. (Executive Subcommittee and Planning Staff)

Activity 2: Continue to improve the committee's understanding of development issues required to make informed decisions on upcoming development proposals. (Executive Subcommittee and Planning Staff)

- Invite guest speakers to committee meetings.
- Seek written resources on relevant topics.
- Identify additional nearby locations that offer relevant examples of mixed-use urban planning forms and other styles of urban design.
- Develop a review template to use as a guide when reviewing development proposals.

Goal II. Complete the Illustrative Concept of the Master Plan and the Concept Plan for a Civic Center/Town Commons (May 2008 – June 2009)

Activity 3: Complete the Illustrative Concept of the Master Plan to provide a common community-based vision of what the future town center could look like and how it might function in relation to the surrounding neighborhoods. Deliver the document to the Planning Board. (Illustrative Concept Plan Subcommittee, September 2008)

Activity 4: Create a Concept Plan for a civic center and town commons that will specify functional requirements and explore opportunities for public/private partnerships. (Executive Subcommittee, June 2009)

Goal III. Review Development Proposals (Ongoing)

Activity 5: Review development proposals that are slated to go to the Planning Board and formulate our committee's recommendation. Appear before the Planning Board for all development proposals in the town center to present our recommendation. Form a new subcommittee to lead this activity. (New subcommittee, Ongoing)

Activity 6: Monitor development proposals for neighboring developments and provide input related to design and functional use as appropriate. (Executive Subcommittee, Ongoing)

Activity 7: Develop recommendations for capital improvement projects that support the realization of the master plan goals. Identify a point person or new subcommittee for this activity. (New subcommittee, Ongoing)

Activity 8: Maintain contact with MD State Highway Administration and M. Co. DPW&T. Develop specific recommendations to increase pedestrian safety and to further identify and improve high-priority pedestrian crossings. (Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee, Ongoing)

Goal IV. Maintain a Level of Outreach to the Community (Ongoing)

Activity 9: Maintain www.olneytowncenter.org so that it is current and accurate and provides useful information to the public, to members, and to developers. (Website Subcommittee, Ongoing)

Activity 10: Develop and implement an effective outreach plan for the Concept Plan for the civic center/town commons and for the Development Guidelines. (Outreach Subcommittee, June 2009)

Activity 11: Develop and implement an effective plan to collect input from and facilitate communication among property owners in the town center and disseminate information relevant to their interests such as the opportunities afforded by mixed-use zone. Form a new Property Owners Subcommittee. (Property Owners Subcommittee, Ongoing)

Activity 12: Participate in any county-wide visioning exercises or planning activities (including the Georgia Avenue Concept Study) that impact the Olney Town Center that occur during the period of this work plan. (All members, Ongoing)