

Olney Town Center

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Monday, November 19, 2007 – 7:30 p.m.
Olney Inn Room, Sandy Spring Bank, Olney, Maryland

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) members in attendance: Jim Smith, Chair; Sunita Bhatia, Vice Chair; Gina Angiola, Eileen Cahill, Nancy DeLalio; Joe Fritsch; Paula Kahla; Dorothy Kane; Walter Lee, Michael Reilly; and Helene Rosenheim.

Others present: Khalid Afzal, OTCAC's liaison from Park and Planning; Bob Beard, GOCA/OTCAC Outreach Subcommittee; Nancy Floreen, County Council – At-Large; Tom Gallagher, Esq, former OTCAC member; Mary Jane Heinbuch, Olney Library; Karen Rollings, Rollings & Associates; and Alan Wandell, Rollings & Associates

Chairman Jim Smith called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. The agenda was accepted with 1 change. The minutes from the October meetings was approved with 2 corrections of misspelled names. .

- Nancy Floreen thanked the Committee for all that they are doing. She came to listen, and noted the changes to the Growth Policy that could affect Olney:
 - Imposing a requirement 25% trip reduction obligation on everything, although she was not sure exactly how this would impact developers and the efforts of the OTCAC.
 - Adopting tighter school capacity tests.
 - Accessing an additional school facilities fee in addition to the new school impact fees for children from new homes that will attend schools in the Blake Cluster.
 - Increasing traffic impact fees.
 - Accessing increased impact fees on office space and retail space. These changes apply to new and significant additions to existing structures. Have to pass this 25% reduction test before it can get approved.
 - Increasing the recordation tax for homes valued over \$50,000.

The range of mitigation measures is still being developed. Since town center is in large part a replacement of office or retail, this may have a more limited impact. The new density would be affected by this. Ms. Floreen also noted that over the next year the Council will be looking at parking lots with the idea of seeing if requirements can be reduced.

- Jim read a letter from Joe Buffington in response to the presentation at the October GOCA meeting in which SHA proposed right-in/right out of the Olney Shopping Center and some proposals for increasing safety for pedestrians on the southwest corner of the Rte 97/108 intersection. Joe felt that the Chamber needed to take a position on this proposal. It was also noted that this is a matter that needs to be addressed by the OTCAC. Jim noted that this is relevant to a follow-on discussion he had with the SHA representatives in which they asked for a task force to identify issues relating to each of the intersections/entrances with high

pedestrian safety concerns. Helene Rosenheim, Bob Beard, Sunita B. and Paula Kahla agreed to serve on that task force. Ms. Floreen did not feel that capacity issues should override pedestrian safety issues.

Proposed Olney Station Concept – Jim noted that Karen Rollings owns several properties in the southwest quadrant of Olney, down N.High Street and between N. High and Morningwood Dr. Ms. Rollings noted that she has assembled about 2.5 acres. She had hoped to assemble at least 5 acres with other property owners. But, she feels she has enough land to move forward to create something nice. She wants to build townhouses that the businesses could own rather than rent. The buildings would be similar to the Kentlands with retail on the ground floor, office on 1 or 2 floors and then residential luxury condominium apartments on the top floor. She has gotten a lot of response, and they have determined that if they built now, the units would sell immediately. Based on the land they have, they could probably build about 15 units. They have been approached by restaurants and some doctors who see a lot of patients, but she thinks those are too intense requiring too much parking. They have also been approached by someone interested in a small deli, a bridal shop and other interesting uses some of which are not in Olney yet.

There would likely be access from N. High St to Morningwood, but she will be relying on a development expert to address all those kinds of issues. Bob Beard noted that his association, Homeland Village HOA is very interested in what they are doing there. She has approached the other property owners on that street, but most are not interested in joining in this venture. She envisions something like a quaint area of shops with some public park-like areas. Of the calls she has received so far, 5% were community questions, including a lot of people soon to be empty-nesters looking for an apartment to own in the town center and the rest were business people interested in doing something in Olney. She feels rents are high in Olney which makes it difficult for small business owners.

There was some discussion of how the Committee can assist her, which was mostly with ideas for uses, and how she can help the Committee by attending meetings and working with the Committee.

Mr. Wandell noted that the concept he saw at our last meeting, showed a 2-acre site with a parking garage and they found with the size and shape lots they have, this would not work because of the cost of the parking garage.

Sample Marketing Video from the Anacostia River project – Khalid Afzal reviewed a sample marketing video he had received for the Anacostia River project in Washington, DC. He did not know who produced it or what it cost, but thought it was well done. He received it as a DVD.

2008 Fact Sheet – Jim presented a draft of a revised OTCAC Fact Sheet that reflects the meeting dates for 2008, the new meeting location, and the work plan for 2008. The consensus was to not plan for an August meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Subcommittee – Dorothy Kane discussed the 3 objectives of the outreach effort. They proposed a 3-panel presentation board that could be used with or without someone with it to discuss the presentation with the public; a series of venues for presenting this panel; single-panel laminated boards that could be posted around the town, and additional press coverage. It was suggested that a Powerpoint presentation can be used both at the Library sessions and at the

GOCA meeting in December. There was some discussion of the text and graphics on the 3 panels. There will also be a 1 panel poster that will be laminated to leave at a few select locations such as the Post Office. And, there would be a large flyer that could be posted in store windows, and a smaller flyer. The public comment draft is expected to be on the website by December 11.

Nominating Subcommittee – Sunita Bhatia reported that the OTCAC had received a nomination form for Eileen Cahill to be the new representative for the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board. **Sunita moved that Ms. Cahill’s nomination be accepted which it was unanimously.**

Website Subcommittee – Helene Rosenheim noted she will update the Members page now that both Mike Reilly and Eileen Cahill have been approved for membership. Her husband, Eliot has taken over 300 pictures in and around the Rte. 97/108 intersection. She is going to narrow that down to a number of alternatives to use with the pictures we received taken of the intersection in 1975 to get others opinions on which to use with them. She will intersperse many of the pictures that are of areas a little further from the intersection on the different pages on the website.

NEW BUSINESS - None

Meeting Dates for 2008 – Jim presented the following list of dates for meetings in 2008.

January 22	May 27	September 23
February 26	June 24	October 28
March 25	July 22	November 25
April 22	No August Meeting	December 23

The proposed meeting dates were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by Helene Rosenheim