

# *Olney Town Center*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee  
Monday, June 18, 2007 – 7:30pm  
Sandy Spring Bank, Olney Inn Room

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (“OTCAC”) members in attendance: Jim Smith, Sunita Bhatia, Paula Kahla, Tom Gallagher, Helene Rosenheim, Dorothy Kane, Nancy DeLalio, Gina Angiola, Walter Lee and Joe Fritsch. Bill Caldwell of RTKL, Miche Booz of Miche Booz Architect Inc., and Khalid Afzal, OTCAC’s liaison from Park and Planning, also attended.

Chairman Jim Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. The minutes from the May 21, 2007 unanimously approved.

Tom Gallagher recorded the minutes for the meeting currently in progress.

### Subcommittee Reports

**Executive Subcommittee**— Jim led a discussion regarding the newly constructed Rockville Town Center. It was decided to attempt and hold the August OTCAC meeting on-site in Rockville. Tom Gallagher was tasked with contacting Federal Realty to see if they would provide a representative to tour the group through the site. Paula Kahla was going to contact the Rockville librarian with respect to securing a meeting room at that facility for the night. Tom also advised that he would contact Rockville’s mayor about having someone from the city be available to talk to the OTCAC about the project.

**Website Subcommittee**— Helene Rosenheim inquired as to any problems with anyone’s email on the site.

**Logo Subcommittee**— Paula and Jim then presented the revised logo for the OTCAC that cleaned up some of the graphics. It was decided that the digital version should be tracked down and placed on the group’s website. With the logo subcommittee’s work completed, the group was dissolved.

**Illustrative Concept Plan Subcommittee**—Nancy DeLalio, on behalf of the Illustrative Concept Plan Subcommittee, introduced Bill Caldwell who presented the first draft of

RTKL's work on the subject. Bill noted that the drawings set forth are very conceptual in nature and that it is difficult when working with multiple properties under differing ownership. He also stated that the group and RTKL need to be sensitive to the fact that concepts may be developed that include properties where the existing owners have an ongoing business and that such plans are purely concepts and not binding on such owners.

The presentation consisted of some information on existing conditions, plans and drawings from the adopted master plan, and information on the MXTC zone. The presentation also contained slides that depicted conceptual build-outs in the four different quadrants of the 90 acres making up the Olney Town Center planning area [no concepts were depicted on the majority of the Freeman Companies properties given the pending planning contemplated on those parcels by the Freeman group].

Some general comments by Bill Caldwell included the following; (i) the contemplated density of 20 units per acre is light for trying to accomplish the type of density and activity level that is often sought in a town center; (ii) the creation of some signature/gateway element to announce the arrival in the town center is an important goal; (iii) work needs to be undertaken to work with the county and state to slow down and calm traffic to create a more pedestrian friendly and connected town center; and (iv) thought will be need to address funding issues as more expensive construction (especially in terms of structured parking) is contemplated in the future. There was some brief discussion about what, if any, public funding was used in Rockville in conjunction with the recent redevelopment there.

Bill Caldwell then took the group through the different quadrants of the town center area. It was noted that many long-term businesses are located in the area and that much analysis would be required to ensure that the uses (such as gas and automotive repair), financial implications (potential for steeper rents) and the owner's needs were addressed moving forward.

The southeast quadrant garnered substantial discussion as the subject of the two larger parcels and the grocery uses thereon came under review. The need to have open space in each quadrant of the area was also discussed as well as the need for signalization throughout the town center. It was noted, given the relatively small area, that the northwest quadrant would be tight as redevelopment is contemplated in that sector. Additional topics discussed at this point included the potential for transferring density within the town center area, eliminating free-flow turning at the intersection of routes 108 & 97, the removal of medians to slow traffic, parallel parking (including the potential for primary roads), fire and rescue design criteria and the concept of a circle at 108 & 97.

Upon completion of the presentation, there was additional discussion on the subject and RTKL was asked to make some revisions based on the comments made then and after further consulting with the Illustrative Concept Plan Subcommittee before the next OTCAC meeting. It was determined that RTKL would present a revised plan at the next meeting.

Miche Booz then presented the second phase of his work on the Olney area vernacular and architecture and future applications as redevelopment takes place. Miche distributed hardcopy reports of his study on the topic commissioned by Carl M. Freeman Associates. Miche, picking up on his first phase of analysis, began with an overview of historic structures, as well as more recent construction in the Olney area (relatively recent).

Miche then ran the group through an analysis of other town centers in the region, discussing the differing origins and how the history impacted the architecture of such areas. Examples reviewed included, Ellicot City, Frederick and Annapolis. Miche also provided the OTCAC with more recent examples of additions to the referenced towns wherein structures were renovated or completely new structures were built that complemented those already in place. There was then presentation of even more recent projects such as Washingtonian and Pentagon Row, focusing on their massing and mixed-use aspects.

Miche finished up his presentation and advised that he would forward an electronic version for posting on the OTCAC website.

#### Unfinished Business

**Template of Program of Requirements (POR)**—Discussion on POR was tabled for a later meeting.

#### New Business

The group discussed the need for outreach to the greater community regarding the OTCAC's work. After further discussion, a Community Outreach Subcommittee consisting of Dorothy Kane, Paula Kahla and Gina Angiola was created.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.