

Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

Minutes of Meeting of June 21, 2017

Next Meeting: July 19, 2017

ATTENDEES

Brookdale: Bob Cope
Chevy Chase West: Naomi Spinrad
Chevy Chase Village:
Drummond:
Friendship Heights Village: Mike Dorsey, Melanie White
Glen Echo Heights: Harry Pfohl
Green Acres - Glen Cove: Danuta Wilson
Kenwood (the subdivision): Pat Johnson
Kenwood condominium: Nikki Lak, Sue Schumacher
Kenwood House Coop: Jean Iker, Judy Throckmorton
Kenwood Place:
Town of Somerset: Marnie Shaul, Kumar Vaswari, Barbara Zeughauser
Somerset House II: Julie Davis, John Metz
Springfield: Phyllis Edelman
Sumner:
Sumner Village Condo:
Westmoreland Hills: Celia Martin, Barry Miller
Westbard Mews: Lynne Battle
Westwood Mews:
Wood Acres: June Gardner, John McLaughlin

Mr. Pfohl called the meeting to order at 8:01 p.m.

Administrative Business:

- The agenda for the meeting was approved.
- The minutes of May 17, 2017 were approved.
- Treasurer's Report: Sue Schumacher reported that 10 of the 19 2016 member communities of the CCCFH have paid their dues for 2017. They are: Brookdale, Chevy Chase Village, Chevy Chase West, Glen Echo Heights, Kenwood (the subdivision), Kenwood Condo, Somerset, Springfield, Westwood Mews and Wood Acres. There were no expenses in May.
- MCCF Report: Sue Schumacher reported that the MCCF discussed a new ZTA which would allow cell towers to go into neighborhoods. The new towers would be smaller than current towers and required to be 20 feet from residences. The county is preparing for 5G.
- July/August meetings. It was suggested by Mr. Pfohl that since several board members will be away on July 19, the date of the next regular meeting, that a meeting be held in August instead of July. This will be determined at a later date.

- Mr. Pfohl read a thank you note he received from the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail for the \$500 donation the CCCFH made towards the Capital Crescent Trail Park.
- A motion was made and passed that Norman Knopf should receive up to \$100 for projected expenses to archive old CCCFH files stored in the Somerset Town Hall.

Reports:

- **5550 Friendship Blvd.** (Melanie Rose White) The owner of this 76'-tall building, of which more than 90% is rented, proposes a 180' building in front of it, leaving a small patch of green next to it. The Village of Friendship Heights protested, asking the owner to keep within the goals and objectives of the 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan, which does not permit a 180' building on that site. Consequently, the developer returned with a plan to knock down the current building and build a 90-foot tall building encompassing almost the entire site and with an even smaller patch of green.

As a result, the Village of Friendship Heights asked the CCCFH for its support of the following resolution, which is also supported by Somerset House I:

The CCCFH opposes any amendment to the 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan to allow greater height or density. The CCCFH supports its member organization, the Village of Friendship Heights, in its opposition to the development proposals for 5550 Friendship Blvd that were presented to the Village Council at its June 12, 2017 meeting.

The motion was seconded and passed by the member organizations present.

The CCCFH will write a letter to the planning department to support this motion.

- **Bicycle Master Plan.** (Harry Pfohl) David Anspacher, Project Manager for the Bicycle Master Plan has made several county presentations on it. To see the slideshow, please go to this [link](#). To view the Bicycle Master Plan and to comment on it, go to: www.mcatlas.org/bikereact/ **Comments will be accepted until July 15, 2017.** The plan is expected to be presented to the Planning Board in the fall of 2017 and approved by the County Council in 2018.
- **The following items all relate to Westbard and were discussed as a group: Update on sketch plan/HOC/cemetery** (Notes from Lloyd Guerci); **Legal Status of Save Westbard lawsuit.** (Celia Martin); and **Lawsuit challenging Planning Board decision on sketch plan re: HOC-cemetery site** (Notes from Lloyd Guerci)
 - An appeal was filed seeking judicial review of the Montgomery County Planning Board's April resolution regarding the sketch plan adopted by the PB in February.
 - Cross motions for summary judgment regarding the lawsuit against the County Council and supported by Save Westbard have been filed (along with a motion to dismiss by the defendant). The hearing will be in mid-July.

In response to citizen protests led by the Macedonia Baptist Church, mediation between MBC and Regency Centers is being conducted to determine the scope and method of the investigation that will delineate the boundaries of the cemetery believed to lie on the Westbard site.

- There have been two mediation sessions thus far with the MBC, Regency Centers, Planning Board and HOC. Another mediation session is planned for July. Mediation by definition is nonbinding. One or another of the parties could walk away from whatever decision is made.
- **ZTA 16-17 on Rooftop Terraces.** (Lynne Battle) The County Council rejected this resolution proposed by Marc Elrich, which would require rooftop structures to be included within the height limit of the structure. The CCCFH supported this resolution as did several member communities.
- **Communications Committee** (Celia Martin). An ad hoc Communications Committee was formed with Celia Martin as chair and members Jennifer O’Keefe, Pete Salinger, Lynn Battle and Harry Pfohl.

The objective of the committee is: to improve communications with member delegates, member association presidents and through them reach the residents in the member communities. At the core of this is the CCCFH website and the blog within the website that includes a brief summary of the substance of the meeting and is published shortly after the conclusion of the meeting. Readers should make their concerns known to their CCCFH delegates. Ms. Martin, recommends that there be a contact email for those with inquiries and comments. She has volunteered to screen and respond to them,

Other recommendations regarding which items should or should not be on the website were also mentioned by Ms. Martin.

- **Update on Bethesda downtown plan** (Naomi Spinrad) The Bethesda Downtown Plan was voted on by the County Council at the end of May. A key provision, supported by local communities, that no height be added to the edges of the plan, was deleted before adoption. With this height limitation deleted, properties that are now zoned for 30-50 feet in height could go up to 70 feet in height and theoretically reach 90 feet.

On June 13, the Council held a hearing on ZTA 16-20, which is also referred to as the Bethesda Overlay Zone. This covers aspects of the BDP that are not covered in the master plan zoning. Among them, and of great concern to the single-family home and townhouse communities between Bradley Blvd and Norwood Park, is the height and density associated with MPDUs. The ZTA would increase the minimum percentage of MPDUs to 15%. There is substantial community opposition to additional height or density as an incentive for more than 15% MPDUS in any area that is near a residential community or serves as a transition area to one. There are also concerns about density transfers, which are another mechanism for adding density.

Any additional height and density between Norwood Park and Bradley Blvd will put a strain on Somerset Elementary School, which cannot be expanded and is on the second smallest site of an MCPS school. Somerset has capacity for 515 students and is projected to be at a minimum between 70 and 101 students over capacity in each of the next six years. There are already about a dozen multi-family buildings in this area that are likely to be redeveloped, with new height limits at 70 feet instead of the 30-50 feet they are now.

In addition, and of significant concern, is the opportunity for density transfer under the ZTA. Aldon Properties and the HOC own most, if not all of the rental housing south of Bradley Blvd. Both also own properties in the Bethesda plan area. HOC testified that it wants to transfer density to the Barclay apartments on Bradley, which it could rebuild.

A request was made by Naomi Spinrad, representing Chevy Chase West and CBAR, that the CCCFH write a letter asking why the height limitation on the edges was deleted from the plan. The council is moving fast and the letter is needed within the next five days.

A motion was made that the CCCFH write a letter to the Council with the above request and was approved by the members in attendance.

- **Appointment of Manual Ochoa as the CCCFH rep to the Friendship Heights Transportation Management District (FHTMD).** Manual Ochoa's nomination as the CCCFH rep to the Friendship Heights TMD was [approved by the County Council](#) on June 13, 2017.

New Business/Miscellaneous:

- The Chevy Chase Club wants to build a small building in the middle of the Club. No action needed by CCCFH.
- The renewal of dues -- \$65 -- for the Montgomery County Civic Federation is required.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Pete Salinger,

Phyllis Edelman