

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

VILLAGE COUNCIL

MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
MICHAEL MEZEY, *Chairman*
CAROLINA ZUMARAN-JONES, *Vice Chairman*
PAULA DURBIN, *Secretary*
KATHLEEN G. COOPER, *Treasurer*
BRUCE R. PIRNIE, *Parliamentarian*
MICHAEL J. DORSEY
JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*

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APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING

March 9, 2020

ATTENDEES:

Melanie Rose White, Mayor; Michael Mezey, Chairman; Carolina Zumaran-Jones, Vice Chairman; Paula Durbin, Secretary; Kathleen Cooper, Treasurer; Bruce Pirnie, Parliamentarian; Michael Dorsey, Council member; Julian Mansfield, Village Manager; Robert Shapiro, Assistant Village Manager; and approximately 20 residents.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mezey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ms. White made the following announcements:

The second and final public hearing on the Proposed Village Operating Budget for Fiscal 2021 would take place after the Treasurer's report and would be followed by the Council's vote on the Budget and the tax rate.

The Mayor, the Chair, the Village Manager and the Assistant Manager met with two developers and their lawyers regarding the redevelopment of 5520 Wisconsin Ave. (Summary of the meeting is attached and made part of the minutes.) The Council heard questions and concerns from the public.

The Council Finance Committee was to meet Tuesday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Village Center.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO AND FROM COUNCIL:

The Council heard comments from members of the audience.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Ms. Durbin moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded, to approve the minutes of the Council's public session of February 10 and closed session minutes of March 3. The motion carried. (7-0-0)

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Cooper presented the financial summary for period ending Feb 29, 2020.

Final Public Hearing on Proposed Budget and Tax Rate for Fiscal 2021:

Mr. Mezey invited written or verbal comments from the public on the Proposed Budget for Fiscal 2021. Pursuant to recognition by the Chair, each speaker was limited to three minutes and could not cede time to another individual.

Discussion/vote on Budget and Tax Rate for Fiscal 2021:

Ms. Durbin moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded, to approve the Fiscal 2021 Budget. The motion carried. (6-0-1)

Ms. Durbin moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded, to approve the Fiscal 2021 Tax Rate. The motion carried. (7-0-0)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Report from the Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights (CCCFH): Ms. White reported that the CCCFH met on February 19 and discussed the following:

- (1) The recap of the update on Willard Avenue Park by Norman Knopf at the February 10 Council meeting.
- (2) An update on the Capital Crescent Trail Crossing at Little Falls Parkway; and
- (3) The CCCFH's nomination of Jenny Sue Dunner, Montgomery County activist, to receive the Neal Potter award.

The next CCCFH meeting will be held March 18 at 8:00 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall.

Report from the Community Advisory Committee: Ms. White reported that the Community Advisory Committee met on March 4 and discussed the following:

- (1) The presence of garbage and debris on Hills Plaza;
- (2) A suggestion to print in the Newsletter the location of bags for dog waste;
- (3) A reminder to clean up after pets;
- (4) The need for the County to check the new traffic signal near Whole Foods as to whether the light is red too long;

- (5) Barren and eroding sidewalk strips in the Village;
 - (6) The possibility of more frequent meetings for building managers and staff to share updates; and
 - (7) Notice of when the shredding truck would be in the Village.
- The date of the next meeting will be announced in the Newsletter.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion/vote on the addition of shuttle bus stop on Wisconsin Avenue by Barlow Building: Mr. Pirnie withdrew his request that the shuttle bus stop by the Barlow Building because the State of Maryland would only allow the stop on the north side of the crosswalk, which is impractical.

Discussion/vote on the engagement of Attorney David Brown to represent the Council in negotiations with the Chevy Chase Land Company:

Ms. Zumaran-Jones moved, Ms. Durbin seconded, to approve the engagement of Attorney David Brown to represent the Council in negotiations with the Chevy Chase Land Company. The motion carried. (7-0-0)

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/vote on modifying the shuttle bus schedule to include the Westbard Giant on a weekday:

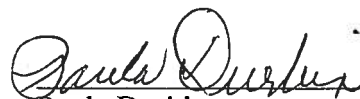
Ms. White moved, Ms. Cooper seconded, to modify the current shuttle bus schedule to include trips to Westbard Giant on Wednesdays between 10:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. The motion carried. (6-0-1)

Discussion of Village Infrastructure: Mr. Dorsey again raised infrastructure issues. After a brief discussion, the Council formed an Infrastructure Committee to identify such issues. The members are Bruce Pirnie, Carolina Zumaran-Jones and Michael Mezey.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Council, Ms. White moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Paula Durbin

Fwd: Summary of Meeting

From: Melanie Rose White (melanierosewhite@gmail.com)

To: mmezey@depaul.edu; spa921@mindspring.com; kgcooper4515@verizon.net; mjdorsey193@gmail.com; czjones28@gmail.com; pirniebruce@gmail.com

Cc: jmansfield@friendshipheightsmd.gov; rshapiro@friendshipheightsmd.gov

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 10:00 PM EST

Hi, everyone,

Please see the summary, by Norman Knopf, of the meeting with Emily Vaias.

We can share this at the March 9 Council meeting.

Thank you,

Melanie

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Norman Knopf <norman.knopf.law@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Feb 19, 2020, 9:53 PM

Subject: Summary of Meeting

To: Melanie Rose White <melanierosewhite@gmail.com>

Melanie,

Melanie,

Below is a brief summary that you requested that I prepare of the meeting with attorney Emily Vaias and her clients so that you might distribute it to all Council members.

Norman Knopf

Donohoe and Carr Companies are proposing to redevelop properties now occupied by Marriott Hotel and the retail stores adjacent to the hotel, south to S. Park Ave.

On Feb. 12th, attorney Emily Vaias, and representatives of her developer clients, met with the Village's land use attorney, Norman Knopf. Also attending were Friendship Heights Village Mayor Melanie White, Village Council Chair Michael Mezey, Village Manager Julian Mansfield and Robert Shapiro, Assistant Manager.

The developers, in the very early stages of planning, explained a preliminary concept plan of possible development, and asked what response might be anticipated from the Village.

The existing Marriott Hotel would remain, the existing retail space from the hotel to S. Park Ave would be greatly reduced in size, and some rebuilt/ redesigned; and a new residential building containing hundreds of dwelling units would be constructed, with a pedestrian through block connection from Wisconsin Ave. to Hills Plaza. Relying on special technical provisions of the zoning code, the height of the residential building would be much greater than 90 ft along Wisconsin Ave, stepping down as it approached Hills Plaza; and the overall development would be at a very great density. The developers were advised that the Village Council in the past had made clear that tall, high density development that blocked views, lacked open space and added to the "canyonization" of the Village was to be avoided. The proposed concept plan appeared to have all these negative characteristics. Also raised was the issue of such an intense project exacerbating the existing traffic congestion on S. Park Ave. Somerset Terrace and Hills Plaza.

The developers advised they would consider the comments in making revisions to their plans. Once their plans became more certain, they would come back to the Village for comments from the Village Council and the public. They were advised that an opportunity to make comments should be provided when the plans were still conceptual and therefore flexible.