

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

VILLAGE COUNCIL

MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
MICHAEL MEZEY, *Chairman*
BRUCE R. PIRNIE, *Vice Chairman*
ALFRED MULLER, M.D., *Secretary*
PAULA DURBIN, *Treasurer*
MICHAEL J. DORSEY, *Parliamentarian*
CAROLINA ZUMARAN-JONES, *Historian*
JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*

4433 SOUTH PARK AVENUE
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815

Phone: 301-656-2797
Fax: 301-907-3922
Email: info@friendshipheightsmd.gov
Website: www.friendshipheightsmd.gov



APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS VILLAGE COUNCIL

Conducted in the Village Center

September 13, 2021

ATTENDEES:

Melanie Rose White, Mayor
Michael Mezey, Chairman
Bruce Pirnie, Vice Chairman
Paula Durbin, Treasurer
Alfred Muller MD, Secretary
Michael Dorsey, Parliamentarian
Julian Mansfield, Village Manager
Attorney Norman Knopf, Council Attorney
Sabrina Hamm, Recoding Secretary from The Professional Documents Service

ABSENT:

Carolina Zumaran-Jones, Historian

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Mezey called the meeting to order at 7:29 p.m.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO AND FROM COUNCIL:

The Council received comments from the following persons:

- Prem Garg asked how the large reserve fund would be spent. Mr. Mezey stated the matter would be discussed during Old Business.
- Roger Cochetti raised concerns about the height of the proposed 5500 Wisconsin Avenue building. Mr. Mezey reported the status of the 5500 project would be covered during Old Business.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor White announced, due to the Columbus Day holiday, the next Village Council meeting will convene on Tuesday, October 12, 2021.

Friendship Heights Village Council Meeting – September 13, 2021 Page 2

Residents were encouraged to attend the Annual Fall Festival Celebration on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at the Village Center. More details will be available via the October 2021 Village newsletter.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Durbin seconded, approval of the minutes from the Council's Public Session held on Monday, July 12, 2021, as presented. The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Durbin seconded, approval of the minutes from the Council's Closed Executive Session held on Monday, July 12, 2021, as presented. The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Durbin presented a summary of the Council's financial standing as of August 31, 2021. Total cash on hand in the General Fund was \$5,603,242.22. Total cash on hand in the Capital Improvements Fund was \$11,298.70. The balance in the OPEB Trust Fund Reserve was \$1,334.93. Following her report, Ms. Durbin and Mr. Mansfield answered questions posed by Council members regarding the latest line item expenses in the financial reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Report from Parks and Grounds Committee: Mr. Pirnie reported on the committee's walk through the Village on Thursday, September 2, 2021, and summarized the conditions in Hubert Humphrey Friendship Park and William Tyler Page Park. Mr. Pirnie also summarized the recommendations raised as a result of the walkthrough.

Mr. Pirnie moved, Ms. Durbin seconded, that the Village plant 18 new trees according to the plan presented in the report of the Parks and Grounds Committee dated Monday, September 13, 2021. The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

Mr. Pirnie moved, Dr. Muller seconded, that the Village remove the holly hedges in Hubert Humphrey Friendship Park and replace them with a dense, easily pruned evergreen hedge that is flush with the edge of the walkway in order to remove tripping hazards. The motion was amended to include replacement of hedges along the pathways leading into the park and carried unanimously (6-0-0).

Report from Community Advisory Committee (CAC): Dr. Muller reported the CAC met on Wednesday, August 4, 2021. The committee discussed:

- (1) Various events/news regarding the surrounding community.
- (2) Work on two issues to develop thoughts and suggestions to the Village Council over the course of the year.
- (3) Ken Niles' leading of an initiative on the parking tickets process, procedure, and dispute resolution.
- (4) Joe Bucherer's leading of an initiative on identifying development for the Village.
- (5) Other areas of review, including vehicular speed enforcement on Village streets, an initiative that will be led by Bill Corey.

The CAC also met on Wednesday, September 1, 2021. The Committee discussed:

- (1) Various events/news regarding the surrounding community.

- (2) Documents related to two initiatives: the parking ticket process, procedure, and dispute resolution (led by Ken Niles); and speed limit enforcement (led by Bill Corey).
- (3) The process to bring recommendations before the Council.
- (4) Ethel Pacheco's agreement to investigate a project to help fund an Afghan refugee family.

Material was provided regarding the development of the Village's identity, but was not discussed, as it is considered a long-term initiative.

The next meeting of the Community Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, October 6, at 5:30 p.m. Dr. Muller asked that the followup report be placed on the Council's October agenda for presentation by the CAC and discussion.

Report from Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH): Mayor White reported that the CCCFH met on Wednesday, July 21, 2021, and discussed the following matters:

- (1) The information presented by Stacy Silber of Lerch, Early & Brewer concerning the 5500 Wisconsin Avenue development project.
- (2) The Thrive Montgomery 2050 plan.
- (3) Zoning tax amendments.

The CCCFH held another meeting on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 and discussed the following:

- (1) The Thrive Montgomery 2050 plan. Between 1,000 and 1,500 petitions have been signed to date. Additional signatures were encouraged.
- (2) The 5500 Wisconsin Avenue development project.

OLD BUSINESS:

Expenses for Architectural Review of 5500 Wisconsin Avenue Development Plans

Following an overview from Attorney Norman Knopf:

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Durbin seconded, to authorize Attorney Norman Knopf to spend up to \$20,000 to secure the services of an architect and a traffic engineer to assist with reviewing and evaluating sketch plan drawings for the 5500 Wisconsin Avenue development project.

Historic Preservation Status—4608 N. Park Avenue

Mr. Mansfield and Dr. Muller met via Zoom with representatives from the Historic Preservation staff of the County Planning Department to discuss the process for applying for historic preservation status for the 4608 N. Park property. It was recommended that the Village engage the services of an architectural historian due to the complexity of the application form. Two firms with experience filing historic preservation applications in Montgomery County were recommended: The Ottery Group and Robinson & Associates. It was also recommended that the Village notify the current property owner regarding interest in pursuing historic preservation if the Council wishes to proceed. The Council will consider proposals from architectural historians at the October 12 Council meeting.

Update on Ad Hoc Council Committee Regarding Village Concierge Service

Dr. Muller reported the ad hoc committee met on Wednesday, July 21, 2021, with two representatives in attendance from the Friendship Heights Neighbors Network in addition

to committee members. Dr. Muller provided a summary of discussions regarding the legality of 1) engaging a contractor to perform concierge services for Village residents; and 2) age restrictions on enrollees. The ad hoc committee agreed to review the bidding specifications with legal counsel before finalization. The ad hoc committee also discussed potential services to be offered; how many residents would likely use or request concierge services; qualifications for enrollment; and other important consensus points. Ongoing meetings will be scheduled after further consideration of the aforementioned matters.

Fish Tank for Village Center Lobby

After discussion of the advantages and concerns of having an aquarium amenity (see attachment) and reviewing the proposals obtained in the bidding process, **Dr. Muller moved, Mayor White seconded, to approve a contract with Aquatic Inspirations to design and install a 72" x 30" x 30" freshwater, aqua-scaped fish tank with custom wood stand and canopy, costing \$8,162 plus maintenance. The motion carried by a vote of four in favor, two opposed (Mr. Mezey and Ms. Durbin).**

Village Financial Investment Review

Mr. Mezey moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded, to accept the proposal from Asset Consultants costing between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to review the Village's for asset growth and higher returns. Following discussion, the motion was tabled, and the Council agreed with one abstention (Ms. Durbin) to seek proposals for an overview of the Village's finances.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointment to Program Advisory Committee

Shirley Carr resigned from the Community Advisory Committee, and was appointed to the Program Advisory Committee with the Council's consent.

Introduction of Amendment to Village By-Laws

Mr. Mezey reported he had withdrawn his prior by-law amendment and introduced a new amendment regarding the structure of Village Council committees. The new amendment will be put before the Council for discussion and vote at the October 12 meeting.

Village Staff Position

Prior to entering into closed session, the Council discussed the Facilities Manager position following the retirement of Betty Ardizzone. The Council authorized the Manager to advertise for the position with a salary not to exceed \$72,750, equivalent to Grade 11, Step 1 on the federal government salary schedule.

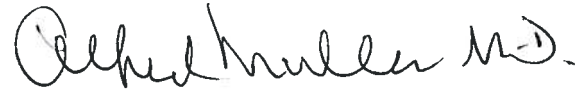
DISCUSSION/VOTE ON MOTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION:

At 9:53 p.m., Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Durbin seconded to enter Closed Session, pursuant to Maryland Code General Provision Article Section 3-305(b)(1): "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom the Council has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals." The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Council, the September 13, 2021, meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alfred Muller MD". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Alfred Muller, MD, Secretary

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS AQUARIUM

Advantages:

1. Drawing card for young children and their families
2. Aquascaping and fish an esthetic centerpiece of lobby for visitors
3. "reduced fatigue, lowered stress, anxiety and increased relaxation"
4. "lowered blood pressure, heart rate, and increased dopamine production"
5. "live plants in the aquarium serve to scrub carbon dioxide from the surrounding air and release copious amounts of oxygen."
6. "easing dry skin and respiratory ailments through increased air quality, oxygen and humidity"
7. All the above reasons (3-6) make aquariums popular in health care settings

Concerns expressed:

1. Unpleasant odor:
Answer: "An aquarium should never smell, but actually freshen the room by helping to absorb offensive smells". Leftover food pellets would not occur, since automatic feeding in tank. Tank cleaning would be twice a month rather than monthly as previously done.
2. Staff maintenance:
Answer: No longer needed with automatic feeder and twice monthly maintenance from aquarium service.

Pricing options:

1. \$4,960 +shipping from TitanAquatic for 72x30x30"rectangular tank
2. \$19, 650 from Bat Aquatics for 72 x 30 x30" rectangular tank
3. \$6,332 from Aquatic Inspiration for 72x18x 30" rectangular tank
4. \$8,932 from Aquatic Inspiration for 72x36x24" half cylinder tank
5. \$11,540 from Aquatic Inspiration for 72x36x30 half cylinder tank
6. Options 3-5 without Apex system are \$770 less.
7. \$23-25,000 from Aquatic Inspiration for 72x30x36 bowed front, approximately 8'6" tall

866.888.TANK (8265)



Wishlist



Search the store



Tsunami 210-Gallon 72"Lx36"Wx24"H Half Cylinder Acrylic Aquarium Setup

Home / Fish Tanks / Fish Tanks by Gallons / Big (100-300 Gallons) / 200 Gallon Aquariums / Tsunami 210-Gallon 72"Lx36"Wx24"H Half Cylinder Acrylic Aquarium Setup



866.999.TANK (8265)

Wish 0 t

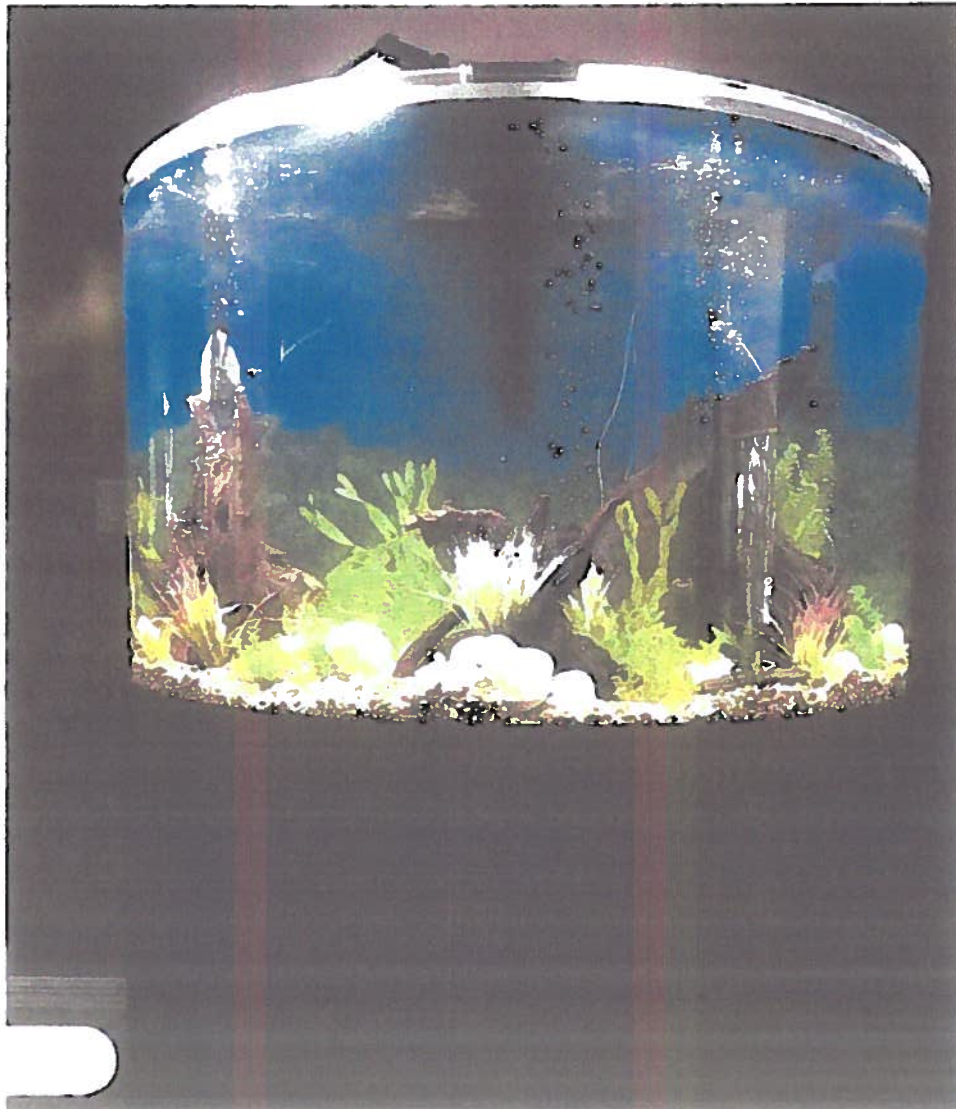


Search the store



Tsunami 210-Gallon 72"Lx36"Wx24"H Half Cylinder Acrylic Aquarium Setup

Home / Fish Tanks / Fish Tanks by Shape / Half Cylinder
/ Tsunami 210-Gallon 72"Lx36"Wx24"H Half Cylinder Acrylic Aquarium Setup



13 September 2021

PARKS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE
REPORT ON THE WALK-AROUND
LIST OF NEW TREES

The left-hand number reflects the nearest street light.

- 1 Adjacent to facade of Center - Cherry
- 1 On Hills Plaza near the Center - Willow Oak
- 5 In south side of Humphrey Park - Red Maple
- 7 Adjacent to Humphrey Park (one of two trees) - Willow Oak
- 7 Adjacent to Humphrey Park (one of two trees) - Willow Oak
- 15 Near the entrance to the Chevy Chase Building - Zelkova
- 17 Near the Marriott Hotel - Sycamore
- 30 Near Highland House (one of two trees) - Zelkova
- 30 Near Highland House (one of two trees) - Zelkova
- 40 Near entrance to the Highland House West - Gingko
- 41 Near Highland House West - Gingko
- 62 In front of Carleton on North Park (one of two trees) - Chinese Pistache
- 62 In front of Carleton on North Park (one of two trees) - Chinese Pistache
- 65 Upper Shoemaker Lane (one of two trees) - Nuttall Oak
- 65 Upper Shoemaker Lane (one of two trees) - Nuttall Oak
- 71 Lower Shoemaker Farm Lane near Willard - Nuttall Oak
- 90 Close to entrance 4611- Aristocrat Pear
- 103 Adjacent to the wide lawn on Friendship Boulevard - Nuttall Oak

PARKS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE
REPORT ON THE WALK-AROUND

On 2 September 2021, the Parks and Grounds Committee walked around the Village, observing conditions in the parks and along the streets. Committee members included Bruce Pirnie (Chair), Paula Durbin, and Julian Mansfield, ex officio. Accompanying the Committee were Council member Al Muller and Nick Scaletta, Bartlett Tree Experts, serving as arborist.

HUBERT H. HUMPHREY FRIENDSHIP PARK

Potted Trees

The two small trees in large earthen plots next to the portico have large brown patches that indicate failing health. The Committee recommends that these two small trees be replaced, either with new arborvitae or another suitable plant.

Hedges and Lawn

The holly hedge along the edge of the brick walkway is leggy, scraggly, and prone to dying, leaving unsightly gaps. The Village has several times reinforced this hedge with new plants, but to little effect. Its poor condition detracts from the appearance of the Park. In several places, the lawn lies below the edge of the brick walkway as it ascends towards the Center on both sides of the portico.

Unevenness between walkway and surrounding terrain can present a tripping hazard. On 9 July 2021, Susan Bruckner suffered a serious accident while walking in the Park. She inadvertently left the brick walkway, lost her footing, and fell, fracturing her left ankle.

The Committee recommends that the lawn bordering the brick walkway as it ascends to the Center be raised even with the top edge of the walkway. One technique would be to cut and lift sod along the edge, add top soil as needed, and replace the sod even with the walkway.

The Committee recommends that the Village entirely remove the existing holly hedge and replace it with a dense, easily pruned evergreen hedge. This hedge should be pruned so that it is flush with the edge of the walkway, thus inducing people to stay on the walkway.

WILLIAM TYLER PAGE PARK

Page Park presents a pleasing appearance with lush grass and healthy trees. Both members think the vigorous young trees should not be removed. While generally pleased with the appearance of the Park, the two Committee members differ regards its future. One member approves the general layout of the Park, including the broad expanse of lawn where from her window she has seen children playing catch for example. This member sees no need for more planning. The other member desires more large shade trees and he feels that the Park lacks coherence and could be much improved. This member advocates pursuing a comprehensive, professionally developed plan.

NEW TREES

All of the street trees planted last year have survived and some are growing very well. However, a pin oak tree (tree #109) near street light 11 on upper Hills Plaza has numerous dead branches and the crown has entirely died. Our arborist thinks this tree is unlikely to recover and should be removed. The Committee recommends removal.

With advice from our arborist, the Committee identified eighteen locations for new trees, including four to replace those removed this summer. (See attached list and sketch for the locations and species of new trees.) The new trees are of diverse species to hedge against failure of one species and to offer pleasing diversity. However, they are also selected for consistent look, reflected in the predominance of oak trees. In general, the new trees will be caliper 2-3 as were the trees planted last year, which have grown well. However, the red maple in Humphrey Park will be a larger tree to accord with its unique position in the Park. The Committee recommends planting these eighteen trees.

OTHER ITEMS

Hanging Baskets

There are two hanging baskets near the Elizabeth and 4615 that partially obscure the parking signs mounted on the same light poles. It would be difficult to raise the hanging baskets because their brackets are sized to the tapering light poles, while it would be easy to lower the parking signs since they are secured by simple metal straps. The Committee recommends that the parking signs be moved below the hanging baskets.

River Rock

Segments of verge on lower Hills Plaza next to the vehicular entrances to Highland House and to the Barlow Building are filled with large river rock, i.e., stones rounded by tumbling in flowing water. Walking over these rocks is precarious and risky, making these segments into dangerous obstacles. To date, the Committee knows of no accident caused by these river rocks, but one might occur at any time. The location is unsuitable for trees and the segments are so narrow and steeply pitched as to make grass or other ground cover problematic. The Committee recommends covering those segments with concrete slabs, thus extending the sidewalk to the curb.

PROPOSED MOTIONS

The Committee proposes to make these motions:

That the Village plant eighteen new trees according to the plan presented in the Report of the Parks and Grounds Committee, 13 September 2021.

That the Village remove the holly hedge in Humphrey Park and replace it with a dense, easily pruned evergreen hedge pruned flush with the edge of the walkway.

