

## VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

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### **Approved Minutes** **Friendship Heights Village Council Development Committee** **Thursday, April 25, 2024**

**Council Development Committee members present:** Bobby Pestronk; Michael Mezey; Cheryl Tyler.

**Others present:** Julian Mansfield; Jason Goldstein; Tino Calabria; Dawn Calabria; Sandra Youla; Manuel Ochoa; Alfred Muller; Julie Davis.

At 2 p.m., Mr. Pestronk called the meeting of the Friendship Heights Village Council Development Committee to order. Mr. Pestronk gave some introductory comments including background information on the development of the Friendship Heights community. Mr. Pestronk asked attendees who were involved with the previous Sector Plan process to relate their experiences. The following attendees gave remarks:

Julie Davis reflected on the two previous Sector Plans from 1998 and 1974, and she discussed affordable housing as the County's current priority. She emphasized the need to be collegial and to coordinate with surrounding neighborhoods on priorities.

Al Muller described the balanced growth strategy that the Village supported in the 1998 Sector Plan plan discussions and the need to establish relationships with other members on the Sector Plan Advisory Group that will be established by Park & Planning.

Manuel Ochoa indicated that attention should be paid to the Rock Creek West Plan on the DC side, and that the Brookdale community should be included in the Sector Plan discussions. He suggested that the committee develop limited priorities and agree on them with surrounding neighborhoods.

Sandra Youla said the Sector Plan is a component of the County Master Plan, and the zoning process is separate from the Sector Plan process, which will provide many opportunities for input. The Planning Board is focused on a future vision, not the present state of affairs.

Dawn Calabria suggested paying attention to tree cover and the environment, given that Little Falls Creek is polluted. She wondered if people will continue to shop locally and whether small retail will still be affordable.

Tino Calabria spoke of diversity development and indicated "balanced growth" is code for discrimination. He suggested the committee speak with representatives from Gaithersburg, WMATA and GEICO.

Other suggestions included speaking with the Montgomery County and DC planners in charge of developing affordable housing, and to speak with Neil Flanagan about the history of the Belmont housing development in Friendship Heights to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. The committee discussed the objectives of collaborating with other area groups and ensuring adequate representation on the advisory committee to be formed. Once the Planning Board has reviewed the plan, it will be taken up by the County Council's Planning, Housing and Parks (PHP) Committee.

No action was taken by the Development Committee. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



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Bobby Pestronk, Development Committee Chair