

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
COUNCIL MEETINGS MINUTES
September 13, 2010

Attendance:

Debbie Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Eve Arber, Councilmember
Dan Macy, Councilmember
Steve Matney, Councilmember
Nicole Fraser, substitute for Cathie Polak, Clerk Treasurer

Visitors:

Polly Angelakis, Site Manager, Glen Echo Park (GEP)
Gerald Bodlander, Echo Reporter
Matt Stiglitz, Resident
William Cannon, Glen Echo Baptist Church (GEBC)
Mark McCaffrey, Conduit Road Fire Board (Glen Echo Fire House)

Mayor Beers opened the Council meeting at 8:03 pm

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Ms. Angelakis reported that GEP is continuing the oral history project with 5 college students in the spring semester of 2011. Students from American University, Catholic University and Howard University are to interview people on the history of GEP and the community. Mayor Beers noted that some Walt Whitman High School students are interviewing Bannockburn residents about GEP history and she will forward the information to Polly. Councilmember Long asked if the Georgetown University doctoral student previously linked with the project would continue. Ms. Angelakis said yes he would be spearheading the project with GEP's outreach coordinator.

Ms. Angelakis reported on the progress of multiple projects at GEP:

- The trolley rust abatement project will begin on November 6th with a group of volunteers from the Air Force. A regional conservator will oversee the trolley painting. Councilmember Long asked if the replacement wheels acquired by GEP were to be included in the trolley restoration. (The question was asked because the trolley, from the Philadelphia line, has a wheel base that does not fit the existing track remount.) Ms. Angelakis said possibly down the line.
- A number of waysides are being completed to tell the stories of Clara Barton and GEP.
- The upper parking lot at GEP has been repaved
- Asbestos removal will begin at the Clara Barton House this week. The house will be closed until 9/24.

Mayor Beers asked on the attendance at the Labor Day art show. Councilmember Long reported that it was an excellent turnout and a number of very positive comments from the public came back to her and GEPPAC. Sales of the artwork were quite good too.

Ms. Angelakis announced that public comments on the bike path routed through the park are being accepted now and an environmental assessment is in the works. Public comments may be sent via e-mail to Ms. Angelakis or accessed through a link on the park website's home page. Councilmember Matney asked Ms. Angelakis to forward the link to the town council. Mayor Beers asked if the bike path planning was working with Montgomery County. Ms. Angelakis said yes, the county is writing up the assessments. Councilmember Long noted that if there is an environmental assessment, a public meeting is required. Ms. Angelakis concurred.

Ms. Angelakis reported that the next upcoming event at GEP will be "Then & Wow" on Sunday, September 26. This will be the last day the carousel is open for 2010. Councilmember Long suggested that everyone go visit the exhibit in the Pop Corn Gallery that depicts the history of GEP as a trolley park.

Ms. Angelakis plans to have the Park's Supervisory Ranger position filled in a couple weeks.

GLEN ECHO BAPTIST CHURCH (GEBC)

Mr. Cannon reported that GEBC may be interested in selling the church's annex located on the corner of Harvard and University Avenues. Mayor Beers expressed that the town might buy the property depending on the price. Mr. Cannon said that he has received two rough estimates of \$350,000 and \$400,000. GEBC is still in the formative stages of thinking about what to do with the property; he hopes to get the church members together to decide. Mayor Beers said that the town would be interested, and would require an inspection; handicap accessibility is a concern. Councilmember Matney asked if Mr. Cannon could arrange a tour for Council. Mr. Cannon agreed.

Mr. Cannon said that the annex has become a burden because of maintenance problems; he noted that it is used infrequently. However, as the real estate market is down right now, the GEBC community may decide to wait. Councilmember Long asked Mr. Cannon if he knew how old the building is. Mr. Cannon thought it went back to the 1920's. Councilmember Long noted that it is the original Redeemer Episcopal Church building; the church's history in Town dates from 1904. Councilmember Long stated that some siding was placed on the annex; this may have covered up some window framing and other decorative elements, as depicted in Brockie Stevenson's print that hangs in the Town Hall. Mr. Cannon was not sure if those decorative elements were covered up or torn off.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion **2010-16** to approve as presented to the August 9, 2010, Town Council meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

PEPCO

Councilmember Matney asked if Mayor Beers or Clerk Polak had received an answer from PEPCO concerning a request for a PEPCO representative to attend a council meeting. Mayor Beers said that Clerk Polak had called several times but had not had a response. Mayor Beers noted that PEPCO deems it financially advantageous to trim trees that may affect power lines rather than burying power lines. Council members Macy and Arber noted that they have seen Pepco crews trimming trees in the region and hope that this will have a positive effect.

REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF C&O CANAL

Mayor Beers presented the letter that she sent to Congressman Van Hollen. She has received an e-mail from County Councilmember Berliner that he will get back to her shortly. Mayor Beers said that it is unlikely that she will hear from Van Hollen as he is busy with other work, namely the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, of which he is Chairman. However, she has the e-mail address of Joan Kleinmann a staffer for Van Hollen who may be the point person on such issues. Mayor Beers also sent copies to Senators Mikulski and Cardin however mail to Congress takes a long time due to security screening. Emails may not be sent directly, but via a form that may be filled out on-line. She is seeking email addresses of other congressional staffers who are relevant to the Maryland delegations. Mr. Stiglitz suggested that letters sent FedEx may circumvent the long security screenings; he may be able to find email addresses for some staffers.

Mayor Beers reported that Kevin Brandt, Superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, noted that the C&O Canal Trust has raised \$100,000 toward the repair of the breach above Old Anglers Inn; the estimated cost is over \$2 million, some expected state involvement fell through. The necessary funds to repair and maintain the C&O canal exceed current budgets and donations; Mayor Beers stresses that funds need to come from both state and federal governments. On that note, she will send the same letter to Maryland State Senator Frosh and Governor O'Malley if she can find contacts there. Councilmember Long suggested contacting Nancy K. Kopp, Maryland State Treasurer and Glen Echo Heights resident; who may be helpful on this issue and informative on how to obtain approval for state grants. As State Treasurer, Ms. Kopp is one of the state's three-member Board of Public Works.

TOWN HALL USE

Councilmember Long noted that English Country Dance continues on Wednesday nights in the Town Hall. The Town film fest resumed in September. Mayor Beers suggested that town Halloween Party be scheduled on Sunday, October 31, and the Holiday Party scheduled for Saturday December 11 from 9 – 11 am.

TOWN MAINTENANCE

Council discussed the bent signpost and missing sign at the corner of Bryn Mawr Avenue and MacArthur Blvd. As it was a town stop sign, it is the town's responsibility. Mayor Beers said that Mark Peyton will need to come and replace it.

Council members Macy and Matney announced that the sound system in the town hall is now installed. Councilmember Matney wishes to get a cabinet to house the components. Council members Macy and Matney said that they plan to screen the October movie using the new sound equipment. Councilmember Long inquired if anyone who that uses the town hall will have access to the sound system. Council members Matney and Macy said that all town hall users should have access. The system will be relatively simple to operate, however there are a lot of remotes, and a locked cabinet might be necessary to keep all the equipment. A key to this cabinet could be placed with the keys made available to town hall users. Councilmember Long asked the total cost of the sound system. Councilmember Matney could not recall.

ORDINANCE REVIEW

Mayor Beers said that she has not been able to move forward on the Animal Control Ordinance review and hoped it will be done next month.

US POST OFFICE (USPS) TRUCKS – RESIDENT COMPLAINT

Council discussed a letter written by Raya Bodnarchuk describing damage done to her home by the large USPS trucks. Mayor Beers said she will write a letter in support of Ms. Bodnarchuk's request that some action be taken. Councilmember Matney asked if Ms. Bodnarchuk has received a response from the USPS. Mayor Beers said she did not know; the problem is that the USPS trucks are too long and too wide for the small residential streets of Glen Echo.

REBUILDING TOGETHER MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Mayor Beers drafted a resolution of support for Rebuilding Together of Montgomery County (formerly known as Christmas in April), a non-profit that provides home repairs to low-income homeowners, primarily elderly, disabled and families with children. Councilmember Macy asked if Mayor Beers was familiar with the organization. Mayor Beers said that she has been aware of this organization for at least ten years. Councilmember Long asked why Rebuilding Together is asking for only one year of support. Mayor Beers was unsure but she does know that the organization is gathering letters of support from all Montgomery County municipalities and this resolution is based on one that Kensington drafted. Councilmember Macy researched the organization and said it was awarded the Maryland Seal of Excellence in 2009. Councilmember Arber and Mayor Beers said that Rebuilding Together had helped some town residents within the last 15 years. Councilmember Long asked Mr. McCaffrey if they were a bona fide non-profit; he said yes they are a registered 501-3C and he has sat on their board.

Resolution 2010-2 to support the Rebuilding Together application for Fiscal Year 2011 community investment tax credit program offered through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of Neighborhood Revitalization. Resolution unanimously accepted. The resolution is attached to these minutes.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Councilmember Arber announced that the next Maryland Municipal League (MML) meeting will be next Wednesday 7 pm in Takoma Park to discuss the next legislative session.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Councilmember Macy inquired about the Management's awareness of risk of fraud statement that Council was asked to sign, specifically question #7 about procedures or an employee handbook. Mayor Beers reassured that controls are in place to stop any fraud as two people sign every check; three people sign a voucher for each check.

Councilmember Matney added that the audit would help stop fraud as well. Mayor Beers said that these signed statements are for the audit. At present, the town's accounts sometimes go over the limit when the state income tax is deposited every year a technical violation of the state law. The awareness of risk of fraud statements must be signed to avoid a black mark on the audit and complete an agreement with the bank (Sun Trust). Council signed the statements.

Mr. McCaffrey announced that the Glen Echo Fire House is trying to raise \$100,000 for an ALS (advanced life support) position and they are submitting a grant to fund a 3-year position to have an ALS trainer. If a trainer can be brought in, then more volunteers can be trained and the Fire House will be better manned. Mayor Beers inquired about the result of the ambulance fee proposal. Mr. McCaffrey said it passed by one vote, many of the signatures to repeal the fees were thrown out. A suit is in progress.

Mayor Beers closed the meeting at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Nicole Fraser for Cathie Polak