

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
Town Council Meeting
May 13, 2013

ATTENDANCE: Deborah Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Steve Matney, Councilmember
Mark McCaffrey, Councilmember
Matt Stiglitz, Councilmember
Nicole Fraser, Clerk-Treasurer

VISITORS: Aaron LaRocca, Acting Site Manager of GEP¹ & CBNHS
Susan and Kate Stiglitz, Residents
Steve & Wendy Carpenter-Israel, owners of 44 Wellesley
Gloria Levin, Resident
Susan Grigsby, Resident
Aaron Hirsch, owner of Baptist Annex
Phyllis Fordham, Resident
Ellen Leary, The Echo reporter
Jeff Broadhurst, architect for Baptist Annex
Eve Arber, Resident

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm

SWEARING IN OF NEW COUNCILMEMBERS

Mayor Beers swore in as Councilmembers Steve Matney and Matt Stiglitz. Mayor Beers and Councilmember Stiglitz thanked former Councilmember Arber for her service.

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Mr. LaRocca announced that his time as acting site manager will end on May 18th; he will continue to work to address all site manager responsibilities until a successor is named. The position may be filled permanently, with another 4 month detail or with a not-to-exceed one year detail at present; GWMP management has yet to make a decision on how to fill the position. Mayor and Council encouraged Mr. LaRocca to apply to the position if it should open.

Mr. LaRocca reported that there has been no movement on the Montgomery County shared use path segment proposed to enter CBNHS and GEP since the April Council meeting. The EA decision remains still at the Regional office, however, GWMP is

¹ Abbreviations used in this document include Assessment of Effect (AoE), EA (Environmental Assessment), GEP (Glen Echo Park), GEPPAC (Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts & Culture), GWMP (George Washington Memorial Parkway), CBNHS (Clara Barton National Historic Site), MC (Montgomery County), MML (Maryland Municipal League), NHP (National Historical Park), NP (National Park), NPS (National Park Service), PHED (Planning, Housing and Economic Development) and WG (Washington Gas).

working on a draft construction permit. Restrictions for building would include: working around busy seasonal and special events at GEP, restricted hours (8 am to sunset), no holiday construction, and where to store equipment during construction. GEPPAC will also review the permit conditions. Councilmember Long asked if there will be enough NPS personnel to regularly monitor the construction if the bike path is approved. Mr. LaRocca said there would be an EA specialist, a biologist most likely, would monitor the diversion dam in Minnehaha Creek.

Mr. LaRocca announced that CBNHS, through their partner Eastern National (operator of the Book Stores) was able to secure transportation for four Junior Ranger Camps to see the African American Civil War Memorial and Museum and the Lincoln and Martin Luther King Memorials. The theme of this year's camps is Civil War to Civil Rights.

Mr. LaRocca noted that Family Day was successful with about 4000 visitors to the site. The parking lots filled up early and as a result some visitors were turned away. NPS and GEPPAC will work to identify alternatives to accommodate more visitors once the parking lots are filled. Councilmember Stiglitz noted that parking by visitors on Family Day was heavier than usual. Councilmember Matney suggested that barricades be moved closer to MacArthur Boulevard so that drivers would see them before turning instead of turning and then being forced to back out into traffic. Mr. LaRocca said that he would try to accommodate the request to have the parking barriers moved up closer to the boulevard. Councilmember Long noted that she moved the barricades up before the day's event began. Councilmember Matney also reported that at previous events (*e.g.* Folk Festival) when traffic guards are used, the traffic guards park next to the bike path to the park; visitors to the park then followed their lead and parked in a line where a "no parking" sign was clearly visible.

Mr. LaRocca said that planning for the upcoming Washington Folk Festival is underway. The event is scheduled for June 1st and 2nd. Mr. LaRocca notified the GEPPAC facility manager and the FSGW lead volunteer that the Town expected a letter from FSGW requesting permission to use Town property between Tulane and Oberlin Avenues, currently rented by the Irish Inn from the Town as a parking area. [Clerk-Treasurer Fraser will check to see if the contract with the Irish Inn notes if FSGW should request from the Irish Inn or the Town for permission to use the parking area.] NPS is concerned that current staffing levels may make it difficult to assist the event at the same level as in previous years. GEPPAC, NPS and FSGW are all recruiting volunteers.

Mr. LaRocca noted that bamboo is to be removed from the Living Classroom area. Volunteers are being recruited for the oral history project.

BAPTIST ANNEX RENOVATIONS

Mssrs. Hirsch and Broadhurst presented their plans to renovate the Baptist Annex into a residence for Mr. Hirsch and his family. The renovation will take place and the footprint of the building will not be altered. Living spaces will be created on the main floor and the lower level will be excavated to create bedroom levels down below. The original

sanctuary space is still there, the trusses will be recreated and the hanging ceiling will be removed. There will be window wells, new siding and a new roof. The current vent that is off center to the gable will be removed; a cupola will be added to the gable line that will function as a light well. This is the only change to the height of the building. Mayor Beers asked if they would restore the original round window above the University Avenue entrance. Mr. Broadhurst said no, it will be square. Mr. Broadhurst said that the building will maintain a historic feel with materials and colors. Mr. Hirsch announced that he hopes to start construction any day, once Mr. McFarland is available. Ms. Fordham requested that Mr. Hirsch pay special attention to sediment control as it has been an issue at some of Mr. McFarland's other projects in Town.

44 WELLESLEY CIRCLE RENOVATIONS

Steve & Wendy Carpenter-Israel, owners of 44 Wellesley Circle, introduced themselves to Mayor and Council and shared their plans to renovate 44 Wellesley Circle. They said that they are adding air conditioning, replacing the roof, moving the kitchen and have gone to the Historic Preservation Commission to make sure the renovations are all in compliance. [*N.B.* – The front section of this structure is deemed historic; the addition at the back is not considered historic and changes can be made there that are not permitted in the front.] The interior demolition and construction ductwork are already done. They will put in new “old” floors by using reclaimed wood and all the older structural details will remain. They do not plan to change the exterior, keeping the windows and shutters, will not paint the stone. Councilmember Long asked if they plan to live in the home; Mr. Carpenter-Israel said that his plan is to renovate the home and move into it in a few years, the project arrived earlier than they expected.

ARCHITECTURAL VISUALIZATION SOFTWARE

Ms. Leary offered to research software that could help the town take architectural plans and insert them into a photograph in an effort to understand the scale of proposed construction in Town. Mayor Beers instructed Ms. Leary to find out the name and how much it would cost.

PET WASTE

Ms. Leary reported that she has had an ongoing problem with dog feces and urine in her garden. She has put up a barrier but it has not stopped dog owners from letting their dogs in her yard. Ms. Fordham wrote an article in The Echo about the issue and has noted that many other residents find this to be a difficult problem. Mayor Beers said that we have no authority for animal control, the Town could request the County to help, however dog urine is not illegal while pet owners are required to pick up other waste and all animals should be on a leash. Mayor Beers noted that the Town ceded animal control to the county and we cannot administer without people staffing a board, which in the past has been a thankless job. Ms. Levin noted that a fair number of people outside of Glen Echo use the Town as a safe place to walk their pets; she suggested sending a note to the Bannockburn Newsletter to remind residents to clean up after their pets. Ms. Fordham said that she felt it was Town residents as well that are part of the problem.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2013-09 to accept the March 2013 Council Meeting minutes with changes.

- 1) Under GEP Report, first paragraph, last sentence insertion of “not” after “shared use path.”
- 2) Under Structure at 6005 Princeton, first paragraph, revision of sixth sentence to read: “According to Mr. McFarland, Mr. Spicer said that if the walls were removed from the ground level it would not be classified as an accessory structure and he would lower the height of the structure as directed.”

Motion passed unanimously.

NATURAL GAS

Mayor Beers reported that the initial estimate of \$20-25,000 for the survey to be submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers has been revised upward to \$32,500. Mayor Beers said that she had contacted Mr. Higgins of WG and asked him to get the price down or if not to get another bid. She said that she finds this very discouraging and at every turn WG underestimates the cost. Mayor Beers said that the only good thing about the cost of the survey is that it is credited towards the overall costs. She said that she would contact the Town attorney and put pressure on the Maryland Public Service Commission to help with the project. Councilmember Stiglitz suggested that we reach out to other towns that might have lessons learned from their experiences with WG.

BUDGET REQUEST

C/T Fraser requested that \$875 be added to the budget for off-duty police officers to monitor traffic at Oxford Road and University Avenue.

Motion 2013-10 to transfer \$2000 from contingency to administration to cover the costs of off-duty police officers. Motion made by Councilmember Matney; seconded by Councilmember Long. Motion passed unanimously.

POLICE REPORT

Councilmember Stiglitz reported that the last meeting of the community police advisory board was large, reflecting the increased size of the district. The district has received six new officers as a result of the redistricting. There has been an uptick in daytime residential burglaries correlated with the nice weather and people working outside in their yards. Mr. Stiglitz advised to keep a key in one’s pocket and keep doors locked. There have been a string of commercial burglaries in the central business district; an arrest has been made. “Click It or Ticket” will begin soon. This three week period will have officers enforcing seat belt laws strenuously.

TOWN HALL USE

Councilmember Long noted that upcoming uses of the Town Hall for the budget meeting, English Country Dance and continued use by Town residents for private events. Report attached.

C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Councilmember Long shared with Council the law that created the C&O Canal historical park. There has been no change in the law other than the extension for several 10 year periods of the advisory commission. When the sequester period is over, Councilmember Long and her colleagues from the late commission will bring up the issue of extending the commission again.

Two principal organizations work with C&O Canal NHP:

- 1) C&O Canal Association
- 2) C&O Canal Trust

Councilmember Long noted that she is the past president and current member of the C&O Canal Association Board. The C&O Canal Association is an all-volunteer group, that acts as a watchdog over park proposals and assists the park when appropriate. Its initial purpose was to establish the park and make it available for public use. This effort was led by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in 1954 when he organized a hike of leading conservationists from around the county and included two editors from the Washington Post. The Post editors were invited because the Post had initially supported a Department of the Interior decision to build a highway over the canal along the Potomac River. Justice Douglas and others did not think this was an appropriate use. For the 17 years until the law was passed, a canal hike was held as an effective means of public relations. Congressman Gilbert Gude and Senator Charles Mathias spearheaded the successful efforts on Capitol Hill. Justice Douglas famously said "We have saved the park, now we have to save it from National Park Service;" hence the Association's watchdog proclivities. The Association has supported the park over many years with volunteer projects and with funds for smaller but needed projects.

The C&O Canal Trust is a much more recent entity and has signed a document making it the official fundraising organization for the park. It has a paid executive director and other paid and some volunteer staff. Its structure is modeled after that of GEPPAC. The Canal Quarters program (where guests can rent the historic lock houses for overnight use) is one of their projects. The trust furnishes the lock houses and each lock house has a theme. Lock house 6 tells the story of Justice Douglas. It is believed that the lock houses themselves are an opportunity to experience what it may have been like to live and work on the C&O Canal. Mayor Beers said that she does not see the funds being spent on maintaining the canal (*e.g.* pulling out debris). Councilmember Long noted that at present the Trust is in the red with the Quarters program; however in the long run it is intended with other fund-raising efforts to further to provide money for park projects but a paid staff comes first.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

1. C/T Fraser shared the image of a White Sycamore leaf created by town resident and artist, Raya Bodnarchuk to be used for the recycling bins.
2. LGIT insurance information was shared with Council and Mayor. The current coverage was approved with the question about how to add Directors and Officers Liability Insurance in the future.
3. C/T Fraser presented a request by Kirsten Roddy of Upper Oxford to limit the amount of bamboo to be cut back on the corner of Oxford and MacArthur

Boulevard. Mr. LaRocca had requested that the bamboo be trimmed so that traffic was not impeded when the bamboo hangs in the road on icy or snowy days. Council directed C/T Fraser to confer with Mr. LaRocca about the amount to be cut back.

4. Ms. Arber noted that Pepco was replacing power lines on Harvard in front of the Shaut and Kenney residences.

Meeting adjourned at 9:51p.m.

Deborah M. Beers, Mayor

Date

Attached: Town Hall Use May and June 2013
Charter for the C&O Canal Historical Park