

COUNCIL REPORTS

March 2014

FORESTRY – Audrey Maskery

Forestry and Beautification:

Stadlers planted a Sun Valley Maple on Political Hill (Wade Park). The Sun Valley Maple is a National Arboretum cultivation, is a cross between "Red Sunset" and "Autumn Flame". The fall color change begins early and transitions from a pumpkin orange to a maroon red often having both colors present at the same time creating a two toned effect. And best of all, "Sun Valley" is a male cultivar, which does not produce seeds! The tree is part of F&B's plan to re-furbish the Wade Park area. A joint effort by F&B and the Woods Group took advantage of Maryland Tree-Mendous program which provides municipalities with young native trees at modest prices. Due to an overstock the Town was able to get 24 of these trees for free! The trees will be picked up by town Maintenance and planted early April.

Woods Group:

Next Woods Group meetings: April 7 and May 5, 2014 at 7:30 pm in Council Room.

The contractors working for Town Crest have trimmed the West Woods limbs that hang over the Town Crest property. The trimmed material was left in West Woods according to Maryland tree law.

At their March Meeting the Woods Group discussed steps proposed by Ann Briggs toward a Three- to Five-year Forest Management Plan for the East and West Woods. They would like to hire a consultant to assess and develop a draft plan to 1) Locate, assess and prioritize issues throughout each woods and then 2) Develop specific recommendations for each identified issue. This would be presented to Committee for modifications and approvals. Then the consultant and the Committee would arrange for contractors to do the work needed. The availability and number of potential volunteers will need to be factored into the plan.

Arbor Day: will be celebrated on Saturday, April 26. Forestry and Beautification will be planting annuals at the Town Hall. The Woods Group will sponsor an East Woods Trails effort (meet at McCathran Hall at 9:30AM). Hot Dog Roast at McCathran Hall follows at noon. All are invited!

MEMORIALS – Audrey Maskery

Nothing to report.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION – Joli A. McCathran

Projects/CSX bridge: On March 18th a new set of 70% drawings of the planned modifications to the bridge arrived from the contractor. Bob Booher will update his previous draft comments. Gail Littlefield will ask Clare Kelly to send us documents relating to the 2005 nomination of the bridge to the county Atlas and Master Plan.

203 2nd Avenue/PC meeting: The issue of non-complying homes encroaching on Town land was discussed. Georgette Cole has emailed Eva Polson she needs a boundary survey, a demolition permit, and a building permit.

HPC permit review: PC members Freda Temple and Brenda Gumula drafted an amendment to PC permit process that inserts HPC review in process and as a requirement for PC consideration

of building permit application. “Applications” in draft needs to be changed to “permitting process.”

PARKS and PLAYGROUNDS – Joli A. McCathran

Tennis Courts: The Maintenance Staff is beginning the necessary drainage work for the clay courts.

Political Hill: The Maintenance Staff is continuing the restoration of the area. The ring of white rocks was located. The ring of white rocks is where the politicians were allowed to stand to make speeches. Wendy Harris is interested in researching the speakers who gave speeches in this location.

WASHINGTON GROVE CONSERVATION MEADOW PARK – Joli A. McCathran

Nothing to report.

MAPLE LAKE - Carolyn Rapkivian

The Committee held its March meeting and made plans for summer life guards (Memorial Day weekend and weekends until MCPS get out then every day until Labor Day) and for Summer in the Parks and swim instructors. It also made plans for Lake Clean-Up Day, April 12/13 (10AM-12PM). The bubblers were turned back on.

SAFETY – Carolyn Rapkivian

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service made an informative presentation to the town about the emergency response to the fire at 203 2nd Avenue. Chief Steve Lohr and other personnel also made presentations to Town residents about fire safety.

WEBSITE – Carolyn Rapkivian

A draft survey about the town website was developed and tested with selected residents. The survey will be sent out to the town in April.

ROADS AND WALKWAYS – Bill Robertson

Snow removal was performed in-house using Town equipment and personnel. Once again no contractual labor was utilized.

Road bids for paving lower Ridge Road were received on March 10th. The bid from A.B. Viers was accepted.

Met with fire department to discuss sign improvements and safety.

MAINTENANCE – Bill Robertson

Winter maintenance on various pieces of Town equipment continued. Two (2) used snow throwers were purchased and rehabilitated just in time for the final snow of the season.

Finished reconditioning John Deere 500.

Exterior door at McCathran Hall was repaired repainted.

Continued clean-up of invasive species and installed a barrier roadside at Political Hill.

Supervised winter tree work.

Brush removal from Town land after several wind events.

Shop floor cleaned and painted. Installed safety tape on floors as well.

Met with WSSC on Cherry Avenue for sewer cleaning.

CONTRACTS – Greg Silber

US Lawns is planning to make a final leaf pick-up by mid-April. Recyclable yard waste pick-up begins 6 March. A bulk trash pick-up by Potomac Disposal will take place in mid- to late-May.

RECREATION COMMITTEE – Greg Silber

The Recreation Committee meets Wednesday 16 April at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Room.

Planning and sign-ups for Summer in the Parks is underway. On 4 May, the Recreation Committee will sponsor an animal petting day, May Pole celebration, and other activities at the playground. A Farewell Party for Pastor Judy Young and David Young will also take place 4 May, 4-7PM at the Town Hall.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL – Greg Silber

Nothing to report.

MCCATHRAN HALL – David Young

Work on the contract awarded in February to paint the McCathran Hall windows did not start in March (but hopefully will start by mid-April now that weather is better).

PLANNING COMMISSION – David Young

Permit Applications: The Commission reviewed the proposed revisions to "Information for Applicants for the Building Permit". The most important change is the placement of the HPC review at the beginning of the process; the HPC review must be completed prior to submitting a building permit application.

Public Ways and Property Permit Applications: The Commission along with Bob Booher from the HPC discussed the request from Clark Construction (CSX contractor) about whether the Town needed anything else from them in order to get approval for their 70% plan. It was agreed to get assurances from CSX that: 1) the Town would be included in the consultation process; 2) the Deer Park Bridge could remain on the County Historic Atlas after the work is completed; and 3) County Historic Preservation Planners would be consulted for approval. Mayor Cole will coordinate responses, Chairman Challstrom will continue to monitor the permits, and Chairman Booher will coordinate the review by the HPC.

Reconstruction of buildings constructed in part on land owned by the Town of Washington Grove: At their March 5 meeting, the Commission discussed the draft ordinance to authorize issuance of a revocable license for reconstruction of buildings initially constructed in part on land owned by Washington Grove. After concerns rose about the draft language, especially the word "revocable", it was decided to seek input from Town attorney Suellen Ferguson during a special meeting of the Commission on March 27. At that meeting, Chairman Challstrom stated that the meeting was not a public hearing open for public testimony and the only topic was reconstruction of buildings constructed on part on land owned by the Town of Washington Grove, specifically reconstruction (due to fire) of the home at 203 2nd Avenue. Some Commission members expressed their view that whatever was decided be thought of in global terms and not just for one home. Town attorney Ferguson reviewed and the Commission discussed the pros and cons of four options: 1) license (revocable use agreement; 2) easement/lease (long-term, 99 year); 3) fee simple transfer; and 4) rebuild only on private property. The Commission approved seeking a next draft based on the concept of using an easement as the method for granting use of town property under certain specific circumstances. The Commission also committed to drafting conditions for the demolition permit at their next meeting on April 2.