

MINUTES of the December 17, 2019 MEETING of the Commission

December 17, 2019

Adopted: 3/17/2020

Members Present: Bob Booher, Gail Littlefield, Mimi Styles, Wendy Harris, David Stopak, Darrell Anderson, and Kirk Greenway.

Attendees: Robert Johnson, Audrey Maskery
Kirk Greenway took minutes.

Approval of Agenda and Adoption of Minutes

The proposed agenda was adopted unanimously. Minutes from the previous meeting would be submitted prior to the January one.

Project Review

No project review was conducted.

Old Business:

WSSC project

Georgette Cole sent Gail Littlefield authorizations for work which Washington Suburban Sanitary Corporation (WSSC) sent to WG. These accurately described the trees which would be trimmed or removed. A WSSC heritage tree project was proposed to prevent large trees from coming down unnecessarily. The terracotta pipes which run under Grove Avenue are slated for restoration; however, exact locations of lateral pipes are not known. Ridge Road also has significant numbers of work orders as well. It is proposed that important trees constitute part of the streetscape or viewshed of an area with a subsequent contribution to the historic character of the town as much as the underlying homes and structures.

If we wait for the machines to be moved in during late January or February 2020, it will be too late. The Mayor might be able to come out to order a cease and desist should they arrive without warning. It was agreed a small group of HPC members should try to film the tree canopy with a drone and to make a map of the tree positions. Specific high impact trees might be identified which would affect the cultural heritage of WG. Audrey Maskery would be overseeing the tree work with Steve Werts so that trees of significant value would be preserved.

Expansion of National Register Progress

Three documents which were finals of the studies were sent by Daria to HPC. Daria will need to add viewsheds to the final. Some more work is required before Daria is finished. Several final bound copies of the reports will be made once they are ready.

Comprehensive Plan Update:

5-6 people will be studying section 8 for the commercial corner. Section 9 will have a work session to discuss it on January 14, 2020. HPC will become the Master Plan committee for this session as it has the most interest in it. A green section to the Master Plan is being considered to include telecommunication and energy/environment.

Joint meeting with PC

This will need to be set up in January 2020.

Guidelines

The full subcommittee is once again meeting. It is defining the scope of the effort as well as areas of interest. Montgomery County has an essential document for historic districts in Gaithersburg and Rockville, from which a lot of ideas can be drawn. Boulder, CO and Chautauqua, NY, have cultural landscape guidelines. Art Deco and Modern categories are defined in the Montgomery County guidelines. The whole new era of guidelines to write should include massing, scale, materials, and compatibility. Relationships between the homes should also be discussed.

Bulletin Material

There will be an article about Emory Grove as an early camp meeting site by Gail in the next bulletin. Clare sent an email asking if we wanted her files. She is moving to Berkshire County, CT.

Video

A history of WG is needed in video form. It could be a series of YouTube segments. It would be an educational tool for the town. Both new residents and officials would benefit. Clare might be the best person to do this. Town council and government make decisions about the town landscape, and maps which show the cultural and related resources are needed. An outline of the topics for the town's history is also required. There are needs to include the historical significance of the West Woods. A two-page document that takes all the historically significant items in the Master Plan is needed as well to help frame the history in a standard way.

The sign video for Montgomery Planning, Inc. went off well. Susan Van Nostrand described all the processes they used. There was a clip in an MCC email that Charlie Challstrom sent. Both Gail Littlefield and Susan Van Nostrand were on camera.

PC Meeting Report

The West Woods RFP was discussed. The Master Plan was accepted on stormwater and additions from HPC. They also discussed heritage trees and parking issues, including the new ordinance 2019-19, which was an amended procedure to permit a new driveway. Circular driveways or 2 driveways on the same lot would not be permitted per the Montgomery County standard. Porches, detached garages, and fronts which align with the other house are considered principle design elements in WG homes to be preserved.

PC Meeting Assignments

January 6: Mimi, February: David, March: Wendy, April: Kirk, May: Bob, and June: Gail.

Town Council Report

The bikeway from Shady Grove to Gaithersburg via Amity Rd. and Crabbs Branch has two proposals now being considered by the county. There have been many proposals, and input has been given to them. It is unclear when the county will move on these. John Compton wants a town

meeting to present these to town residents. A meeting is slated on February 2 for a discussion of alternatives, and then this feedback would go to the county.

New Business:

Input to West Woods Watershed Study RFP

Part of the stormwater master plan will be rewritten.

Input to Crabbs Branch Way Extended to Amity Drive

Kyle Lukacs is a project manager who is willing to take feedback on cultural resources affected by the planned extension. Wendy Harris submitted three attachments including written notes. See attachments. It is proposed that HPC serve as stewards for the archaeological site immediately adjacent to the extension area. There were quarry sites in the agricultural, industrial envelope that once surrounded WG in that specific area. A town meeting for input should be held in late January 2020. Then, the finished results would be presented to Kyle and the consultant who is doing his cultural resources.

The conservation meadow impact should also be addressed out of 106 Piedmont Parcel A near MD 200. It is possible the artificial prominence or hill which separates the town from the road noise and some runoff from the roads would be demolished. If the scoping of information is done at this point in time. No count of birds exists for the lower field. The jurisdiction of the settlement pond needs to be determined. Currently, there is little room to put in a bike path. Also, a large number of trees would have to be removed. If the settlement pond were covered over, this would make room for the trail or the road extension. Either way would result in significant impacts.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at 7:30pm in the McCathran Hall meeting room.

Signed:

Kirk Greenway