

TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS DECEMBER 2021 MEETING

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION – Darrell Anderson

The HPC held a virtual meeting on November 16, 2021; the next meeting will be held on December 14, 2021, at 7:30 pm by virtual means.

The HPC did not have any permits to review.

Alberto Zagrada from PEPCO attended the meeting to answer questions from the HPC as they reviewed proposed locations and permits for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. Mr. Zagrada said that PEPCO prefers the Chestnut Road site because it provides better access for the public than alternative sites. The discussion centered around mitigation issues, such as placement and colors of bollards and screening. There are options that PEPCO will consider if safety and access are not sacrificed. HPC members strongly suggested that the EV station could be secured at the Commercial Corner, although it was pointed out, again, that the station cannot be placed on private property. Before the next meeting, clarification on the extent of Town property at the Commercial Corner will be investigated. The HPC began developing a letter to the Town Council to express their recommendations for siting of the EV station. Mr. Zagrada reiterated that the offer from PEPCO is not infinite and they are hoping the Town will “get on board” as soon as possible so work can begin.

For the bulk of the remaining meeting, the HPC spent time critically reviewing the Shared Use Pathway Task Force Report. The main criticism was that the Task Force did not count their documents as Tier 1 (fact-based), although they felt that they had unique credentials and expertise in developing their submissions. The HPC will provide a point-by-point rebuttal to the Task Force Report to the Town Council before the Special Town Meeting on December 4.

The National Register Nomination materials have been fully placed on the Town website.

MAINTENANCE – Darrell Anderson

We now are past most of the groundskeeping season and focusing on winter projects. Leaf collection is a major task. Brush still is being removed with trips to the dump. Maintenance on equipment and trips to get gas also are ongoing. Completed paperwork as required. Worked in the maintenance shop if needed or weather dictated.

Met with Myers & Laws to go over tree work to be done.

Met with Linda Baim about markings on the tennis courts.

Worked at the lake preparing for repair work on the outflow berm. Worked on the lake berm. Picked up stone from Jack T. Irwin.

Put up flags for Veterans Day. Took them down after Veterans Day.

Blew leaves off the roof at the Town Hall and cleaned the gutters.

Worked with the Woods Committee in the East Woods.

Picked up parts for chain saw and mower at Rippeon Equipment. Repaired both.

Cleaned the bathrooms in the park.

Checked the new speed bumps installed on Ridge Road for WSSC.

Went to Home Depot to pick up exit lights & electric connectors for the shop Installed new exit light bulbs in Town Hall.

Went to John Deere to pick up mower parts.

Met with Guardian Fire for quarterly inspection on the sprinkler system.

Met with John & Darrell to review maintenance position (via zoom meeting).

Picked up trash in the park.

Worked on servicing mowers.

Blew leaves out of drainpipes around Town.

Went to Advance Auto Parts to pick up oil & filters for the Town truck & buggy. Serviced Town vehicles.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE – Darrell Anderson

The MML held a virtual meeting on November 17, 2021, at 6:30 pm. The next meeting will be held on November 18, 2021.

Rich Madeleno, County CFO, was present to answer questions about the tax duplication issue. MC MML presented a draft bill representing the position of the MC MML as a basis for discussion. The link to the draft bill is:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rkHRUEGNqGRc9AqFq325QLfmQJKgouZU?usp=sharing>.

In essence, the bill will codify increases in tax duplication from the current 60% as follows: 70% in FY23, 80% in FY24, 90% in FY25, and 100% in FY26 and beyond. The formulas to be used still need to be worked out. Also, the issue snow removal is included in the draft bill but is not currently covered.

The remainder of the meeting included how police and fire costs will be included in the draft bill. These discussions do not directly impact Washington Grove.

MC MML also held a virtual meeting on November 18, 2021, with the Prince Georges MML (PGC MML). Discussions were held on common-ground issues such as tax duplication, climate change programs, and redistricting.

CONTRACTS – Dave Cosson

Nothing to report

WOODS COMMITTEE – Dave Cosson

The Woods Committee met on December 6th by Zoom and discussed the following:

Deer Management: With one additional doe harvested, the total for the season so far is five does, no bucks. Two were from the West Woods, three from the East Woods. Hunting season continues through January.

Draft Comprehensive Plan Review: The Committee reviewed a redraft of Section 6, Sensitive Areas and Environmental Concerns, intended to reflect comments received from the County. The revision notes that, to date, no comments have been received from the Department of Natural Resources. The Committee intends to coordinate with the Forestry and Beautification Committee as the document is further revised.

Trail Maintenance Projects:

November Work Day: The November 11 work day volunteers focused on improving the trail in the area of the new Bradfield Crossing, including clearing blockages in the stream, closing off the entrances on each side of the old crossing, and clearing greenbrier away from the new trail crossing.

Improved Trail Mapping: Specific methods for using GPS-based mobile apps to improve the accuracy of trail maps have not yet been determined, but the Committee expects additional input in the near future. The objective is to ensure that new maps accurately describe the trails in the East and West Woods.

Rerouting Trails to Avoid Wetlands: The Committee continued to discuss the protective benefit of closing the chronically wet sections of Maple Avenue Extended to prevent further deterioration and soil erosion and rerouting the trail to higher ground to intersect with the McCauley and Pine trails.

American Rescue Plan Funding of Storm Water Management Projects: The Committee began to review files and documents from the Storm Water Management Committee related to controlling erosion in the West Woods as it considers application for ARP funds and other federal or state grants. Further information is expected to be available for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Monday, January 3rd, 7:30 pm

LIGHTING COMMITTEE – Dave Cosson

The Lighting Committee met on December 8th and discussed the following:

Bollard Lights at McCathran Hall: The necessary waiver forms have been received from the Maryland Historical Trust and will be submitted upon completion.

Streetlight Options: The Committee has had discussions, funded by grant through January, with a consultant with Clean Energy Solutions who has provided assistance to other municipalities to procure their own streetlights. Pepco is expected to file new streetlight tariffs in 2022, following the PSC rejection of its 2021 proposals. The Committee has also discussed with Pepco how price would be determined if the Town were to exercise its right under Maryland law to purchase the

existing streetlight fixtures. Pepco is reportedly preparing a webinar for municipalities on the subject.

Comprehensive Plan Submission: The Committee made further editorial revisions to the draft of its proposed Section 4.5 of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. The revised version will be submitted by the end of the week.

Town Website: The Committee intends to develop additional information regarding lighting for posting on the Town website. Information developed for the revised Comprehensive Plan will be included.

Replacement and removal of streetlights: The Committee discussed ways the Town could assist residents who request that non-functioning or mal-functioning streetlights be repaired and a procedure for responding to requests for removal of intrusive lights.

Next Meeting: January 26th, 7:30 p.m.

CONSERVATION MEADOW

Nothing to report.

PLANNING COMMISSION – Christine Dibble

- “Border signs” are currently being fabricated.
- In other sign news, it was noted that the advertising sign on the Cator property is illegal, and that there is currently no process for permitting signs other than getting the Mayor to approve.
- In other Cator property news, several prospective purchasers have noted that there is no fence separating the property from the train tracks. The developer is interested in installing a six-foot privacy fence. Georgette and Deb will research whether this is permissible under Town ordinances.
- The PC is nearing the end of reviewing/incorporating the material from the Maryland Department of Planning review. The Planning Commission will be holding their next work session on December 15. The new Public Hearing date will be determined as soon as possible.

WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS – Christine Dibble

Nothing to report this month; engaged in basic site maintenance.

DOG PARK – Christine Dibble

Grove dogs and their owners continue to meet most weekends on Saturday or Sunday mornings for playdates.

PLAYGROUNDS AND TENNIS COURTS – Christine Dibble

- Nonresident athletes have marked lines in chalk for pickleball use on the hard court. Linda Baim has spoken with those players. They will most likely not return and may use the courts at Shady Grove Middle School instead. In the future, the town will most likely

encourage pickleball players to put down painters' tape rather than chalk and remove it when they leave. Nonresidents will continue to be reminded that the courts are private.

- Steve Werts and Charlie and Mary Challstrom filled the cracks on the hard court with caulking in about 2.5 hours. It took 12 hours to cure. In the spring, they will obtain small amounts of U.S. Open Blue and Green to paint the repaired areas.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (EPSC) – Patty Klein

The EPSC did not meet in November due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The next meeting will be on December 16, 2021.

BORDER COMMITTEE – Patty Klein

The Border Committee met on November 11th to discuss the following matters:

Welcome Signage: The chair and Craig English met with the 'SignCity' sign maker to review mock-ups of the Welcome signs and verify color selection. The committee viewed photos of the mock-ups and agreed on original proposed size. Production of the signs may be delayed up to 60 days due to supply chain shortages.

Welcoming signage between Shady Grove Crossing (SGX) and Ridge Rd. and at the cul-du-sac of Lower Ridge Road is being considered. Barbara Raimondo contacted the Amity community and was referred to their management company. The committee agreed that installing welcoming signage now would promote a friendly impression we strive to achieve at both locations since the County's shared-use path projects will delay moving forward for several years while their planning continues.

Identity Fencing: The committee discussed the need to trim back overgrown foliage along the West Woods border on Washington Grove Lane (WGL) to improve visibility and safety. The best time for this project would be in the winter when foliage is dormant. The chair and liaison will seek Steve Werts' advice and his recommendations for a contractor to do the work. Clearing the overgrown foliage will help identify locations for Identity Fencing.

WGL and Railroad Street vehicular noise and speeding: EPSC drafted a letter for the Mayor to send to the County Executive and DOT requesting interventions to include installation of speed camera(s). A group of Town residents continue to gather data on speeding vehicles and will update the Border Committee at the next meeting.

Commercial Corner: Repaving the Commercial Corner parking lot was a good improvement. The chair will remind the County again to remove the dumpster the end of this year.

The Border committee will be scheduling a joint strategic "visioning" session for Railroad St. and WGL with several other town committees.

The next Border Committee meeting will be on December 9, 2021.

FORESTRY AND BEAUTIFICATION – Barbara Raimondo

At the November Meeting the F&B Committee:

- 1) Reviewed Tom Land's proposal for a Frisbee golf course beginning with one "hole" and expanding later to two if it proves popular. F&B felt the use was consistent with the use of Woodward Park and not detrimental to the trees/shrubs there. It should proceed.
- 2) Reviewed the planting of 12 trees so far for fall 2021 with 6 more to come.
- 3) Discussed areas to consider for Spring 2022 tree planting and the hiring of a licensed arborist to do aesthetic pruning of trees which are hard for us to reach.

F&B appreciates the inclusion of the article on tree survival in WG and what F&B and the Town is doing about it.

RACIAL AND SOCIAL EQUITY COMMITTEE (RASEC) – Barbara Raimondo

Researching anti-bias training.

Working with the Lake Committee about proposed steps to be taken in response to racial profiling incidents at the Lake, including an anti-racist statement.

Researching anti-racist statement that could be made on behalf of the Town.

Working on RASEC presence on Town web site.

Translating Town welcome packet into Spanish.

Working on a project to raise awareness of the restrictive covenants on houses in WG and steps homeowners can take.

Researching accessory dwelling units.

Finishing up Town inclusivity survey, which is expected to be disseminated in January 2022.

MCCATHRAN HALL – Barbara Raimondo

Nothing to report.

SHADY GROVE CROSSING – Barbara Raimondo

Nothing to report.

Accessibility of Zoom Meetings:

Use of Transcripts as Minutes/Accessibility

Recommendations:

Transcripts - The Zoom auto generated captions are not adequate to serve as a transcript of the

meeting. There are too many errors, and it is not possible to tell who is speaking. Links to the captioned recordings should make it explicit that they are not official minutes but are provided only as a convenience. However, all Council, commission, and committee meeting Zoom hosts should turn on the captions, and each individual who wants to see the captions can turn them on on their own computer. If they wish to save the transcript they can. Again, these would not be official transcripts, but if an individual wants to use them for review, they will be able to.

Minutes - Streamlined minutes should be used. Minutes should briefly describe the topic and capture several of the main points raised, the motion as stated, and the votes. Here is a sample: <https://jurassicparliament.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Minutes-record-what-is-done.pdf> Minutes should reflect what the meeting group as a whole does, and not what individuals say during the meeting. The focus needs to be on what was done.

Accessibility – So far, one person in Town has expressed a preference about this, and that person was satisfied using the auto-captions. If the Town receives a request for another way for meetings to be accessible, the Town would have to consider that request under disability law.

ROADS AND WALKWAYS – Gray Yachup

Currently confirming and further investigating my comprehensive status report of all Town roads to present to the next Maintenance Supervisor, so that we can pick up seamlessly with road repair projects.

Still working on creating a standardized process for requesting/approving projects like speedbumps, road repairs, or other similar maintenance projects.

MAPLE LAKE – Gray Yachup

Miscellaneous: The Lake Committee continues to have productive meetings with RASEC regarding how we can best incorporate racial equity into our operations.

In addition, members of the RASEC Committee have reached out to the Conflict Resolution Center of MoCo to help address racial profiling events at the lake and help with training lifeguards.

RECREATION – Gray Yachup

No currently pending Rec Committee projects.

MONTGOMERY MUNICIPAL CABLE – Gray Yachup

MMC has finished their work with Judy Mroczka and the Christmas Show crew to film the virtual show this year. The premier will be on MoCo Public Access on Saturday.