

**MINUTES of the December 21, 2021, MEETING of the Commission
(via Zoom)**

**December 21, 2021
Adopted: January 18, 2022**

Members Present: The meeting began at approximately 7:30 p.m. Bob Booher, Wendy Harris, David Stopak, Mimi Styles, and Darrell Anderson (council liaison). Guests included Mayor John Compton.

Approval of Agenda

The proposed agenda was revised by adding project reviews for 410 4th Avenue (Greenway) and 17050 Railroad (Cator property) and removing several agenda items. The order of agenda items was revised. The amended agenda was unanimously approved.

Adoption of Minutes

October 20, 2021 minutes were unanimously approved. Approval of the November minutes was postponed.

Pepco EV Charging Stations

Mayor Compton came to the meeting to express his views about the potential EV charging stations. He was reminded that HPC had prepared and submitted a document entitled “Compatibility of Proposed PEPCO EV Charging Stations”. Bob suggested that going forward, the mayor might wish to follow up with the Sustainability Committee, as the HPC had likely discharged its responsibility to comment via the above-referenced document. The mayor left the meeting following the EV charging discussion.

TC Report

Darrell reported that the topic of most interest to HPC was likely the Town Council’s resolution regarding the Shared Use Path, that stipulated

- Lower Brown Street is the preferred location for the Washington Grove Connector
- the Mayor will ask the County to continue studying the Salt Barn route as a future safe and attractive secondary path and connection and report back to the Town Council within 6 months of the adoption of this Resolution and at least annually thereafter.
- These reports are to include a summary of material safety incidents or material safety complaints regarding the Lower Brown Street connection.

Project Reviews

Early consultation reviews/discussions were anticipated for 410 4th Avenue (Greenway) and 17050 Railroad (Lisa Johnson, Realtor for the Cator property), however neither property owner/representative was present at the meeting.

National Register Nomination on Town Website

Wendy reported that she has been working with Christine Dibble and that glitches that existed previously have been corrected.

Historic Landscape Resources

Wendy reported on her volunteer work with Heather Bouslog (Senior Archaeologist, Montgomery County Parks). They are recording archaeological features in the forested hedgerow and plan to add the findings to the existing registration with the Maryland Historical Trust. Wendy presented a photograph of the remains of laid stone retaining walls of a presumed spring feature and an historical aerial photograph showing its proximity to the farmstead that once existed. The spring would have been an important resource for the both the farmer and livestock. Wendy included a number of interesting historical photographs of spring features in other geographic areas as part of her brief presentation. She plans to resume her volunteer work with the Montgomery County archaeologists after the holidays.

Bike Path Debrief

As Darrell reported, the TC passed a resolution reinforcing the Brown Street connection and pursuing study of a Salt Barn route as a future option. A reporting mechanism for safety issues was included.

At the TC meeting, the mayor voiced the opinion that HPC had overstepped its role in the bike path issue. Taking that into consideration, as we look forward to the formation of the Shared Use Path “Mitigation Committee”, HPC will have its work cut out to convince the mayor that HPC indeed has a role in that committee. HPC’s role in reviewing PWP’s was discussed, and reference was made to the 2009 Master Plan. That document states “The Town should define the optimal location and coordinate with the County for a shared-use path in keeping with the history and character of the Town.” Clearly, assessing “history and character” compatibility would fall within HPC’s advisory role. Darrell suggested that Bob speak with the mayor, one-on-one.

Educating the TC on the scope of HPC’s advisory role was also discussed.

Bob will contact project manager Kyle Lukacs to request a copy of consultant Shelandia’s report and to inquire whether the Shared Used Path project will be subject to the Section 106 Review Process. Bob will copy HPC members on his email correspondence. It will be important to provide input to the county early in the design process.

Planning Commission

Mimi attended the December PC meeting and provided a summary. Pepco EV charging stations were the main topic of discussion at the PC meeting. Commissioners are not of a single mind regarding the charging stations and they have varying concerns (would the stations fall under Pepco’s “regulated activities”; would the stations run afoul of the town’s avoidance of “income generating” activities, etc.) PC decided they would limit their input to the mayor/TC to summarizing how existing ordinances would allow/disallow the stations (rather than the PC issuing a statement of support or opposition). Christine Dibble is setting up a Google.doc where the PC will summarize existing ordinances/resolutions that would relate to EV charging station installation/operations. PC will take up the issue again at their January 2022 meeting and will submit a report to the TC before its January meeting.

Chair Peter Nagrod reported having been contacted by an agent for the Cator property inquiring about construction of a 6-foot privacy fence at the back of the property to shield view of the railroad tracks. The issue will be handled by Georgette Cole and Deb Melferber, who may bring Charlie Challstrom in on their assessment.

Border Committee

Bob reported on the idea of developing an overall, comprehensive vision for the Town’s borders as interest in various aspects develop and funds are available.

Lighting Committee

Bob advised that Pepco is up for tariff renewal. The “threat” of LED streetlights now appears to be a non-issue. Purchasing the entire streetlight units may be an option. It seems Poolesville and the District of Columbia have done this. The committee is also considering proposing differentiation between streetlights and walkway lights, with lower scale lights to be installed on walkways.

Woods Committee

Wendy reported that the Woods Committee had reached out to her for some historic maps.

Bulletin – Robinson & Associates’ four research documents are now available on the Town website (historic context, cultural landscape, architectural survey, and viewshed documentation). Mimi will submit a bulletin piece to introduce the documents to residents. It will include links.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 7:30pm via Zoom.