

Town of Riverdale Park
Work Session Minutes
February 26, 2018
8:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Mayor Alan K. Thompson
CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1
CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

John N. Lestitian, Town Manager
David Morris, Chief of Police
Leonard Addison, Director of Public Works
Jessica Barnes, Town Clerk

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the work session to order at 8:06 p.m.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alan Thompson deferred his report to the March 5th Legislative Meeting.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Presentations

Laura Perez, Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center

Ms. Laura Perez discussed the purpose and vision of the Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center (PGAAMCC). Ms. Perez also discussed several PGAAMCC programs and activities. Ms. Perez encouraged everyone to visit the PGAAMCC website and Facebook and Instagram pages.

Annual Update from Aaron Marcavitch, Executive Director, Maryland Milestones/ATHA Inc.

Mr. Aaron Marcavitch discussed the ATHA mini-grant program and upcoming activities and partnerships. Mr. Marcavitch encouraged everyone to sign-up for weekly e-blasts from ATHA.

Discussion:

University of Maryland student Paige Leckie asked how much the annual dues are for ATHA membership. Mr. Marcavitch replied that the dues were approximately \$900 this year and will be approximately \$1800 next year due to the expansion of the ATHA grant programs.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager John N. Lestitian reported:

- Overview of recent attacks on police officers in the region and discussion of the good work done by RPPD officers
- Staff continues to work on Chapter 64
- State of the Town is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall
- First Community Walk will be held on Saturday, March 24 at 9:00 a.m. starting at Town Hall

Council Committee & Ward Reports

CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1

CM Marsha Dixon reported that a Legislative Committee Meeting was held on February 21st to discuss expansion of voting rights and Chapters 55 and 56. She stated that the Committee did not reach a vote on any of the items discussed. CM Dixon stated that the next Legislative Committee Meeting will be held on March 8th at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall to discuss expansion of voting rights.

Discussion:

Resident Lora Katz asked who was on the Legislative Committee.

CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

CM Alejandro Silva did not have a report.

Discussion Items

1. Variance Request: 4514 Oliver Street for waivers of the fence location and height requirements for a fence over 4 feet in side yard (Ward 1)

Applicant Jade Jagers discussed her project and the reason for a variance request. Ms. Jagers stated that she had spoken with all of her neighbors and they were all supportive of her variance request.

Mayor Thompson stated that he thought that all of the fencing was actually in the backyard, not the side yard. CM Dixon stated that she would talk with the Mayor regarding his zoning questions and confirm the support of the applicant's neighbors.

CM Dixon requested that the variance request for 4514 Oliver Street be added to the regular agenda for the March 5th Legislative Meeting.

2. Variance Request: 6209 Beale Circle for variance of 7 feet front yard depth and 1.2% net lot coverage (Ward 1)

Applicant Yohannes Negassi stated that he bought the property last May and it had been a foreclosure property with a lot of damages. Mr. Negassi stated that he was not requesting to add anything else to the driveway, just to validate the existing condition. Mr. Negassi stated that it would be a financial hardship to have to remove any of the concrete.

CM Dixon discussed her concerns regarding setting a precedence and stated that she wanted more time to think about the request.

CM Dixon requested that the variance request for 6209 Beale Circle be added to the regular agenda for the March 5th Legislative Meeting.

3. Fence Permit Request: 6-foot white vinyl fence at 4601 Queensbury Road (Ward 1)

CM Dixon gave an overview of the fence permit request.

Resident Jeffrey Yorke provided additional details regarding the fence permit request and the history of the previous fence that had been removed.

CM Dixon asked that the fence permit request be placed on the regular agenda for the March 5th Legislative Meeting so that she could contact the neighbors.

4. CIP Project #12PW07 Streets and Sidewalks Improvement (Street Overlay and Bike Sharrows)

Director Addison gave an overview of the Street Overlay and Bike Sharrows project. Director Addison also discussed the reasons for the timing of the project.

5. Budget: FY2018 Estimated Actuals

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the current year budget and gave an overview of the report provided to the Mayor and Council. Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff are modifying revenue projections for a variety of reasons and explained how staff plan to address the change in revenue projections.

CM Dixon thanked Town Manager Lestitian for informing the Council of the modified revenue projections. She stated that having the information allowed for adjustments to be made as needed before the end of the fiscal year.

Town Manager Lestitian reiterated that there are four months left in the fiscal year and staff has time to adjust.

Mayor Thompson asked how staff projected the revenues. Town Manager Lestitian explained the process and stated that he felt confident in the numbers. He also stated that he expected to receive revised TIF numbers and he would forward them to the Council when he received them.

6. Resolution regarding celebration of businesses in Town

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the Celebrating Business Initiative and the concept of recognizing grand openings and significant anniversaries for businesses in Town.

CM Dixon asked if the Initiative had been presented to the Riverdale Park Business Association and if it had been well received. Town Manager Lestitian replied that it had been presented and was well received.

7. Rental Licenses and Inspections Programs – Chapters 55 and 56

Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff had worked with Town Attorney Fred Sussman and adjusted the language and formatting of the draft legislation for rental licensing and inspections to make it clearer.

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the notable changes that had been made since the last meeting of the Council. He stated that the section regarding appeals had been separated out and made into another chapter, Chapter 56, which was consistent with Council discussions last fall.

Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff needed policy direction from the Council regarding owner occupied dwellings. He stated that the current draft legislation included owner occupied dwellings where two or more rooms are rented which was also consistent with Council discussions last fall.

CM Dixon stated that the Legislative Committee had discussed the inclusion of owner occupied dwellings in the rental licensing program however they could not reach a consensus so there would be no recommendation from the Committee.

Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff plans to have the legislation ready for introduction on March 5th and to move forward for adoption at the April 2nd Legislative Meeting.

Resident Corey Bettenhauser thanked the staff and Council for consideration of his comments from last month. Mr. Bettenhauser asked why there was a distinction between owner occupied dwellings that are renting rooms and multi-family dwellings and stated that a more conservative ordinance is preferable.

CM Dixon discussed her position regarding owner occupied rentals.

Resident Jeffrey Yorke stated that the right answer was to leave owner occupied rentals alone and he discussed potential scenarios when a homeowner may want to rent a room.

Resident Lora Katz suggested looking at how other communities address owner occupied rental properties. Town Manager Lestitian stated that every jurisdiction with a rental licensing program varies and even though there are some basic components, this type of aspect had lots of variations.

8. Boards and Commission Membership

Town Clerk Jessica Barnes gave an overview of the vacancies on Town Boards and Commissions. Ms. Barnes stated that staff would solicit volunteers by placing a notice in the *Town Crier*, on the Town's website and in the Status and Information Report.

9. Ordinance to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

Town Clerk Jessica Barnes provided an overview of the draft ordinance to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act.

10. Vision and Commitment to Business and Economic Development

Town Manager Lestitian stated that he would request that the resolution regarding the Town's Vision and Commitment to Business and Economic Development be placed on the March 5th agenda for adoption as part of an overall effort to create a concise vision statement for Town.

11. Vision and Commitment to Infrastructure

Town Manager Lestitian stated that a draft resolution regarding the Town's Vision and Commitment to Infrastructure was included in the meeting materials and that staff was seeking input from the Council and public. Town Manager Lestitian explained that the draft resolution outlined a regional perspective on infrastructure as well as the need for well-maintained infrastructure to include stormwater management.

12. Minutes from January 29, 2018 Work Session

Mayor Thompson requested that the Council let staff know if there are any corrections needed to the January 29, 2018 Work Session minutes.

13. Minutes from February 5, 2018 Legislative Meeting

Mayor Thompson requested that the Council let staff know if there are any corrections needed to the February 5, 2018 Legislative Meeting minutes.

Unfinished Business

1. Ordinance 2018-OR-01 regarding Ethics Ordinance Revisions

Town Manager Lestitian stated that Ordinance 2018-OR-01 regarding Ethics Ordinance Revisions would be placed on the March 5th Legislative Meeting agenda for adoption.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 p.m.