

Town of Riverdale Park
Legislative Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2018
8:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Alan K. Thompson, Mayor
CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2
CM David Lingua, Ward 3
CM Christopher Henry, Ward 4 (left at 9:24 p.m.)
CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

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

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the legislative meeting to order at 8:09 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of reflection.

Approval of Agenda

CM Faulx made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua.
Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Presentation

Ethics Awareness Month Proclamation

Mayor Thompson read the 2018 Ethics Awareness Month proclamation in English and in Spanish. Town staff members Daryle Cunningham, Garey Davis, Bradley Goshen, Jonathan Green, Wayne Sanders and Brian Slattery accepted the proclamation on behalf of all Town employees.

Correspondence Summary

The Correspondence Summary was included in the meeting materials.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alan K. Thompson reported:

- Thank you to Town staff for the response to wind storm last Friday. The response from Public Works (DPW) and the Police Department was quick and efficient.
- Dedication of Great Blue Herons sculpture was well attended and the Town received positive responses and appreciation for the Town's Public Arts Initiative
- Update on the status of CSX bridge and reminder to residents to not drive on the bridge until it is turned over to the Town
- Town received a letter regarding 7-Eleven on Baltimore Avenue's application for a variance to install a monument sign

Discussion:

CM Lingua stated that he was only aware of one tree in the public right-of-way that was effected during the wind storm. CM Lingua stated that DPW has done a great job with tree inventory and maintenance.

Town Manager Report

Town Manager John N. Lestitian reported:

- Discussion regarding recent review of Chapter 64 and approved areas for speed cameras; staff will be coming back to Council with recommendations
- Requested confirmation of the date and time for the State of the Town presentation so that staff can start advertising
- Public Safety Committee Meeting will be held on March 23, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss railroad safety
- Community Walk will be held on Saturday, March 24 at 9:00 a.m. and the route will cover Wards 4,5, 6. Walk will begin at Town Hall.
- Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 24 at 11:00 a.m. at Riverside Neighborhood Park
- Budget Public Hearings will be held on Saturday, April 21 and Saturday, April 28 at Town Hall
- Discussion regarding the closure of the Hiker-Biker Trail

Discussion:

Mayor Thompson stated that the developer is planning to open another temporary Hiker-Biker Trail and more information would be coming soon.

Finance Report

As of February 28, 2018, subject to audit:

Expenses: \$ 414,227

Revenue: \$87,052

CM Lingua made a motion to adopt the Town Manager's Finance Report subject to audit. The motion was seconded by CM Henry. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the Finance Report and explained that the revenue shown reflected the segregation of TIF funds and other restricted use revenue. Mayor Thompson asked if the year to date totals reflected the change and Town Manager Lestitian stated that they did not.

Fire Department Report

The Fire Department's report was included in the meeting materials.

Council Committee & Ward Reports

CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1

CM Marsha Dixon reported:

- Thank you to Town staff for the efficient response to the wind storm
- Recently met with a Ward 1 resident who would like to open their property to a community garden
- Reminder to residents that the no parking signs are up along the curve from Madison Street to Harrison Avenue

- Legislative Committee met on February 21 to discuss the expansion of voting rights in Town and lowering the voter age to 16. The Legislative Committee will meet again on March 8th at 6:30 p.m. and all residents are encouraged to attend.

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2

CM Aaron Faulx reported:

- Thanks to Town staff for response to wind storm on Friday- they did a fantastic job!
- Preparing for gardening season and looking into acquiring rain barrels: reminder regarding rain check rebate program and a reminder to be as green as possible
- University of Maryland agricultural extension- ask an expert www.extension.umd.edu
- CM Lingua and CM Faulx attended February 21 PTO meeting at 5:30 p.m.

CM David Lingua, Ward 3

CM David Lingua reported:

- Reminder to utilize the experts located at the University of Maryland
- CKAR CDC meeting will be held on March 6 at 7 pm at 6801 Kenilworth Avenue, Suite 203
- Garden beds at EcoCity Farms sustained a great deal of damage during the wind storm. If you are willing to help with repairs, please contact them.

CM Christopher Henry, Ward 4

CM Christopher Henry reported:

- Thank you Cpl. Walch and Officer Amaya for coming out to address dumping in Ward 4
- Plans to attend Community Walk on March 24- thank you to Town Manager Lestitian
- Public Safety Committee Meeting will be held on March 23 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. to discuss plans for response to a train derailment
- Thank you to all for condolences

CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

CM Alejandro Silva reported:

- After the wind storm, there were very sad property owners due to the damage caused by the storm.
- Thank you to DPW for taking care of streets

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items and Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on Non-Agenda Items and Consent Agenda Items.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda items:

1. Minutes from January 29, 2018 Work Session
2. Minutes from February 5, 2018 Legislative Meeting

CM Dixon made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. CM Faulx seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Legislative Action Items:

1. Motion to authorize the Town Manager to send a letter to Prince George's County Board of Zoning Appeals regarding a variance request for 4514 Oliver Street for waivers of the fence location and height requirements for a fence over 4 feet in side yard (Ward 1)

CM Dixon made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to send a letter of support to Prince George's County Board of Zoning Appeals recommending approval of a variance request for 4514 Oliver Street for waivers of the fence location and height requirements for a fence over 4 feet in side yard. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

CM Dixon gave an overview of the discussion at the Work Session and conversations with Mayor regarding whether a variance was actually required based on County Code. Mayor Thompson stated that it appeared that the area of the yard where the fence was to be placed is not actually a side yard based on the County's definition.

2. Motion to authorize the Town Manager to send a letter to Prince George's County Board of Zoning Appeals regarding a variance request for 6209 Beale Circle for variance of 7 feet front yard depth and 1.2% net lot coverage (Ward 1)

CM Dixon made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to send a letter to Prince George's County Board of Zoning Appeals recommending approval of a variance request for 6209 Beale Circle for variance of 7 feet front yard depth and 1.2% net lot coverage. The motion was seconded by CM Henry. Vote: 4-1-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained, CM Lingua opposed)

Discussion:

CM Dixon gave an overview of the discussion from the Work Session and stated that she was concerned about setting a precedent. She asked if the applicant would be willing to mitigate/off set the lot coverage issue by installing rain barrels or something similar.

The applicant, Mr. Yohannes Negassi, stated that he would be willing to work with the Council but he needed to determine the most cost effective way forward. Mayor Thompson clarified that CM Dixon was willing to recommend approval of the variance request if the would agree to address the lot coverage issue in the future with something similar to rain barrels. Mr. Negassi stated that he shared the Council's concerns but he was under some financial pressure due to the repairs needed to the property when he purchased it. CM Henry stated that the applicant had purchased a foreclosed property and was making improvements which would benefit the Town.

CM Dixon stated that she was willing to help the applicant find grants/assistance. CM Faulx stated that he would check with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to see if they were still accepting applications and to get more information for the applicant. Resident Jade Jagers provided additional comments regarding the Chesapeake Bay Trust's grant process.

Mayor Thompson requested that staff mention "undue hardship for the applicant" in the letter to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

3. Motion regarding Fence Permit request for a 6-foot white vinyl fence at 4601 Queensbury Road (Ward 1)

CM Dixon made a motion to approve a fence permit request for a 6-foot white vinyl fence at 4601 Queensbury Road. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

CM Dixon provided an overview of the discussion from the Work Session. CM Dixon also stated that she had attempted to contact the neighbors but had been unable to reach them.

4. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-01 regarding Ethics Ordinance Revisions

CM Lingua made motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-01 regarding Ethics Ordinance Revisions. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (approved, Mayor Thompson abstained)

5. Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-04 regarding celebration of businesses in Town

CM Lingua made a motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-04 regarding celebration of businesses in Town. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

6. Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-05 Vision and Commitment to Business and Economic Development

CM Lingua made a motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-05 Vision and Commitment to Business and Economic Development. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

7. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-02 to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

CM Lingua introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-02 to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act and read a summary of the ordinance.

8. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-03 Rental Licenses and Inspections Programs – Chapter 55

CM Dixon introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-03 Rental Licenses and Inspections Programs – Chapter 55. Mayor Thompson read a summary of the ordinance.

9. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-04 Appeals – Chapter 56

CM Lingua introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-04 Appeals – Chapter 56 and read a summary of the ordinance.

10. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-05 revising Chapter 67 – Housing Standards

CM Faulx introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-05 revising Chapter 67 – Housing Standards and read a summary of the ordinance.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

1. Vision and Commitment to Infrastructure

Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff were seeking input from the Mayor and Council and community regarding the Town's vision and commitment to infrastructure. Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff will continue to solicit input and any comments or suggestions should be sent to community_input@riverdaleparkmd.gov.

2. FY2019 Budget Assumptions

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the budget assumptions that will be used to create the proposed FY2019 Budget.

CM Lingua asked about the future impact of the Other Post-Employment Benefit Fund (OPEB) liability. Town Manager Lestitian explained that OPEB does not have to be 100% funded but the goal is to have it 40-50% funded. Mayor Thompson explained that the long term goal would be for OPEB to be 40-50% funded. CM Dixon asked when the OPEB would be funded at 40%. Town Manager Lestitian stated that it would be difficult to estimate because the OPEB fund is a moving target, however putting money aside each year would better position the Town over time.

Resident Corey Bettenhausen asked if the Council had considered raising the tax rate.

3. Boards and Commission Membership

Town Manager Lestitian stated that volunteers are needed to fill vacancies on M-UTC, the Ethics Commission and the Housing Review Board. Town Manager Lestitian also updated the Council regarding expressions of interest from members of the community and current Board and Commission members.

4. Recent Purple Line Community Advisory Team (CAT) Meeting

Mayor Thompson reported that he had recently attended a Purple Line Community Advisory Team (CAT) meeting and there was discussion regarding Quesada Road (off of Kenilworth Avenue) becoming a two-way street. Mayor Thompson stated that it was expected to change to a two-way street approximately one year from now.

Adjournment

CM Dixon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua. Vote: 4-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)