

**STAFF REPORT FOR
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014
MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF SYKESVILLE**

CALL TO ORDER:

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

MINUTES: **December 9, 2013**

REPORTS: **Public Safety Report
 Council Committees**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- On December 9, 2013 in closed session, the Mayor and Town Council (MTC) voted to approve the hiring of Andra Dennett as the Curator of the Gate House Museum with a salary of \$10.00 per hour on a part-time basis.
- On Saturday, January 25, 2014, the Main Street Association will hold their second annual SYK Awards reception. This will be held at the Fairhaven Community Center.
- The Town offices will be closed on Monday, January 20 for Martin Luther King Day.
- Maryland Municipal League will award Scholarships this year. Information will be posted on our website.
- Police Chief search update. Town Manager Dawn Ashbacher will provide an update on the search for the next Police Chief. Applications were due January 10.

OPEN SESSION:

1. **Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities and Towns Campaign** – The Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities & Towns Campaign in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League provides *free* coaching and technical assistance to municipal leaders to adopt local policies that promote access to healthy, affordable foods, convenient access to opportunities for physical activity and recreation, and workplace wellness for municipal employees. These policies set the framework for healthy, prosperous communities where people live, work, and play. To join the campaign, the Town would adopt a resolution indicating efforts the Town will make. The first 15 cities or towns to join receive special recognition. Sample ideas are attached. Mayor Shaw proposes that the Town participate in this program. If there is Council interest, Mayor Shaw will direct staff to draft a resolution.

Recommended Action: No action required. Provide input about whether or not the Town should participate and possible ideas for what the Town could do.

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- 2. FY 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** – Mayor Shaw will present the FY 2015 - 2019 capital requests. This is so the Mayor and Town Council are aware of ALL requests. This is not the proposed plan. Town staff and the Mayor and Council will continue to vet this list as part of the FY 2015 budget process. The FY 2015 budget is anticipated to accommodate a total of approximately \$250,000 in capital expenditures. At a later date, the Mayor and Town Council will be asked to help prioritize requests. Additional notes:

- The list of paving projects for FY 2015 is being re-evaluated.
- Council member Link has proposed expenditures for Baldwin’s Station. While the repairs are probably necessary, it may not be the Town’s responsibility to make these as per the lease agreement. Staff will work to clarify.
- The FY 2015 includes expenditures to increase accessibility to Town facilities.
- The requests for FY 2016 - 2019 are lumped together for now but will be spread out over each year once Town staff have more time to analyze the requests and make a realistic plan.
- The current list does not include funding for stormwater management or sidewalk repair but it is anticipated that these items will be discussed as part of the budget process.
- The Mayor has expressed an interest in adding road *improvement* projects to the capital plan, such as improvements to Oklahoma Avenue, in addition to road maintenance.

Recommended Action: Provide any questions and/or input for Town staff to research and/or consider in the budget process.

- 3. FY 2015 pre-budget input from the public and Council** – This is an opportunity for members of the public and the Council to share funding requests or concerns early in the budget process before a budget is proposed. This input will be considered by Town staff and the Mayor in making FY 2015 budget recommendations. First, Mayor Shaw will allow time for the public to provide input. Next, the Mayor will allow time for Council members to provide input.

Recommended Action: Provide input on specific budget concerns or requests to be considered as part of the FY 2015 budget process.

- 4. Potential Schoolhouse Road development** – At the joint meeting on December 18, 2013, the Mayor and Town Council and Planning Commission discussed a development off of Schoolhouse Road. A proposal has been presented to build age-restricted single dwelling unit housing. This would require a text amendment to amend the Conditional Uses for the Conservation District to allow “retirement housing” and Town annexation of the property.

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Another alternative is to re-zone the property to R-20,000, which also allows nursing homes and/or retirement homes as a Conditional Use. This may also require a text amendment to allow for age-restricted housing.

Mayor Shaw would like to get input from the Council to determine whether there is interest in a development like this in this specific location. If so, then the MTC would direct staff to propose a text amendment to be referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a report and recommendations. Before adopting a change, the MTC would have to hold a public hearing.

Advantages:

- The Town does not offer any age-restricted homes. As the baby-boomer generation ages, this would be a very appealing product for them
- The developer is willing to discuss putting in curb/gutter and sidewalks along Oklahoma Avenue to help with pedestrian access from Schoolhouse Road to the downtown. This area gets a great deal of pedestrian traffic for Town events, so the additional curb/gutter and sidewalks will help to make the roads safer for pedestrians. There currently is no sidewalk.

Challenges to Consider:

- The current proposal is for age-restricted homes for individuals 55 years and over, many of who will still be driving which would provide a greater impact on traffic in that area. There are serious challenges with Oklahoma Avenue already.
- This plan does not seem to mesh well with the intent of a Conservation zone, given the area of disturbance. This development would entail topping off the top 30 feet of the peak in order to level out the rest of the area. This proposed project would require major grading, cut and fills, and retaining walls for approximately 40-50 villas.

Recommended Action: Action as recommended by the Mayor and Town Council

- 5. Program Open Space (POS) land conversion update** – The Town would like to sell the property at 732 Oklahoma and to do that the covenant on the deed must be removed. To accomplish this, the Town must provide other Open Space that is equal or greater in size, financial value, and recreational value than the land being replaced.

The Mayor and Town Council approved the use of Little Sykes Railway Park for the land conversion. In consulting with the Planning Commission, Commissioners expressed concern that a portion of the park could be considered an extension of the downtown. The Town has a limited amount of infill opportunities in the downtown area.

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Planning Commissioners favor exploring the Patapsco Overlook parcel, which is currently being used for recreational purposes. The Program Open Space official indicated that the land proposed for conversion must have the same recreational potential, e.g. must be buildable, suitable for a playground, etc. as the land being converted to have equal recreational value. This means the proposed property must be flat and out of the flood plain. The Town Manager has asked Town Engineer, Bob Bond, to review the parcel to see if there is a one acre parcel that meets these requirements. In addition, the Town must obtain a Level 1 Environmental Assessment of whatever parcel it proposes, in addition to the appraisal.

The Mayor and Town Council previously approved up to \$5,000 for an appraisal for the POS land conversion. The Town has only spent \$3,800 to date.

Another suggestion has been made to consider the Town-owned parcel near Bloomfield Manor.

The Town Manager would like authorization from the Mayor and Town Council to explore the Patapsco Overlook parcel with associated expenses and indicate if supportive of exploring the Bloomfield Manor parcel.

Recommended Action: Action as recommended by the Mayor and Town Council

RECESS:

CLOSED SESSION:

The meeting was proposed to be closed pursuant to the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 10-508(a) to discuss (7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

- Consult with legal counsel to discuss Warfield contract negotiations

ADJOURNMENT: