

TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE
COUNCIL MEETING
May 10, 2023

*All Councilmembers were present.
The recording of this meeting is available on the Town website.*

OPEN SESSION TO VOTE TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION

At 6 p.m., the Town Council met in open session for the purpose of voting to enter a closed session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Maryland Code, General Provisions Article, Section 3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on Town development regulations. Mayor Rush moved to enter closed session. Councilmember Brancato seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The Council convened in closed session and consulted with counsel to obtain legal advice on Town development regulations. The closed session was adjourned at 7 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

I. GENERAL BUSINESS

- Newly elected Councilmembers Stephanie Martz and Joy White read the oath of office.
- Voted unanimously to appoint Council officers, as follows:
 - Irene Lane, Mayor
 - Barney Rush, Vice Mayor
 - Rich Brancato, Treasurer
 - Stephanie Martz, Secretary
 - Joy White, Community Liaison
- Voted unanimously to appoint Council liaisons to Town committees, as follows:
 - Climate and Environment: Joy White
 - Community Relations: Stephanie Martz
 - Land Use: Rich Brancato
 - Long Range Planning: Barney Rush
 - Public Services: Irene Lane
 - Corso Special Committee: Barney Rush
- Read and unanimously approved National Gun Violence Awareness Proclamation.
- Heard April 2023 financial report.
- Heard Town Manager's report.

II. COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS

- Discussed Corso Chevy Chase rezoning and redevelopment.
 - Noted that Corso Chevy Chase and the Town have ratified an agreement related to redevelopment of the property. Detailed information on this agreement, which allows the Town to permanently enforce, among other conditions, building setbacks and heights, maintenance of forest conservation areas, and provision of garage space for the Town, was publicized via Town Crier.
 - Noted that the Hearing Examiner has forwarded to the County Council a recommendation to approve the rezoning. Discussed next steps for the Corso redevelopment if the rezoning is approved. Corso will proceed to prepare a preliminary site plan, develop stormwater management plans with Town involvement, and complete requisite traffic and parking studies.

- Discussed the Bethesda Market Park project.
 - Reviewed the schedule for park construction, including the undergrounding of utilities. Noted that the developers may recommend that some undergrounding work proceed before the developer obtains construction financing, and that, if such advance work is necessary, the Town could consider using some of its state grant funds for this work adjacent to the parks.
 - Discussed reducing the scope of utility undergrounding, including along 46th Street, as a potential cost-saving measure that could offset possible cost overruns but not compromise the quality of the parks. The Town will engage in further consultations with the development team and the Planning Department on this matter.
 - Heard and discussed a report from the Town's Long-Range Planning Committee summarizing resident comments from the Town's survey on park amenities and recommending priority design elements for the park.
 - Discussed the potential for a water feature in the park and agreed that such a feature is desirable to the overall park plan.
 - Agreed to send a letter to the Parks Department asking for the next concept plan to retain the option of providing a water feature and to incorporate other amenities identified as priorities by Town residents.
 - Noted progress in developing the project funding agreement with the County for construction of the underground garage and continued engagement with the Parks Department to develop a project funding agreement for construction of the park. Noted the Town's commitment to ensure that a full funding plan is in place to develop the entire park across both parking lots.
- Discussed Zimmerman Park redevelopment.
 - Noted delays in the project due to the need to obtain a variance from WSSC for the proposed park improvements.
 - Noted that WSSC's approved variance does not allow the Town to construct any park improvements until WSSC has repaired the water and sewer lines under the park.
 - Agreed to follow up with WSSC to obtain more information on the scope and timeline of its proposed work and to determine whether the Town may proceed with some park improvements prior to WSSC's work.
- Discussed Antisemitism Awareness Resolution.
 - Noted that 14 Montgomery County municipalities have signed the resolution in some form.
 - Agreed to continue to encourage other municipalities to sign the resolution.

III. OTHER BUSINESS/UPDATES

- Discussed a proposal from the Town's Climate and Environment Committee to ban gas-powered leaf blowers in Town year-round.
 - Agreed to hold a work session on the matter in June.
- Discussed a proposal to remove the entry restriction onto southbound 46th Street from Leland Street.
 - Noted that the Town's engineer has prepared a report and that Town staff is preparing a memo summarizing options.
 - Agreed to continue discussion at the June meeting.
- Discussed the process of considering enhancements to Rosemary Triangle park.
 - Noted that the Town is awaiting a final survey of the park's underground utility infrastructure and will distribute it publicly when received.

- Noted concerns expressed by some residents about the Climate and Environment Committee proposal.
- Discussed the option of replanting with native plants and provision of benches adjacent to the perimeter sidewalk.
- Agreed to schedule and publicize a community “walkinar” of the park in the fall to review existing conditions and to solicit resident feedback on possible, limited enhancements. The Town arborist will inventory all plantings in Rosemary Triangle prior to this event.
- Discussed lack of water flow in Coquelin Run.
 - Noted that the Town sent a letter to state officials, including those managing Purple Line construction and state waterways, to request a community meeting to discuss this matter, with a focus on what mitigation can be undertaken to restore flow to the stream.
 - Noted that state officials have responded to the letter and have either requested additional information or assigned it to others within their organization. Agreed to follow up with state officials and to solicit support from the Town’s state delegation if needed.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.