

Town of Chevy Chase
Long-Range Planning Committee Meeting
January 18, 2010
Minutes by Leslie Hill

Group Members Present: Karen Depew and Mary Anne Hoffman, Co-Chairs; Pat Burda, Council Liaison; Tina Coplan, Charles Duffy, Leslie Hill, John Murtagh , Russ Powell,, Jim Roy and Steve Seidel

Group Members Absent: Sharon Light and John Midlen

Town Residents: John Whitty

The meeting was called to order by Mary Anne Hoffman at 6:30 p.m. The first order of business was to discuss: How can the LRP increase community awareness and involvement by Town residents in the regional government process?

Karen Depew facilitated a lively discussion which produced answers to the above question in two general categories:

1. Vehicles to educate the community on local government structures, such as role of the planning board, county council and how these various positions impact our community, and
2. Vehicles to educate the community on who the candidates will be in the 2010 elections and what they stand for.

The committee left it to Tina Coplan and Leslie Hill to organize the overall strategy put forth by the committee to realize the above goals. They will make recommendations for strategies at the next meeting for LRP to consider. Their recommendations will focus on the several elections important to Town residents that will occur in 2010.

Charles Duffy suggested a May forum for candidates for the District 1 Council seat if the incumbent is challenged, and a second forum after Labor Day for the four at-large County Council candidates. A list of tasks needed to implement any forum was distributed, and LRP members were asked to come prepared to the next meeting to volunteer for a task if the committee decides to host one or more forums.

Pat Burda relayed to the committee that District 1 Council Member Roger Berliner is interested in presenting an operating budget forum to the Town as the County needs to resolve a \$600M shortfall in its current budget. The committee, as part of its plan to help educate residents, thought this was a good idea, especially if the four at-large council members, Duchy Trachtenberg, Mark Elrich, Nancy Floreen and George

Leventhal ,were part of the forum. Ideally, this forum would have co-sponsors from neighboring communities involved. Pat Burda will respond to Berliner, see what other communities wish to be involved, and then invite the four at-large members.

Steve Seidel reported on a new project being developed north of the Town of Chevy Chase by Donohue. The new 150,000 square foot, 8-story building will be located west of Pearl Street and directly north of the Georgetown Branch Trail. The permitting process is just about to get started, and it is believed that no variances will be required in the permitting process. Currently the project manager is looking to meet with those residents directly impacted by the construction, but has offered also to have a public meeting with the Town to see what issues, if any, town residents have with the proposed project. Steve and Jim Roy will keep LRP posted on developments.

Pat Burda mentioned that the Town of Kensington is in the process of revising its Master Plan. The committee decided not to get involved with this plan.

The next order of business was an update on the Mitigation Advisory Group's (MAG) progress on the Purple Line. Leslie Hill and Mary Anne Hoffman reported that at MAG's January 7 meeting, MTA manage, Mike Madden explained to the group how the State determined to locate the trail north of the tracks, on the far side of the town. Several safety and noise issues were discussed with no final conclusions drawn. The MAG will meet again on Thursday January 21, 2010 in the Lawton Center Conference Room.

Pat Burda reported that the U.S. Department of Transportation is recommending changing the formula for federal New Starts funding from a cost-per-rider-benefit ratio to a new formula which factors in development benefits. The committee decided the Town should send comments, particularly focusing on BRT.

As a final agenda item, the committee discussed possible changes at Chevy Chase Elementary School, (CCES). It was brought to Mayor Strom's attention that due to the moratorium on development in Chevy Chase, the County is considering the expansion of the physical plant of CCES and changing its makeup from the current grade 3 to grade 6, to K to 5th grades. The committee concluded that it would be helpful to contact Community Relations Committee member Bridget Hartman to help inform us on the process. Russ Powell agreed to be LRP's point-person on this issue.

Jim Roy announced he has read *Wrestling With Moses*, the community action guide for one woman's success in turning development around in New York recommended by John Murtagh. Jim offered to lead a short discussion of the book at the next committee meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.