

TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
February 11, 2004

Present: Mier Wolf, Mayor; Bill Hudnut, Vice Mayor; Rob Enelow, Treasurer; Linna Barnes, Secretary; Martha Covell, Community Liaison; Todd Hoffman, Town Manager; Marty Hutt; Town Attorney; and Andi Silverstone, Town Clerk. Residents and guests: Greg Bitz, 7201 Oakridge Avenue; Margaret de Lisser, 6915 Ridgewood Avenue; Elias, Elaine, and Stravroula Lambrakopoulos, 4403 Ridge Street; William Pritchard, 7211 Ridgewood Avenue; Vicky Taplin, 4120 Leland Street; and Marcus Zarin 4402 Ridge Street.

I. General Business

A. Call to order – 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Wolf called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

B. Pledge Allegiance to the Flag

The Mayor led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the United States of America.

C. Comments, questions, suggestions from residents

There were no residents in attendance who wanted to speak on any non-agenda item.

D. Acceptance of Financial Report for January

Councilmember Hudnut made a motion to accept the financial report for January. Councilmember Enelow seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes of January Council Meeting

Councilmember Covell made a motion to approve the minutes of the January Council meeting. Councilmember Hudnut seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

II. Action

A. Variance, V04-10, 6915 Ridgewood Avenue, Front Yard Fence

Margaret de Lisser, 6915 Ridgewood Avenue, applied for a variance from Town building regulations to construct a front yard fence that adjoins the public right-of-

way at a perpendicular angle. The Town Code prohibits front yard fences and requires fences on private property to be set back two feet from the public right-of-way.

The Town Manager described the hardships as presented by the applicant. He recommended approval of the variance with the condition that the applicant be required to remove and relocate the fence two feet from the property line in the event that the Town makes public improvements to the portion of Pine Place along the applicant's property. The fence is not to extend into the public right-of-way.

After discussion, Councilmember Hudnut made a motion to approve the variance request with the condition recommended by the Town Manager. Councilmember Covell seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

B. Curb Cut Application for 4403 Ridge Street

Elias and Elaine Lambrakopoulos, 4403 Ridge Street, submitted an application for two curb cuts to accommodate a circular driveway in the front yard of their property. The curb cuts and attached driveway would provide off-street parking for the applicants.

Discussion followed about the Town's curb cut policy and procedure. The Town provides a curb cut for each residence to encourage and facilitate off-street parking. The Council may, at its discretion, approve more than one curb cut; however, the homeowner is required to assume the cost of any additional curb cuts. The applicants presented reasons why they believed the curb cut was necessary. A neighbor from across the street, Marcus Zarin, 4402 Ridge Street, expressed opposition to the curb cut request because of his belief that it would limit the availability of on-street parking for others.

After discussion, Councilmember Covell made a motion to approve the second curb cut subject to the approval of the Town Manager with regard to location and design. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

III. Discussion

A. Conservation Easement and Land Donation Program

Councilmembers discussed establishing a program for conservation easements, which would benefit the Town by preserving open space while providing residents with tax benefits. Town Attorney Marty Hutt provided an analysis of legal, operational and financial issues associated with a land donation/conservation easement program.

There was discussion about referring the issue to the Construction Committee, but it was the sense of the Council that a policy needed to be developed, with a statement of intent and criteria, by the Town Council.

After discussion, it was the sense of the Council to establish a Committee of Council to develop a policy statement and eligibility criteria. Mayor Wolf, Councilmember Barnes, Town Manager Todd Hoffman and Town Attorney Marty Hutt will be on the committee and will report back to the Council.

B. Proposed Speed Controls for Leland Center Parking Lot

The Town Manager provided Councilmembers with a schematic drawing of a proposed plan to control speed in the parking lot at the Leland Center. It includes one-way designations and speed and entry restriction signage. The proposed speed limit is 5 miles per hour. Although the Town does not own the lot, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has indicated support for the proposed plan. There was discussion about enforcement of the speed limit in the lot, including the use of speed humps.

It was the sense of the Council to defer discussion of speed control devices for the Leland Center parking lot until the traffic report is presented at the March Council meeting.

III. Reports

A. Mayor: Mayor Mier Wolf reported that the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Coalition would be having a tree-planting event, including installation of a bench, to honor former County Councilmember Ike Leggett. The Town will sponsor the event and provide the necessary insurance coverage.

The Mayor also reported progress with negotiations with Montgomery County to expand the Town office, by breaking through the Town Manager's office into an adjacent conference room and replacing that conference room with an addition in the back of the building.

B. Town Manager: Town Manager Todd Hoffman recommended that "Trash and Treasures" be scheduled for the weekend of April 17 and 18 to avoid all religious holidays at that time. Staff was directed to look into the possibility of including a drop-off for toxic waste in the Town in conjunction with "Trash and Treasures."

There was discussion about the Town's sidewalk snow removal program and the potential liability the program poses for the Town. Staff was asked to check with the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) to see if the Town is covered for this program.

C. Committee Reports

1. History Committee: Councilmember Hudnut reported on the progress the History Committee is making with the interviews that are being conducted. They have a plan to have displays at the annual meeting; a time capsule at the Town's 4th of July event; and reminiscences by older Town residents at the mid-year meeting.
2. Traffic Committee: Councilmember Covell reported that the Traffic Committee hasn't met but the members are getting ready for the open meeting in March on the Traffic Study.

Councilmember Covell suggested that the Town ask the municipal cable channel to tape some of the History Committee events.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linna Barnes
Secretary

Transcribed by Andi Silverstone