

TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
March 9, 2005

Present: Bill Hudnut, Mayor; Mier Wolf, Vice Mayor; Rob Enelow, Treasurer; Scott Orbach, Secretary; Linna Barnes, Secretary; Todd Hoffman, Town Manager; Marty Hutt, Town Attorney; and Andi Silverstone, Town Clerk. Residents and guests: Chris Bruch et. al., developers of hotel at Air Rights site; Kelly McMahon and Mark Squier, 3908 Leland Street; Kelly and John Murray, 39009 Leland Street; Mark Nolan, 3905 Leland Street; Chris Reed, 3905 Thornapple Street; and Norman Wollberg, 3907 Leland Street.

Note: The Council convened the meeting in the Anderson Room at the National 4-H Center due to the renovation of the Town offices.

I. General Business

A. Call to order – 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Hudnut called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Hudnut and a young girl who lives on Leland Street led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

C. Comments, questions, suggestions from residents

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

D. Approval of Minutes of February Meeting

The minutes of the February meeting were deferred until March.

E. Acceptance of Financial Report for February

Treasurer Rob Enelow reported that the revenue projections are high. The financial report for February was accepted as submitted.

Mayor Hudnut welcomed Vice Mayor Wolf back. He had been absent from the February meeting. Vice Mayor Wolf has been on the Council for 22 years and has missed very few meetings.

II. Action

A. Public Hearing on Speed Humps for 3900 block of Leland Street

The residents of the 3900 block of Leland Street introduced themselves and were welcomed by the Council. The residents came to advocate for two speed humps in their block. It was pointed out that every block of Leland Street has speed humps except the 3900 block.

Discussion followed about concerns about the proliferation of speed humps in the Town. There was discussion about how rescue personnel feel about the effects of speed humps on their efforts to get in and out of Town.

There was discussion about making the block safer by installing speed humps. Several residents described the 3900 block of Leland Street as functioning as an “off-ramp” from Connecticut Avenue. The intersection at Meadow Lane and Leland Street is very open and large. People at that intersection tend to ignore the stop signs, according to the residents. In addition, there is a school bus stop at that intersection.

There was discussion about the volume of traffic that uses the 3900 block of Leland Street. Councilmembers considered the pros and cons of installing one or two humps and whether or not to have a moratorium on additional speed hump installations.

Councilmember Orbach made a motion to install the speed humps in two phases: one at the beginning of April and one about six months later, subject to review by the Council and new traffic counts. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. Discussion followed about the number of humps that block could accommodate. Town Manager Todd Hoffman indicated that there were no objective criteria to evaluate one versus two speed humps in that block. In addition, the Town does not always follow the County standards for speed hump installations. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

Discussion followed about the process for the two-phase installation of the speed humps. Councilmember Wolf made a motion to reconsider Councilmember Orbach’s motion in order to give the Council time to get more information concerning the span of the street and the placement of the humps. The Council voted four to zero in favor of reconsidering Councilmembers Orbach’s original motion.

Councilmembers discussed the process of evaluating the effectiveness of one hump versus two. Residents questioned Councilmembers about installing one hump, if the ultimate intent is to install two.

Councilmember Orbach made a motion to install two speed humps in the 3900 block of Leland Street. Councilmember Wolf seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. An engineer will be consulted as to placement of the humps. Councilmember Wolf and Town Manager Todd Hoffman will look into whether or not the Town should be abiding by County standards.

III. Discussion

A. Discussion of Air Rights Center Hotel Project

Councilmember Wolf, liaison to the Town Boundary Committee, briefed Councilmembers on the hotel project at the Air Rights Center. He described the work he

has done with the developer on an amenity package. The package includes a connection to the Capital Crescent Trail from Pearl Street and other improvements to Elm Street Park.

Chris Bruch, with Donohoe Construction, described the project in detail and showed drawings to Councilmembers. The hotel will be a Hilton Garden Inn. Changes to the design were made to the roof, windows and top floor. It will be less dense and have less impact on the Town than the previously planned apartment project.

The Council was given a description of a landscape plan, which includes fixing erosion in the trail under the tunnel. The pathways in Elm Street Park will be redone.

Councilmember Wolf reported that the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission opposes the project, because the height of the building exceeds the 95-foot maximum as required by the Master Plan. The roof steps down from a height of 116 feet, to 98 feet, to 88.6 feet. The Park and Planning Commission can demonstrate flexibility when reviewing projects.

Councilmember Wolf asked Councilmembers for their approval of his representing the Council in supporting the hotel project. He pointed out that the residents on Elm Street who would most directly be affected by the project are on the Boundary Committee and have been kept informed about the project. Councilmembers unanimously approved Councilmember Wolf's request.

Mayor Hudnut discussed the process by which the Council holds public hearings and votes on public hearing issues. The Town Attorney reminded Councilmembers that they are not obligated to take a vote on issues related to a public hearing at the public hearing.

#### B. Discussion of Montgomery Municipal Cable

This agenda item was deleted.

Mayor Bill Hudnut had to leave at this point in the meeting. Vice Mayor Mier Wolf chaired the remainder of the Council meeting.

#### C. Discussion of Preliminary FY06 Budget

Town Manager Todd Hoffman presented Councilmembers with a preliminary budget package, which included a budget spreadsheet, text, and a memo highlighting the budget. The FY06 Budget is based on setting the property tax rate at \$.029 per \$100 of assessed value, which is the constant yield tax rate. It was the sense of the Council to approve the budget as presented.

Town Manager Todd Hoffman described some improvements that will need to be made to the Town garage. More formal storage space will be added.

Councilmembers congratulated the Town Manager on the excellent job he's done with the office renovations.

#### IV. Reports

A. Mayor: Vice Mayor Wolf requested that the Council approve an expenditure of \$3,000 to cut a one-foot swath of ivy from trees along the Crescent Trail to Connecticut Avenue. The area is along the boundary of the Town and benefits Town residents by providing shade and a vegetative barrier. Councilmember Orbach made a motion to approve the expenditure. Councilmember Enelow seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Staff was instructed to get permission from the owners of the property along the trail.

B. Town Manager: Town Manager Todd Hoffman updated Councilmembers on the status of the property at 7206 Meadow Lane. The owners of the property have decided to deed the property to the builder, Peterson and Collins, Inc. The builder has 90 days to find a buyer. Since he does not expect to be successful at finding a buyer, he plans to tear down the existing house and sell the land.

The Town Attorney and Town staff were instructed to look into the possibility of the Town purchasing the land for use as public open space and update the Council at the April Council meeting.

C. Committee Reports: None

There was discussion about the confusion among residents about the State's assessment process. It was the sense of the Council to invite an official from the State Department of Assessments and Taxation to the annual meeting to explain property assessments to residents.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Orbach  
Secretary

Transcribed by Andi Silverstone