

TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE
COUNCIL MEETING
November 21, 2024

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

DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY POLICE

The Town Council met with the Community Services Officer from the Montgomery County Police Department (2nd District - Bethesda). Topics of discussion included recent crime incidents, resources to notify residents of active crime scenes, and general and holiday safety tips. The Council agreed to continue discussions with MCPD officials about a real-time community notification system for active crimes. The Council also asked the officer to provide safety tips that the Town can share with residents.

I. GENERAL BUSINESS

- Heard October 2024 financial report.
- Heard Town Manager's report.
 - Town staff has assisted with several key projects, including the Bethesda Market Park development; analyzing and publicizing the County's proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative; and addressing proposed clarifications to state law concerning municipal regulatory authority. They have also collaborated with MCDOT, MTA, and Purple Line officials on fencing and barrier improvements along the Capital Crescent Trail adjacent to the Town. Additionally, staff continued overgrown vegetation enforcement and Zimmerman Park improvements, and they prepared for fall tree planting and improvements to the East and Leland intersection.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

- Held a public hearing on a variance for a retaining wall setback at 4116 Aspen Street. Voted unanimously to approve the variance.

III. COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS

- Discussed privacy screening that the Town has requested on the fencing and barrier along the Capital Crescent Trail adjacent to the Town. Because the original cost estimate was higher than expected, Mayor Lane and Vice Mayor Rush have reached out to affected residents to discuss the scope and cost of the project as well as vegetative screening measures that could be employed on private property with assistance from the Town. The Town is awaiting additional information about the screening cost estimate, which will further inform the Council's consideration of this project. The Council discussed the timing of improvements if the Town proceeds with the project.
- Discussed proposed minor amendments to the Town building code to address the prospect of different housing types in Town (e.g., accessory dwelling units). The updates focus on definitions, and the Council agreed to direct the Town attorney to draft a proposed ordinance for Council discussion at the December meeting.
- Discussed the possibility of updating the Town's permit parking regulations to streamline enforcement. Asked the Public Services Committee to consider what data is needed to assess any changes to the Town's permit parking program.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS/UPDATES

- Discussed the Bethesda Market Park project. Mayor Lane reviewed the recent community meeting on proposed renovations to Elm Street Park as part of a larger park development project on the west side of Town. Vice Mayor Rush reviewed progress on the various development and funding agreements for the Bethesda Market Park project.
- Discussed Montgomery Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI). Mayor Lane reviewed the County Council's discussion of this matter at its November 19 meeting. She noted that the County Council did not discuss next steps in considering the multifamily housing proposals or introducing legislation to implement any zoning changes.
- Discussed a technical amendment to state law to clarify municipal building authority. Mayor Lane reported that a bill has been filed in the State House of Delegates to clarify that municipalities have regulatory authority over all housing types if local regulations are not stricter for multifamily housing than for single family housing. She also reported that the Town and other municipalities have retained land use counsel to assist in tracking this legislation and following developments with AHSI.
- Discussed the Bethesda Downtown Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) and the Town's testimony to be presented at the Planning Board's public hearing on December 2.

V. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.