

October 18, 2021 Town Council Meeting

(held by Zoom Video Conferencing)

- Approved the Closed Session Minutes of July 19, 2021.
- Approved the Closed Session Minutes of August 30, 2021.
- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of September 13, 2021.
- Acknowledged that Mayor Furman signed a letter from the Community Coalition on County Redistricting requesting that the down-County municipalities remain within a single County Council District.
- Approved Resolution No. R-14-2021, as Amended – A Resolution to accept the proposal from AS Creative Services for certain improvements to the Town of Kensington website.
- Approved Resolution No. R-15-2021, as Amended – A Resolution to accept the proposal from McLean Controls, Inc., for the replacement and installation of controls for a Carrier VVT system at Town Hall.
- Approved Resolution No. R-16-2021, as Amended - A Resolution to accept the proposal from Chamberlin-Washington, Inc., for the repointing of the brick parapet at Town Hall.
- Approved Resolution No. R-17-2021 - A Resolution to accept the bid proposal from Contracting Specialists Incorporated for the repair of the veranda and parapet at the Kensington Town Hall.

Town Council Meeting October 18, 2021, 7:00 pm, by Zoom Video Conferencing

Mayor Furman, Council Members Bartram, Crimmins, Engle; Town Manager Hoffman; Assistant to the Town Manager Marini; and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present via Zoom. Council Member Hill-Zayat was necessarily absent. A moment of silence was observed.

The Minutes from the Closed Session Meeting of July 19, 2021, the Closed Session Meeting of August 30, 2021, and the Town Council Meeting of September 13, 2021, were reviewed and approved. See Council Actions.

From the Mayor and Town Council

Montgomery County Commission on Redistricting

Mayor Furman explained that Montgomery County created a Commission on Redistricting in an effort to divide the County into seven Council districts. The Community Coalition on County Redistricting sent a letter requesting that the down-County municipalities remain within a singular Council District, in which Mayor Furman endorsed.

Kensington Website Refresh

Justin Watson, AS Creative Services, was present to discuss the proposed website refresh. Mr. Watson's firm developed the existing Town website and noted that the refresh would include improving the user interface and creating a modular backend.

The Council questioned how the refresh would improve the website's user friendliness and suggested having a quick link page for certain services.

Mr. Watson noted that the overall look of the website will remain the same; however, they will update the Calendar, permit integrations, and will address other areas for improvement.

Montgomery County Climate Action Plan

Adriana Hochberg, Climate Change Officer; Sandra Brecher, Chief of Commuter Services; and Stan Edwards, Environmental Protection, all with Montgomery County, presented an overview of the County's Climate Action Plan, which has a goal of reducing carbon emissions to zero by 2035.

Ms. Hochberg noted that the Climate Action Plan has identified 86 Climate Actions, of which, 75 are moving forward within FY22. Ms. Hochberg also noted that the Town could help implement the plan by participating in Climate Leadership Team meetings; the Maryland Climate Coalition of Local Governments; and the Climate Change Communications Coalition.

Council Member Crimmins questioned whether the Town could acquire electric vehicles through the County program and suggested that the County implement a smart traffic signal system.

Council Member Bartram questioned the effectiveness of the County's commitment to addressing climate change without including nuclear power as an alternative energy source.

Council Member Engle spoke in support of the Climate Action Plan, as he believed it is aggressive in terms of mitigating the impacts of the building and transportation sectors on climate change. Council Member Engle also asked how the Town could promote and advocate for sustainable building practices by developers proposing projects in the Town.

Jack Gaffey noted the importance of including nuclear power to reduce carbon emissions and using traffic light technology; and suggested synchronizing the light at Connecticut Avenue and Knowles Avenue with the light at Connecticut Avenue and Plyers Mill Road.

From the Mayor and Town Council

Council Member Crimmins reported that the proposed redevelopment project at 10619 Connecticut Avenue, Crossroads of Kensington, filed their notice of application to Montgomery Planning for a one-story commercial property. The required Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 3, 2022, and the applicant has been asked to attend a future Development Review Board (DRB) meeting to present any updated plans.

Council Member Crimmins also provided an update from the Attainable Housing Strategies meeting on October 7, which focused on new types of housing, which would allow duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes, by right; and noted the next Attainable Housing meeting will be November 4.

Joe Campbell noted that he appreciated Council Member Crimmins staying informed on possible zoning changes at the County level, and asked if there was a general time frame as to when these zoning changes may begin.

Council Member Crimmins stated that the zoning changes could be adopted as early as 2022 and physical changes would be dependent on housing turnover.

Council Member Bartram reported that he is working with staff on an ordinance for code revisions to address side yard setbacks, which will address encroachments, including bay windows, and will be introduced at an upcoming Town meeting. The proposed code revisions will also address and protect the R60 zone if the Thrive 2050 plan is adopted.

Council Member Engle noted that a Press Release was sent on October 8, 2021 announcing that the Town had been chosen for the State's Bicycling and Pedestrian Priority (BPPA) designation, which will help facilitate collaboration between the Town, County, and State in identifying and implementing bicycle and pedestrian improvements; the next step will be for a comprehensive study of the Connecticut Avenue corridor, which will also include Knowles Avenue, Plyers Mill Road, Metropolitan Avenue, and University Boulevard to determine possible improvements and connectivity; and noted that the Town held a WALKtober event on October 17, which was well attended.

Mayor Furman thanked the Racial Justice Committee for organizing the successful Community Read event on October 9; and noted the following upcoming events: Halloween Pop-up Event on October 31, 7-8 pm; the KTown Ladies event on November 10; Dog Parade on November 13; the Town Dance featuring the Nighthawks on November 24; Town Menorah Lighting on November 28; Light Up KTown on December 3 at Howard Avenue Park; Town Christmas Tree Lighting on December 5; and Carolling Around the Fountain December 23.

From the Town Manager and Staff

Town Manager Hoffman noted that the Town's leaf collection will begin on November 8 and run thru the week of December 6.

Assistant to the Town Manager Marini noted that the Town had received 218 surveys thus far and the deadline is November 1. The survey results will be presented at the November Council meeting.

Public Appearances

Jack Gaffey noted the upcoming astronomical events, which include a full moon on October 20, the Orionid Meteor Shower on October 21-22, and the Taurid Meteor Shower on November 4-5.

Joe Campbell noted Council Member Bartram's opinion article within Bethesda Magazine on Thrive Montgomery 2050 and thought his comments on the County's Climate Action Plan were interesting and well-reasoned.

Ordinances, Resolutions, and Regulations

Resolution No. R-14-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$16,000 from AS Creative Services for certain Town of Kensington website improvements was presented. See Council Actions.

The contract would be pending review by the Town Attorney.

Resolution No. R-15-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$14,600 from McLean Controls, Inc., for the replacement and installation of controls for a Carrier VVT system at Town Hall was presented. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Hoffman noted that the control system for the HVAC system at Town Hall no longer communicates with the system and that the Town received pricing from two vendors to replace the system. Mr. Hoffman also noted that the resolution for McLean Controls included \$2,000 in contingency to cover the cost of any damper replacements, if necessary.

The contract would be pending review by the Town Attorney.

Joe Campbell questioned if bids were received.

Town Manager Hoffman stated that the Town received two proposals, but a formal bid process was not issued.

Resolution No. R-16-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$41,816 from Chamberlin-Washington, Inc., for the repointing of the brick parapet at Town Hall was presented. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Hoffman noted that Town Hall needs brick repointing, as the building is 94 years old, and the third floor is experiencing significant leaks. He stated the Town received two proposals and that he was recommending that the Council accept the proposal from Chamberlin-Washington. The resolution will need to be approved by extra-majority vote, as the Town's bid requirements are being waived for the contract.

The contract would be pending review by the Town Attorney.

Joe Campbell stated bidding is far better than seeking proposals and a process that the Town often waives.

Resolution No. R-17-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to accept the bid for \$87,645.85 from Contracting Specialists Incorporated for the repair of the veranda and parapet at Town Hall was presented. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Hoffman noted that the veranda and parapet partially collapsed in August 2020 and the Town bid the project out in March 2021. The Town received 11 bids and six of these bids were considered. The two lowest bids were deemed unqualified for the project and the Town's

Building Inspector was recommending Contract Specialists Incorporated, the third lowest bid; the resolution requests an additional \$20,000 for contingency to help with the cost of salvaging the existing brick.

Joe Campbell questioned the reason the two lowest bidders were not qualified and supported using the bidding process.

Town Manager Hoffman stated their prior work experience did not relate to our project.

Council Actions

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve the Closed Session Minutes from July 19, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Bartram moved to approve the Closed Session Minutes of August 30, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Engle moved to approve the Town Meeting Minutes from September 13, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve Resolution No. R-14-2021 authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$16,000 from AS Creative Services for certain Town of Kensington website improvements pending contract review by the Town Attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve Resolution No. R-15-2021 authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$14,600 from McLean Controls, Inc., for the replacement and installation of controls for a Carrier VVT system at Town Hall pending contract review by the Town Attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve Resolution No. R-16-2021 authorizing the Town Manager to accept a proposal for \$41,816 from Chamberlin-Washington, Inc., for the repointing of the brick parapet at Town Hall pending contract review by the Town Attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve Resolution No. R-17-2021 authorizing the Town Manager to accept the bid for \$87,645.85 from Contracting Specialists Incorporated for the repair of the Veranda and Parapet at Town Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Engle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 pm. The motion passed unanimously.