

November 8, 2021 Town Council Meeting
(held by Zoom Video Conferencing)

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2021.
- Approved the Closed Session Minutes of October 21, 2021.
- Acknowledged there was a Closed Session on October 21, 2021, in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(7) of the General Provisions Article to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.
- Acknowledged receipt of the Audit Committee's Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021.
- Approved sending a letter to the County Council requesting that the Town and Ken-Gar be included within the same Council District following the Redistricting Commission's Map recommendation.
- Approved sending a letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation – State Highway Administration (MDOT-SHA) in support of extending the bike lane pilot program along University Boulevard, and to consider expanding the program westward toward Farragut Avenue.
- Approved sending a letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation – State Highway Administration (MDOT-SHA) requesting that the speed limit along the business/pedestrian corridor of Connecticut Avenue be reduced.
- Acknowledged the results of the Town Survey, which may be viewed here.
- Approved Resolution No. R-18-2021 - A Resolution authorizing and ratifying compensation of GreeneHurlocker, PLC, Attorneys, and authorizing continued legal services as necessary.
- Approved Resolution No. R-19-2021 – A Resolution authorizing the extension of the existing refuse and recycling contract with Ecology Services Refuse & Recycling, LLC, for the term of one year.
- Approved Resolution No. R-20-2021 – A Resolution proclaiming November to be Municipal Government Works Month in Kensington, Maryland.

Town Council Meeting November 8, 2021, 7:02 pm, by Zoom Video Conferencing

Mayor Furman, Council Members Bartram, Crimmins, Engle, Hill-Zayat; Town Manager Hoffman, Assistant to the Town Manager Marini; and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present via Zoom. A moment of silence was observed for Carl Porter who recently passed away.

The Minutes from the Town Council Meeting of October 18, 2021, and the Closed Session Meeting of October 21, 2021, were reviewed and approved. See Council Actions.

From the Mayor and Town Council

Mayor Furman acknowledged that the Council met in Closed Session on October 21, 2021, in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the State Code to consult

with the Town Attorney. No actions were taken. See attached form – Statement for Closing a Meeting.

Mayor Furman acknowledged receipt of the Audit Committee’s Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021 (FY21).

Montgomery County Commission on Redistricting

Council Member Bartram provided an update on the proposed redistricting map from the County’s Redistricting Commission, which was created to expand the County from five to seven council districts. The Town is currently placed within the newly formed District 4, which will have to be reviewed and approved by the County Council.

The Council discussed the importance of remaining within the same district as Chevy Chase View and Garrett Park, which are neighboring municipalities, along with ensuring that the Ken-Gar community be included within the same district as well.

Karen Jackson, past President of the Ken-Gar Residents and Civic Association, spoke in support of Ken-Gar being included in the same district as the Town of Kensington.

Joe Campbell questioned what could be done by the Town to remain within District 1, which is represented by Andrew Friedson.

Ann Lichter spoke in support of the Ken-Gar community being included within the same district as the Town.

The Council concurred to send a letter to the County Council requesting to be within the same district as Chevy Chase View and Garrett Park, along with the Ken-Gar community.

University Boulevard (MD193) Bike Lane Pilot

Council Members Crimmins and Engle discussed the Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) pilot bike lane project along University Boulevard (MD 193), which provided protected bike lanes north of the Town. The pilot program was planned to run through November 14, 2021.

Council Member Engle also noted that MDOT is currently conducting an analysis to reduce an eastbound travel lane along University Boulevard beginning at Farragut Avenue, which would allow for bike lanes.

The Council approved sending a letter to MDOT expressing support for extending the successful bike lane pilot program indefinitely and requesting that the protected bike lanes be extended in the Town of Kensington. See Council Actions.

Anne Banville noted concerns over reducing the number of lanes on University Boulevard prior to understanding the full impact it may have on traffic.

Council Member Engle stated that the extension of the bike lanes along University Boulevard would be a two phased approach, which would allow for a study during a pilot program.

Ann Lichter supported exploring a pilot bike lane program within the Town.

Jack Gaffey stated placing a bike lane between the curb and parked cars provides additional safety.

Council Member Bartram requested that the letter clarify that the proposed bike lane expansion would be within the westward bound lanes of University Boulevard only.

Connecticut Avenue Speed Limit Reduction

Council Member Crimmins discussed sending a letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation – State Highway Administration (MDOT-SHA) about reducing the speed limit along Connecticut Avenue between Perry Avenue and Warner Street.

Council Member Engle noted that this was also a recommendation of the Working Group and that SHA is currently studying the Connecticut Avenue corridor.

The Council concurred to send a letter to MDOT-SHA to evaluate and consider reducing the speed limit along Connecticut Avenue. See Council Actions.

Jack Gaffey stated that lowering the speed limit along Connecticut Avenue would help reduce vehicle stopping distance due to kinetic energy.

Joe Campbell supported lowering the speed limit and questioned how it would be enforced.

Town Survey Update

Assistant to the Town Manager Marini provided an update on the results of the two Town Election Survey questions:

- 396 surveys were returned which included 2 printed from the website;
- 26% response rate based on the 1500 sent out;
- Question 1 on whether 16 and 17-year-olds should vote in Town Elections, 30% in favor, 70% not in favor;
- Question 2 on whether non-citizens that are Town residents should vote in Town Elections, 49% in favor, 51% not in favor.

The Council discussed the results and decided Question 1 was decisive and Question 2 warranted further consideration.

Council Members Bartram and Engle will review all the comments on Question 2 and the number of residents affected and discuss recommendations for a future charter amendment.

Joe Campbell stated the 26 percent response rate was low and suggested the questions worded correctly could be placed on the ballot.

From the Mayor and Town Council Reports

Council Member Engle reported the Traffic (Mobility) Committee will be meeting prior to the next meeting; Ride On Route 4 is under consideration for expansion to the Wheaton Metro Station, which will provide connectivity between two areas and may increase MARC ridership; a public hearing will be held on Tuesday, December 7, for anyone who wants to provide testimony; he will be providing the Council with a draft of his testimony in support of the expansion; and the BPAWG has a new Co-Chair, Chris Zappi.

Council Member Hill-Zayat provided an update on her neighbor, who is doing well following a kidney donation.

Council Member Crimmins noted that the Wheaton Urban District is holding a public meeting November 9, 6:00 pm, to discuss Thrive 2050, and there will be upcoming information in the next Around Town Journal regarding attainable housing and Thrive 2050.

Council Member Bartram stated that housing density can be addressed at the municipal level to ensure that the Town has a level of review separate from the County.

Mayor Furman noted the following events: Dog Parade on November 13; the Town Dance featuring the NightHawks on November 24; and the Town Menorah lighting on November 28.

From the Town Manager and Staff

Town Manager Hoffman noted that the Town's leaf collection started on November 8 and will run thru Friday, December 10.

Public Appearances

Jack Gaffey suggested that the Traffic Committee should include "Traffic" in the committee name; noted the memorial service for Carl Porter is November 13 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Wheaton; and noted the Leonid Meteor Shower on November 17 and a partial lunar eclipse on November 19.

Joe Campbell requested an update from Council Member Crimmins on attainable housing and Thrive 2050; and appreciated the upgrades to Clum Kennedy Park.

Ordinances, Resolutions, and Regulations

Resolution No. R-18-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing and ratifying compensation of GreeneHurlocker, PLC, Attorneys, and Authorizing continued legal services as necessary was presented. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Hoffman stated the resolution was to authorize payment of the legal fees for the Pepco Rate Case.

Resolution No. R-19-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington authorizing the extension of the existing refuse and recycling contract with Ecology Services Refuse & Recycling, LLC, for the term of one year was presented. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Hoffman stated the existing contract ends on December 31, 2021, which includes options to renew the terms of the contract for up to an additional three (3) consecutive one-year terms. He stated it is in the best interest of the Town to renew the contract for one year at the bid unit pricing; additional units with a per unit price increase will be added due to the annexation, which was not included in the original contract, and a 2.5% increase will be added to calendar year 2022.

Joe Campbell noted the importance of bidding out contracts and questioned whether this was bid prior to the 2018 contract and whether it would be put out to bid after the three one-year renewals.

Resolution No. R-20-2021 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Kensington proclaiming November to be Municipal Government Works Month in Kensington, Maryland was presented. See Council Actions.

Council Actions

Council Member Engle moved to approve the Town Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2021. The motion passed unanimously. Council Member Hill-Zayat was not present.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve the Closed Session Minutes from October 21, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Engle moved to send a letter supporting the indefinite extension of the pilot program for bike lane north of Town on University Boulevard with additional edits to the letter. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to send a letter to SHA requesting the reduction of the speed limit on Connecticut Avenue in the Town corridor with additional edits to the letter. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Bartram moved to approve Resolution No. R-18-2021 authorizing and ratifying compensation of GreeneHurlocker, PLC, Attorneys, and authorizing continued legal services as necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Engle moved to approve Resolution No. R-19-2021 authorizing the extension of the existing refuse and recycling contract with Ecology Services Refuse & Recycling, LLC, for the term of one year. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve Resolution No. R-20-2021 proclaiming November to be Municipal Government Works Month in Kensington, Maryland. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Hill-Zayat moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 pm. The motion passed unanimously.