

December 12, 2022, Town Council Meeting Summary (held by Zoom Video Conferencing)

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2022.
- Concurred to have the Town staff draft an RFP for a feasibility study to analyze the impact on traffic and safety for certain traffic improvements along Connecticut Avenue between the University Boulevard split and the intersection of Plyers Mill Road and Metropolitan Avenue.
- Adopted Resolution No. R-06-2022 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Town Council of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to establish a corner clearance prohibition at the following locations: 1) the south side of Carroll Place, from the projected west curb line of Hadley Place to a point 30’ westward; 2) on the west side of Hadley Place, from the projected south curb line of Carroll Place to 40’ southward; and 3) on the south side of Montgomery Avenue, from the projected east curb line of Hadley Place to a point 25’ eastward.

Town Council Meeting December 12, 2022, 7:00 pm, held by Zoom Video Conferencing

Mayor Furman, Council Members Bartram, Crimmins, Engle, Lichter, Town Manager Hoffman, Assistant to the Town Manager Marini, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present. A moment of silence was observed for longtime Resident and Ethics Commission Chairman, John ‘Jack’ Gaffey, who passed away.

The Minutes from the November 15, 2022, Town Meeting were reviewed and approved. See Council Actions.

From the Mayor and Town Council

Brookside Apartments (10214 Frederick Avenue)

Council Member Lichter provided information on the Brookside Apartment property, which is owned by the Church of Latter-Day Saints and is currently unoccupied and for sale.

Council Member Lichter also noted that Mayor Furman reached out to County Executive Marc Elrich about working with the Town to preserve the property for affordable ownership opportunities through a community land trust. This model would allow a non-profit to hold the property and allow equity to be shared between the homeowner and the trust, similar to a program the City of College Park has undergone.

Bids are due on the property in December and the Montgomery County Housing Partnership, a quasi-agency of the county, plans to bid on the property.

The Council was supportive of a community land trust to provide affordable housing at the Brookside Apartments and other possible locations in the future.

Helen Wilkes provided information about the Kensington Land Trust for context.

Jody Krieger spoke in support of providing affordable housing.

Beth Roberts spoke in support and questioned whether the connected lots were included.

Bonita Condon clarified the buildings being discussed on Frederick Avenue.

Joe Campbell questioned when the property will be sold, whether there was community outreach, and the asking price for the property.

Connecticut Avenue Corridor Transportation Design

Council Member Engle discussed one of the recommendations from the TLC grant to mitigate traffic issues and improve pedestrian and bicycling access and safety at the Connecticut Avenue/University Boulevard split. During the last meeting with SHA, they advised the Town to take the initiative in order to address these issues. Council Member Engle proposed doing an initial design/feasibility study that would allow the Town to partner with SHA and MCDOT to improve the Connecticut Avenue corridor.

Council Member Crimmins stated besides traffic and safety this this would also address the economic component relating to the Summit Avenue Extension streetscape development.

The Council supported issuing an RFP for a ten percent design study, estimated to cost approximately \$50,000, that would provide both traffic and pedestrian improvements, as well as economic development visioning.

Joe Campbell questioned when Summit Avenue extension is scheduled.

Mayor Furman stated the preliminary date is 2031.

Pickleball Court

Mayor Furman stated she has received requests for a pickleball court, and a possible location has been identified at 10403 Kensington Parkway, which is owned by the Town. The court would not have lights and would require fencing; no trees are expected to be removed, and the space could still be used, if needed, for the Spirit Club events.

Town Manager Hoffman stated he has ordered a survey of the property to clarify the boundaries.

The Council supported the location for pickleball courts and noted the importance of outreach to the community due to the proximity to residents.

Jody Krieger supported a pickleball court.

Joe Campbell noted the courts at Kensington Cabin Park are used frequently for pickleball.

Greenscape Committee

Council Member Lichter stated the Greenscape Committee has met and will be focusing on enhancing and preserving the Town's tree canopy which is important to help mitigate effects of climate change. This will include a tree inventory of Town parks, education outreach to private property owners, informing Residents of the County tree program to plant native shade trees at no cost, the Weed Warrior program, and providing information to Residents on the replacement options for Town street trees.

Town Manager Hoffman stated for street trees the Town has an aggressive plan and will reach out to see if the Town can benefit from the County's native shade tree program.

Community Training with the Anti-Defamation League January 18, 2022

Council Member Lichter stated, in response to the concerning trend with racist and antisemitic incidents, the Racial Justice Committee is hosting a workshop with law enforcement officials and the Anti-Defamation League on January 18 from 7 to 8:30 pm. The workshop will provide community training on how we can work together to deter and report bias incidents and hate crimes to create a safe community for all.

Mayor and Council Reports

Council Member Crimmins reported that K-Town Bistro has closed and Tacos Don Perez (formerly operating a food truck in Town) will be opening in that space; China Gourmet will be closing at the end of the year and will be changing their concept to an American sports themed restaurant; and the Café at Modena Reserve is nearing completion and will open in January.

Mayor Furman noted tumbleweed will be closing the physical store but keeping their online business; and will be looking for another location in Town.

Council Member Bartram stated the County conducted a traffic count on Farragut Avenue just outside of Town and has requested, due to the heavy volume, the Town's 'Do Not Enter' signs be moved to University Boulevard at St. Paul Street; the Mobility and Traffic Committee will be addressing this at the next meeting.

Council Member Engle noted that the County is soliciting feedback for a proposed McComas Avenue Neighborhood Greenway project, which would improve pedestrian and bicycling safety along McComas Avenue between St. Paul Street and Georgia Avenue. This project, if approved, could connect with similar Neighborhood Greenway projects along Lexington Street and Plyers Mill Road that were recommended in the TLC grant study.

Council Member Lichter reminded Residents of two upcoming events, 'I, Too' documentary on December 15 at 7 pm, and the Annual Town Menorah Lighting on December 18 at 6 pm.

Mayor Furman thanked all those that have helped with all the recent and upcoming Town events.

The Mayor and Council concurred that the Town Council Meetings in January and February will be held by Zoom.

From the Town Manager and Staff

Assistant to the Town Manager Marini stated the Town had an overwhelming response to the Toys for Tots collection and thanked all the residents who participated.

Town Manager Hoffman stated WRA engineering has provided the draft RFP for a project engineer for repair of the three bridges in Town, and the Town attorney will be reviewing so it can be posted in January; leaf collection ends December 16; and there are new sway swings at Reinhardt and Flinn Parks.

Public Appearances

Joe Campbell questioned when the bridge repair work will begin; and supported the tree inventory of the parks and suggested expansion to all Town trees.

Town Manager Hoffman stated the work should begin within 6 months of awarding a separate construction RFP but would depend on permitting.

Council Member Lichter stated Greenscape members Alison Oppenheim and Katherine Wood will be working on the tree inventory of the Town parks.

Ordinances, Resolutions, and Regulations

Resolution No. R-06-2022 - A Resolution of the Mayor and Town Council of Kensington authorizing the Town Manager to establish a corner clearance prohibition at the following locations: 1) the south side of Carroll Place, from the projected west curb line of Hadley Place to a point 30' westward; 2) on the west side of Hadley Place, from the projected south curb line of Carroll Place to 40' southward; and 3) on the south side of Montgomery Avenue, from the projected east curb line of Hadley Place to a point 25' eastward was presented.

Town Manager Hoffman stated that he, along with Assistant to the Town Manager Marini, Council Members Bartram and Lichter, and the Traffic Engineer met with Residents on-site and came to an agreement on the corner clearance and vegetation management.

Council Actions

Council Member Bartram moved to approve Town Meeting Minutes from November 15, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Bartram moved to approve Resolution No. R-06-2022 authorizing the Town Manager to establish a corner clearance prohibition at the following locations: 1) the south side of Carroll Place, from the projected west curb line of Hadley Place to a point 30' westward; 2) on the west side of Hadley Place, from the projected south curb line of Carroll Place to 40' southward; and 3) on the south side of Montgomery Avenue, from the projected east curb line of Hadley Place to a point 25' eastward. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Engle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 pm. The motion passed unanimously.