

M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

April 20, 2006

MEMORANDUM—MANDATORY REFERRAL

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*

FROM: Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, Georgia Avenue Team (301-495-4650)
Community-Based Planning Division *KA*

SUBJECT: Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Selection of Committee Members

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

PURPOSE

During the Olney Master Plan amendment process, the Olney Coalition asked for the creation of a form-based zone for the Olney Town Center as a way to address the issues of proposed density, pedestrian amenities, building height and setback, other urban design elements, and the community's interest in creating a civic center in the Olney Town Center. Staff from the M-NCPPC and the County Council did not support the idea of a form-based zone for the Town Center. Instead, in a worksession report to the County Council, the Council staff recommended creating an advisory group after the approval of the master plan, whose purpose would be to assist in facilitating and expediting public and private actions to foster the redevelopment of the Town Center and the creation of a civic center in particular. The Council agreed with its staff and, as part of the Resolution approving the amended Olney Master Plan, stated:

The Council recommends the creation of a Town Center Advisory Committee to support the redevelopment of Town Center and the creation of a new civic center. This committee should be established by M-NCPPC and develop a work program to further these goals. Park and Planning should work with the Advisory Committee to facilitate a community town center concept that will be used to guide future development/redevelopment efforts. (Council Resolution No. 15-924, adopted 3-15-05.)

The staff of the M-NCPPC began working on establishing the committee in the summer of 2005. In August of 2005, staff prepared and distributed to the community a discussion paper for comments, which included the purpose of the advisory committee, a proposed structure and composition of its membership, and a draft workprogram. In October of 2005, staff received comments from the Greater Olney Civic Association (see Attachment 1) and some citizens. At the same time, staff mailed a notice to all civic and business groups in the Olney Master Plan area who might be interested in the redevelopment issues of the Olney Town Center (see Attachment 2). In December 2005, staff met with the representatives of the Greater Olney Civic Association, the Olney Coalition, and Councilmembers Marilyn Praisner and Mike Knapp to discuss the issues raised by the two groups, primarily regarding the role of the committee in any future redevelopment of the Town Center and how its recommendations will be considered by the Planning Board in any future land use and planning decisions affecting the Town Center.

In a letter to the Planning Board Chairman dated December 19, 2005 (see Attachment 3), Councilmembers Praisner and Knapp said that the formation of the committee was "an opportunity for the Olney community to create a set of principles and illustrative understanding of what a future town center would look like which can then serve as a guide for future redevelopment proposals and ultimately implementation of the Master Plan." The letter included some specific recommendations about the role and functions of the committee (see Attachment 3). Chairman Berlage, in a letter dated January 18, 2005, supported the stated expectations of Councilmembers Praisner and Knapp and further elaborated the process and the committee's role in providing input into the Planning Board's decisions on future Olney Town Center projects (see Attachment 4).

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Based on the guidance and input by the Councilmembers, the Planning Board Chairman and the community, staff has put together a balanced group of twelve members with diverse interests, skills and representation, as follows:

	Name	Representation
Umbrella Groups		
1	John Lyons	Greater Olney Civic Association
2	Sunita Bhatia	Olney Coalition
3	Dorothy Kane	Project Change
4	Dan Dionisio	Olney Boys and Girls Club
Homeowner/Civic Associations		
5	Walter Lee	Environ HOA
6	Nancy DeLalio	Hollowell HOA
7	Jim Smith	Oatland Farms HOA
8	Mark Feinroth	Williamsburg Village CA
Business/Chamber of Commerce		
9	Paula Kahla	Olney Chamber of Commerce
10	Tom Gallagher	Freeman Properties
County Agencies		
11	Jim Wallace	Mid-County Citizen Advisory Board
12	Helene Rosenheim	Mid-County Services Center

The group is expected to meet once a month, more frequently if needed, and create its own rules and procedures and a workprogram. Staff's function is to provide support and technical assistance to the committee in all land use and planning deliberations. Other County agencies will be contacted as needed and are expected to provide assistance to the advisory committee as needed. The committee will present its illustrative concept plan and design guidelines to the Planning Board for review, which will then be used as a guide by the staff, the community, potential developers and property owners in the Olney Town Center.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee.

KA:ha: j:\2006 staff reports\team 5\Olney Town Center Committee Selection

Attachments

1. Greater Olney Civic Association Draft Proposal Memorandum
2. Olney Town Center Advisory Committee Solicitation of Nominations Notice
3. Letter from Councilmembers Praisner and Knapp dated December 19, 2005
4. Letter from Chairman Berlage dated January 18, 2006

ATTACHMENT 1

TO: Khalid Afzal

FROM: Greater Olney Civic Association

DATE: October 19, 2005

RE: Draft Proposal for the Town Center Advisory Committee

The Greater Olney Civic Association ("GOCA") respectfully submits these comments on your draft proposal concerning the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee ("Committee"). GOCA's comments are driven by two core beliefs: First, decisions concerning the future redevelopment of the Town Center will affect the entire Greater Olney community; and second, the creation of the long-sought civic and community center must be the highest of priorities given that it is one of the few direct public benefits the new master plan provides the community.

1. Fundamentally, GOCA believes the Committee needs a clear charter, including an unambiguous statement of the scope of its mandate and authority. To be clear, GOCA believes the Committee must be recognized by the County Council and the Planning Board as special advocates for refining the master plan's vision and recommendations for the Town Center, and, as such, must be vested with some special standing or authority in helping to guide and comment on Town Center redevelopment issues going forward. If, on the contrary, the Committee's input and recommendations will have no real force or effect in planning decisions, then potential participants should be forewarned so they may make informed decisions about whether and how to participate. In any event, the Committee needs to understand from the outset whether and how its input and recommendations will be incorporated into or will supplement the Olney Master Plan or will be applied to redevelopment proposals in the Town Center.

2. GOCA believes that the composition of the Committee should reflect the Greater Olney community and thus needs to be changed and enlarged. For example, Fair Hill Farm HOA is part of Environ and only one representative from this group is needed. GOCA is unaware of a Fairland Farms HOA in the Greater Olney area. Moreover, to ensure that the Committee includes a broad cross-section of the Greater Olney community, GOCA suggests that Olney's larger communities be invited to send one delegate each to serve on the Committee. Such communities include Olney Mill, James Creek, Norbeck Meadows, Norbeck Grove, Hallowell and, Cherrywood. GOCA recommends that Park and Planning issue such invitations; GOCA would be happy to facilitate their delivery by providing contact information. GOCA also recommends setting a firm deadline (*e.g.*, 30 or 45 days) for a response to the invitation, and stating clearly that a failure to respond by the deadline will be construed as declining the invitation.

3. GOCA believes that the Committee's work could benefit greatly by including representatives from other County agencies who have been involved in similar

redevelopment processes. For example, GOCA is aware that Wheaton's commercial district has been undergoing redevelopment and that Natalie Cantor of the Mid-County Services Center and her colleagues may have significant relevant experience to share with the Committee. GOCA believes that inviting Ms. Cantor and/or other officials with similar experience to serve on the Committee in an *ex officio* capacity makes sense. In addition, GOCA believes that representatives from County and private agencies such as the Library, Police Department, Project Change and perhaps others should be invited to participate on an *ex officio* basis.

4. GOCA believes the Committee should continue through the life of the master plan, meeting as frequently as necessary but no less than twice a year.

5. GOCA believes that representatives of the Committee should elect the chairperson of the Committee. However, due to actual or apparent conflicts of interest, anyone employed by the owner of, or otherwise representing the interests of, a redevelopable property in the Town Center should be deemed ineligible to serve as chair of the Committee.

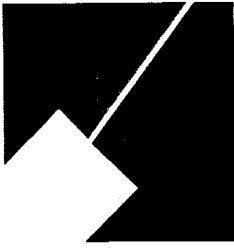
6. If the Committee has the meaningful mandate and authority that GOCA strongly recommends (*see* point number 1, above), then minutes of the Committee's meetings should be kept and posted on Park and Planning's website. GOCA and other civic and homeowners' associations should be encouraged to post the minutes or provide a link to them.

7. Regarding the purpose and intent of the Committee, GOCA agrees with the two major tasks outlined on page 1 of the Draft Work Program. Identification of a site and the establishment of adequate space necessary for a Civic Center is imperative from the outset of the concept plan for the Town Center. Equally important is a "Town Green", an open space area which serves as a focal point for community use. GOCA believes that involving an independent design consultant may help ensure that the Committee's vision and recommendations are translated into a practical and detailed final concept plan.

GOCA appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments, and eagerly looks forward to the establishment of this important Committee.

ATTACHMENT 2

M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

October 26, 2005

SUBJECT: Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

Dear Homeowner/Civic Association President:

Please be advised that the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning is soliciting nominations and letters of interest from residents, homeowners and civic associations, business groups, and other civic and community organizations to participate in the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee. The idea of an Advisory Committee for the Olney Town Center came from the County Council deliberations on the Olney Master Plan in the past year. While approving the Olney Master Plan in September of 2005, the County Council recommended establishing an advisory committee in response to the community's request for a more detailed concept plan for the Town Center in general and its interest in creating a civic center in the Olney Town Center in particular. The Council resolution stated that a Town Center Advisory Committee should be established *"to support the redevelopment of Town Center and the creation of a new civic center. This committee should be established by M-NCPPC and develop a work program to further these goals. Park and Planning should work with the Advisory Committee to facilitate a community town center concept that will be used to guide future development/redevelopment efforts"* (Council Resolution No. 15-924, adopted 3-15-05).

I expect the committee to meet initially once a month, and less frequently as its work progresses. Although no work program for the Advisory Committee is available yet, one of the major responsibilities of the committee will be to explore ways to help create a civic center and a town commons in the Town Center. The committee would mostly be involved in advising on redevelopment issues of the Olney Town Center including redevelopment proposals on private properties as well as public improvements of roads, sidewalks and open spaces. However, please note that the committee itself will finalize its detailed workprogram and how it plans to function.

To keep the overall size of the Advisory Committee to no more than 10-12 people, I suggest that homeowners and civic associations talk to other adjoining civic associations and nominate one person to represent more than one group instead of nominating one person from each group. For example, all groups who are part of the Olney Coalition should nominate one person who would represent all the groups in the Olney Coalition. Similarly, all the groups located in the northwest quadrant of Olney—

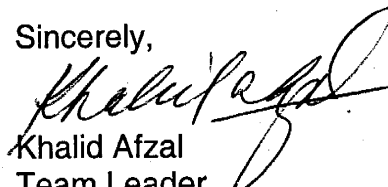
Tanterra, Olney Mill, Olney Village, and Brookeville Knolls—should send one representative to the committee. A person may represent a homeowner association and some other group such as Project Change, or a group concerned with teen recreation issues. If you need any help in identifying the contact information of the other community groups adjoining your association, please contact me and I will be glad to work with you.

I also encourage you to nominate persons who have been involved with the Olney Master Plan process in the past three years, or those with technical expertise that might be helpful in town center planning and revitalization issues (architects, planners, engineers, County or State employees who are also Olney residents, marketing experts, etc).

Please respond to this letter by Friday, December 2, 2005, to let me know if your association is interested in nominating a representative on the advisory group. If I do not hear from you by December 2, I will proceed assuming that your group is not interested in nominating a representative to the Advisory Committee. However, please be assured that not having a representative on the group does not preclude your association or the residents in your area from giving input into the Advisory Group's work.

I hope to hear from you soon. If you need to contact me please call me at 301-495-4650, or send an email to khalid.afzal@mncppc-mc.org.

Sincerely,



Khalid Afzal
Team Leader
Georgia Avenue Team
Community-Based
Planning Division

KA:tv: G:/Afzal/Town Center Advisory committee letter.doc

ATTACHMENT 3



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

RECEIVED
2005-2054
DEC 27 2005

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

December 19, 2005

Mr. Derick Berlage
Chair
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Derick,

As the planning staff and the community begin the initial steps of implementing the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee ("Committee"), as recommended in the approved Olney Master Plan, we are providing clarification of the intent for the Committee and its roles and responsibilities. Our expectation is that the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee will play an integral and vital role during the entire life of the master plan. The formation of the Committee is an opportunity for the Olney community to create a set of principles and illustrative understanding of what a future town center would look like which can then serve as a guide for future redevelopment proposals and ultimately implementation of the Master Plan. Specifically, we view the Committee fulfilling the following roles and functions:

- The Committee will work toward creating a common community based vision of what the future town center will look like and how it will function in relation to the surrounding neighborhoods, including proactively identifying guiding principles for the town center.
- The Committee will forward and present its principles to the Planning Board and its staff; this should be used as the framework for any future redevelopment of the town center.
- The Committee will play an active and ongoing role during the entire life of the Olney Master Plan - advising, critiquing and working in partnership with both private and public stakeholders with regard to the fulfillment of the vision for the Olney Town Center.

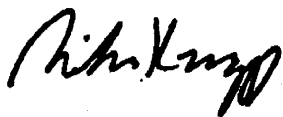
STELLA B. WERNER COUNCIL OFFICE BUILDING, 100 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850
240/777-7900 TTY 240/777-7914 FAX 240/777-7989
WWW.CO.MO.MD.US/COUNCIL



- When considering future town center development approvals and reviews, the Planning Board will give similar and equal weight to the Committee's and Planning staff's advisory opinions.
- County agencies with a role in the town center redevelopment should recognize the special role of the Committee and coordinate their processes with the committee's work and input.
- Park and Planning staff shall play a support role function to the Committee, assisting it with any technical and advisory assistance as is deemed necessary by its members.

Our goal for the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee is to bring individuals, organizations, and businesses representing the entire Olney community directly into the planning, visioning and development process. We believe this Committee will be an invaluable asset as the community begins to outline and work towards the creation of a true town center for all of Olney.

Sincerely,



Michael Knapp
Montgomery County Council, District 2



Marilyn Praisner
Montgomery County Council, District 4

ATTACHMENT 4



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Office of the Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board

January 18, 2006

The Honorable Marilyn J. Praisner
Montgomery County Council, District 4
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

The Honorable Michael Knapp
Montgomery County Council, District 2
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

SUBJECT: Olney Town Center Advisory Committee - Roles and Responsibilities

Dear Ms. ^{Marilyn} Praisner and Mr. ^{Mike} Knapp:

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 2005 outlining the Council's intent in recommending an advisory committee for the Olney Town Center in the recently approved Olney Master Plan. On behalf of the Planning Board, I assure you that the Planning Board and staff are committed to providing all necessary support to the committee. We look forward to receiving feedback and recommendations from the committee on all future development projects in the Town Center.

The Planning Board is in the process of reviewing its community input and public hearing process. The establishment of the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee at this time is an excellent opportunity to create a new and enhanced process for community input into the Planning Board's deliberations and land use decisions. In addition to the roles and functions of the committee described in your letter, I would add the following steps to further clarify the process and the committee's role and input into the Planning Board's decisions on future Olney Town Center projects.

1. The Park and Planning staff will establish the committee in the next 4-6 weeks.
2. The Committee will establish its rules and procedures, select a chairperson, and draft a tentative workprogram.
3. The Planning staff will schedule a briefing for the Planning Board at one of its regularly scheduled meetings held on the Thursday of each week to allow the committee to discuss its workprogram and its role in the redevelopment of the Olney Town Center with the Planning Board.
4. Once the committee has created an illustrative plan and a set of design guidelines, it would present it to the Planning Board for deliberation and adoption as a guide for the staff, the community and the applicants for all future projects in the Olney Town Center.

The Honorable Marilyn J. Praisner
The Honorable Michael Knapp
Page Two
January 18, 2006

5. All applicants in the Olney Town Center will be required to have a pre-application meeting with the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee and enter the minutes of that meeting in the records of the official application filed with Park and Planning.
6. All applicants will be encouraged to work with the staff and Olney Town Center Advisory Committee to come up with a plan that best meets the objectives of the illustrative plan and the Olney Master Plan.
7. The Committee's recommendations will be included in the staff report to the Planning Board for any redevelopment proposal in the Olney Town Center presented to the Board.
8. The Planning Board will give the same consideration and equal time to the committee's recommendations as it does to the applicants during its deliberation of any project in the Olney Town Center.

I look forward to the establishment of the committee and the future transformation of the Olney Town Center into an attractive, walkable center, and a great place for the Olney community.

Sincerely,



Derick P. Berlage
Chairman

DPB:KA:ha: