

ASHTON VILLAGE CENTER IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE – NEW MEMBER APPOINTMENT



Description

Appointment of two new committee members for the Ashton Village Center Implementation Advisory Committee and reappointment of existing committee members who wish to continue.

Completed: 7-02-2024

MCPB
Item No. 10
7-08-2024

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SECTION 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS AND DETAILS

Staff Recommendation

Approve Stephen Faehner and Jim Meehan as new members of the Ashton Village Center Implementation Advisory Committee (AVCIAC). Reappoint Amy Medd, Nadine Masone-Mort, and Kathleen Wheeler to the Committee.

Background

The Montgomery County Council approved the 2021 *Ashton Village Center Sector Plan* through Resolution #19-904 on June 15, 2021. The approved and adopted plan includes the following recommendation to establish an advisory committee:

This Plan supports the creation of an advisory group to address its implementation. The formation of any new advisory group should be staffed by the Planning Department in close coordination with the civic/neighborhood groups within the Ashton area.

This advisory group would work in coordination with the Regional Services Center that covers the area of a project by providing specific community and redevelopment expertise. It would also serve as an interface between community members, county agencies, and developers in implementing recommendations of the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan. This new group should be structured to include representatives from the various constituencies interested in successful implementation of the Plan. Notification and participation in the development review process should occur at the earliest stage of the process.

The initial ten AVCIAC members were appointed by the Planning Board at its meeting on May 5, 2022. On July 20, 2023, the Planning Board appointed one new member to replace a member who had resigned.

When the Committee was established, five of the members were randomly selected to serve an initial two-year term and five for a three-year term. Afterwards, all member terms are for three years. One of the initial two-year members was replaced in 2023, but the terms of the other four two-year members ends in June of this year. Three of the four members—Amy Medd, Nadine Masone-Mort, and Kathleen Wheeler—agreed to remain on the Committee, while one, Harry Berman, is stepping down at the end

of the term. One other member, Jimmy Lakey, is also resigning, leaving two openings on the Committee.

Montgomery Planning sent an e-letter to the Ashton email distribution list in early June 2024, followed by an email from Planning staff to homeowners associations and civic associations in and around Ashton, inviting people to submit letters of interest for joining the committee. The deadline to apply was June 28, 2024. A reminder e-letter was sent on June 24, 2024.

Planning staff received three applications for the Committee. All applicants are well qualified to be members, with varying situations and experiences that could bring new voices to any discussion of projects for the Ashton Village Center. One of the selected applicants, Jim Meehan, applied in 2022 and has reapplied. Mr. Meehan was active during the development of the sector plan in 2021. The other selected applicant, Stephen Faehner, is a business owner who grew up in the Ashton area and moved back in 2011. We will hold onto the letter of interest from the third applicant, Ali Azimi Bolourian, in case there is another resignation from the Committee in the next year and encourage Mr. Bolourian to reapply during the next round of openings.

Ashton Village Center Implementation Advisory Committee Membership

- Amy Medd (June 2024 – June 2027) [*pending reappointment by Planning Board*] (Chair)
- Julia Roberts (June 2022 – June 2025) (Vice Chair)
- Nadine Masone-Mort (June 2024 – June 2027) [*pending reappointment by Planning Board*] (Secretary)
- Lianne Clements (June 2022 – June 2025)
- Stephen Faehner (June 2024 – June 2027) [*pending approval by Planning Board*]
- Chelsea Hughes (June 2022 – June 2025)
- Paul Mangus (June 2022 – June 2025)
- Jim Meehan (June 2024 – June 2027) [*pending approval by Planning Board*]
- Jessica Sidar (June 2022 – June 2025)
- Kathleen Wheeler (June 2024 – June 2027) [*pending reappointment by Planning Board*]

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of Stephen Faehner and Jim Meehan as new members and reappointment of Amy Medd, Nadine-Masone-Mort, and Kathleen Wheeler as continuing members of the Ashton Village Center Implementation Advisory Committee.

Attachments

- Application letter from Mr. Faehner
- Application letter from Mr. Meehan

June 24, 2024

Jamey Pratt
Montgomery County Planning Department
2425 Reedie Drive, 13th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

Dear Mr. Pratt,

I appreciate the opportunity to be considered to serve on the Ashton Village Center Implementation Advisory Committee (AVCIAC) which is open to residents, property owners, and business owners, to serve on the committee.

My history with Ashton began in 1980 when my family moved just down the road to Brinklow, Maryland. I spent the bulk of my childhood enjoying the country lifestyle and remember driving through Ashton on nearly a daily basis to school, church, or work. As I turned 54 last year I can safely say that I've seen most of the changes in Ashton first hand and can remember when there was Kimball's Service Station & High's way before Ashton Village Center & the 7-11 were even built.

More recently my wife and I moved back into the area as our parents continued to live in Brinklow and Silver Spring. We picked our current home site in Ashton because it still has a country feel while being very close to all the amenities one needs. We have been residents of Ashton since 2011 living at 17504 Country View Way.

As a business owner with locations from Maryland to California I understand how important affordable housing is for everyone, especially those who might be less skilled and are just starting their careers. It's important to balance the services that are offered in a community with the history and legacy too. Our, cities, counties and the greater DMV have to balance the demand for development with what the land can support. I'm a big proponent of strategic growth, in business, and in life.

I hope to bring my experience and skills to help shape the future of Ashton on the AVCIAC.

Best Regards,

Stephen Faehner
17504 Country View Way
Ashton, MD 20861
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From: [James Meehan](#)
To: [Pratt, Jamey](#)
Subject: Updated interest letter...
Date: Friday, June 28, 2024 5:08:38 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Yes, I am interested in serving on the Ashton Village Center Plan Implementation Committee! Thank you for providing an opportunity to be considered:



My interests in serving are the very real traffic/safety concerns @ the intersection of Rt 108 & New Hampshire Ave, the poor physical condition of that intersection, safety of pedestrians (especially students from Sherwood HS), the adherence to County/State codes by the developer(s) & the follow through of the "missing middle" housing situation that benefits those most in need! Have follow the various plans for development of that SE quadrant since as far back as 2008...



With regard to my background, I have been a resident of Ashton for 26+years and worked in the Olney, Sandy Spring, Ashton 108 corridor for 38 years. I have witnessed both the good & bad of development along Rt 108 and feel my background knowledge/experience of such would be a asset to the committee. I have been a part of the Keep Ashton Rural & Sandy Spring Ashton Rural Preservation groups since 2018. Have exchanged several voice & email communications with you, as well as Council members, Jawando (new resident in Ashton)/Navarro/Hucker and County Ex/Elrich. My 6/18/2021 (Still time to do the right thing...) email to ALL invested parties should validate my background in staying on top of issues directly related to the Ashton Village Center...



While my expertise on zoning, density, design & environmental concerns are average at best, I do understand the process of listening, than acting for the common good for all parties involved. Over the 38 years in education/athletic administration, I have served on a multitude of county/regional/state committees that strived to solve problems, deal with active issues, and work in a collaborative setting to do the right thing for those to be effected...

Jim Meehan/retired

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