

**MINUTES**  
**College Park City Council**  
**Legislative Dinner**  
**Monday, January 6, 2020**  
**University of Maryland Golf Course Clubhouse**  
**7:30 p.m. – 9:05 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Brennan, Dennis, Day, Rigg, Mackie and Mitchell.

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Lauren Roberts, Administration; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Julia Nihkinson, Deputy Student Liaison.

**GUESTS:** County Council Members Dannielle Glaros and Tom Dernoga; Eugene Jones (Dernoga Constituent Services Specialist); Bianca Harsley (Mel Franklin Constituent Services Specialist); Ola M. Hill (Alsobrooks Municipal Liaison); Senator Jim Rosapepe; Carolyn Brosch (Rosapepe Chief of Staff); Edith Perry (Peña-Melnyk Chief of Staff); Mary Jane Coolen (Lehman Legislative Aide); Jarryd Hawkins (Sen. Cardin’s office); Eve Shuman (Sen. Van Hollen’s office); Len Lucchi, City Lobbyist; Candace Donoho, MML; Carlo Colella and Anne Martens (UMD); Eric Olson, (CPCUP).

Mayor Wojahn opened the program at 7:30 p.m. with welcoming remarks. The guests introduced themselves.

**College Park Accomplishments and Initiatives:** Mayor Wojahn reviewed the City’s 2018-2019 Accomplishments and 2020 Initiatives from the Legislative Dinner briefing book (see attached).

**Discussion of Baltimore Avenue Improvements (College Avenue to I-495):**

1. Councilmember Dennis discussed the status of the project. Segment #1 (from College Avenue to 193) has been fully funded. Segments #2 and #3 (from MD193 – I-495) have not been funded. He requested help from Federal, State and County representatives to make this a priority and press MDOT for funding. It would create a safer environment for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Comments:

- Sen. Rosapepe says this should be a transportation priority for 2030 vision that CPCUP is working on. The money comes from the transportation trust fund and needs to be on the City, UMD and County’s priority list. That filters to SHA and DOT list of priorities.
- Council Member Dernoga says there are competing interests with 210/Rt. 4/Rt. 5, but he would like to make it a priority.

- Council Member Glaros says there needs to be a plan for Segment # 2 and #3 in place before it will advance on the list of priorities. Some brainstorming is needed before it can move forward.

#### **Discussion of Bond Bill for City Hall Plaza:**

2. Councilmember Day discussed the vision for the new City Hall Plaza. It includes a gathering location in downtown College Park that is attractive to younger residents and can accommodate special events. He asks the Delegation to support this initiative by requesting State funding to offset the cost.

#### Comments:

- Councilmember Rigg says this is a major opportunity for investment in downtown College Park. The Plaza could house a farmer's market and other amenities for a more exciting and vibrant public space.
- Mayor Wojahn says the City received bond funds at an excellent rate to bring this project to fruition but could use additional funding.

#### **Discussion of Opposition to Beltway Expansion Plan:**

3. Councilmember Kabir discussed the cons of the Beltway expansion such as losing residential homes, trees and park land. Also, it will bring pollution and noise. Gov. Hogan has two votes on the Board of Public Works to move a plan that will only widen at American Legion Bridge and I-270 instead of entire beltway. The State Board of Public Works will consider a broader expansion at a later time. He asks the Delegation for their opposition to widening the beltway east of I-270. Also, the City would like to see more bus routes to reduce congestion and needs help from all jurisdictions to create a transit plan.

#### Comments:

- Sen. Rosapepe encouraged everyone to work together on a solution—it is important to offer an alternative and not simply oppose this proposal.
- Council Member Dernoga said we need to revisit asking WMATA to extend their green line to Laurel/Fort Meade/BWI. MARC cannot carry the load alone. He encouraged the City to revisit the transit study completed by WMATA in 2008.
- Council Member Glaros has concerns about where the exit ramps will be, which hasn't been answered. The initial plan was to drop traffic onto Baltimore Avenue. It wasn't coordinated well with the County and there needs to be a coherent strategy.

#### **Discussion of State Funding for Sidewalk and Trail Connectivity:**

4. Mayor Wojahn discussed new trails being created in College Park and the need for more in the area which will help reduce traffic congestion. Gov. Hogan has agreed to participate in the Transportation Climate Initiative which will bring investments to support walking and biking in our State. In addition, we ask our State, County and Federal Delegation to continue investment on all levels.

#### Comments:

- Sen. Rosapepe says progress has been made but there is still more work to do.
- Council Member Dernoga has been pushing for bike lanes and trails since being elected in office.
- Council Member Glaros will continue to advocate for it.

### **Discussion of Preserving Municipal Authority on Small Cell Antenna Siting:**

5. Councilmember Mitchell, in conjunction with Candance Donoho (MML), discussed the City's position on Preserving Municipal Authority on Small Cell Antenna Siting. She sees the need for a state-wide bill to preserve municipal authority in the right-of-way. Forty out of 157 cities have adopted an ordinance to deal with aesthetic issues created by small cell antennas. She asks for support from the Delegation to maintain municipal control over these issues. Ms. Donoho says MML's first legislative priority is small cell siting, the second is Highway User Revenues.

#### **Comments:**

- The Mayor says NLC is working on 5G on the Federal level and pursuing legal action against the FCC and the issue with the Cable Franchise Agreements, which restricts Municipalities from negotiating to provide better services to the community.
- Sen. Rosapepe says since UMD has many properties within College Park, it might make sense for them to collaborate with the City, be proactive by choosing preferable locations for 5G infrastructure in advance.
- Ms. Donoho says cell companies cherry-pick prime locations and they should be required to service all areas in the State, which is a challenge.
- Council Member Glaros says the County passed 5G legislation at the end of last year and she stands with the City and MML in preserving our local authority. It's about site location and setting appropriate fees. There is a level of guidance from the federal government, but cities will need consultants to review sites and this cost should be included in the fee scale.

### **General Discussion and Comments:**

Sen. Rosapepe suggests MML survey members in regard to their Pre-K capacity. On average, there are 50% public and 50% private providers (church schools, private schools, nursery schools). He encouraged the expansion of private Pre-K providers across the State that can offer subsidies on a sliding scale, making services affordable to 80% of families.

Edith Perry (Peña-Melnyk Chief of Staff) says Del. Peña-Melnyk is working on a bed registry bill, helping mental health patients to find what space is open at a mental health facility in advance. Currently, people in need are having to wait long hours for a space/bed to become available.

Mary Jane Coolen (Lehman Legislative Aide) says Del. Lehman is working on a bill that will allow each County state-wide, not only on the Eastern Shore, to have a say as to whether a toll road can be established in the County. This will level the playing field for counties on the Western Shore of the Bay. Also, she is working on how to dispose of expired synthetic turf (crumpled tires, plastic carpet, adhesive). There are companies that try to recycle or dispose of it but they stockpile or dump it in remote areas. This is becoming a problem across the country. She wants to task the manufacturers with finding a way to dispose of expired turf.

Ola M. Hill (Alsobrooks Municipal Liaison) says she will follow up with County Executive Alsobrook's Chief of Staff and send the County list of priorities to the City Manager in the near future. In the meantime, she says that Small Cell Infrastructure is at the top of the list. The

County Executive is in support of Municipalities maintaining control of small cell standards and in support of municipalities receiving the Highway User Revenues. They constantly get calls about the Beltway expansion and the effect it will have on the community, so it is on the radar. Lastly, she encourages all Municipalities to identify as a Census Hub on April 1, 2020.

Council Member Glaros is active in advocating for youth services bureaus and financially supporting the College Park Arts Exchange and other nonprofits who are serving residents. She is excited that the College Park Woods project is moving forward and thanks everyone for coming together. Also, she thanks Del. Barnes and Sen. Rosapepe for the work on Albion Road and acquiring the property from WMATA in order to preserve it. She will reopen the Green Street issue on Campus Drive. It is time to work out the details and have a plan in place to move forward in 2022. She's been working on affordable housing with the DHCD Director and innovative school funding, which was encouraged by Sen. Rosapepe. The county struggles with litter. Del. Lehman is working on a bill to ban plastic bags across the State. She also successfully led a ban on Styrofoam county-wide. Council Member Glaros encourages everyone to get on board.

Bianca Harsley (Mel Franklin Constituent Services Specialist) says Council Member Franklin regrets not being here. He advocates for young and minority new businesses. She will take our initiatives that need funding back to his office.

Carlo Colella is working with the City-University Partnership on the Bond Bill for City Hall Plaza. Connectivity requests, Baltimore Avenue project, Beltway expansion, and other legislative issues will receive their support. He seconded Sen. Rosapepe in collaborating with the City of College Park to help fix some of these issues.

Jarryd Hawkins (Sen. Cardin's office) says he will relay opposition to Beltway expansion to Sen. Cardin and says more public input is needed. The feedback is not falling on deaf ears.

Eve Shuman (Sen. Van Hollen's office) says Sen. Van Hollen stands with the Delegation in asking for details and answers from the government about I-495 Beltway expansion, such as how much does it cost and which neighborhoods are impacted. She advised to keep pushing forward because College Park is a very vocal and powerful group. Sen. Van Hollen's office is tasked with helping Iranian Dual Citizens/Green card holders who are trying to enter the USA but having problems. If you know of anyone having these issues, please refer them to Sen. Van Hollen's office.

The Legislative Dinner concluded at 9:05 p.m.

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Lauren Roberts  
Administrative Specialist

Date Approved