

**MINUTES**  
**College Park City Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 5, 2023**

**7:30 p.m. – 9:59 p.m.**

**This was a hybrid meeting: Online via Zoom;  
In-person in the Council Chambers of City Hall.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Kabir; Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell; Councilmembers Hew, Kennedy, Esters, Whitney, Mackie, Rigg and Adams.

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; Miriam Bader, Director of Planning; Steve Halpern, City Engineer; Jacob Vassalotti, GIS Analyst; Jim Miller, Parking Management; Dhruvak Mirani, Student Liaison; Gannon Sprinkle, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Kabir opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Councilmember Kennedy announced the upcoming Know Your Neighbor event.

Councilmember Esters discussed the Lakeland Day event that was held in August.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell talked about the school supply drive and student debt relief.

Councilmember Mackie welcomed the Maryland students back to College Park.

Councilmember Adams discussed the Calvert Hills Civic Association BBQ event, and the Edmonston Road complete street project.

Councilmember Rigg announced the Yarrow Civic Association annual meeting and picnic.

Mr. Mirani announced the UMD Free Fest and First Look Fair.

Mr. Sprinkle also discussed the First Look Fair, and said the Campus Sustainability Fund Review Committee is accepting applications.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:** Mr. Young reminded everyone about the open container prohibition and to clean up your yard after a party.

**AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

Councilmember Whitney requested to remove 23-R-11 from the Agenda; the item has been called up for Oral Argument.

Motion by Councilmember Mitchell, second by Councilmember Mackie, to move items 23-G-119 and 23-G-132 to the Consent Agenda from action. Passed 8-0.

Motion by Councilmember Adams, second by Councilmember Rigg, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed 8-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Maxine Gross, resident: Support for 23-G-126, a grant application to preserve historic black churches. We need to enforce the County regulation that limits occupants of residential housing to 5 unrelated individuals; harmful impact to the community when this is not enforced.

Jacob Hernandez, resident: Discussed the fire at the Wynfield Park apartments, thanked the first responders, and asked the City to continue to be a resource for the displaced residents.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** A motion was made by Councilmember Whitney and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adopt the Consent Agenda, which consisted of the following:

- 23-R-10      Approval of 23-R-10, a Resolution of the Mayor And Council of The City Of College Park Adopting The Recommendation of The Advisory Planning Commission Regarding Variance Application CPV-2023-02, 8612 35th Avenue, College Park, Maryland Recommending Approval Of Two Variances and Three Validations of The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, To Construct a Second Story Addition to the Existing Rear Portion of the House.
  
- 23-G-121      Approval of the appointment of Samuel Slowinski to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

- 23-G-122 Approval of the appointment of Mayor Fazlul Kabir and reappointment of Steve Brayman as Class B Directors of the College Park City University Partnership for terms to end June 30, 2026.
- 23-G-123 Approval of a joint letter (UMD, CPCUP, City) to County Executive Alsobrooks asking the County to prioritize funding for US 1 design.
- 23-G-124 Approval of a letter in support of CB-069-2023, a County bill entitled Urban Street Design Policy and Standards.
- 23-G-125 Ratification of grant application to Transit Within Reach (MWCOG) for 10% design plans to include bicycle lanes on both sides of a section of River Road.
- 23-G-126 Ratification of a grant application to the National Trust for Historic Preservation for Historic Black Churches for the Lakeland Embry A.M.E. Church.
- 23-G-127 Approval of minutes from the August 2, 2023 Council meeting.
- 23-G-128 Award of contract in substantially the form attached not to exceed \$50,000 for consulting services from Paypoint HR to help the City design and execute a comprehensive classification and compensation study, subject to review by the City Attorney.
- 23-G-129 Award of contract in substantially the form attached to O'Malley, Miles, Nysten and Gilmore for legal representation for the City.
- 23-G-119 Approval of a subrecipient agreement in substantially the form attached with the Housing Authority of College Park for the receipt of ARPA funds, subject to review by the City Attorney.
- 23-G-132 Approval of a Contract in substantially the form attached with Katie Hearn, Redgate, for Project Management of the Attick Towers Rehabilitation.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**A. Public Hearing and possible action on the Council request for a traffic calming study in the 7200 block of Rhode Island Avenue (Agenda Item 23-G-130)**

Mr. Vassalotti reviewed the staff report.

Public Comment:

John Payne, resident: Said the report does not show a need for traffic calming, but it does show a need for traffic control, on this one-way section of street. It is a heavily travelled

area. Consider adding traffic control at the pinch points to prevent people from going the wrong direction. Not speed humps.

Bob Baer, resident: Against speed humps but in support of traffic control at two choke points. Suggests planters for beautification. They witness wrong way traffic. Work in conjunction with the County because they are redoing the sidewalk.

Sarah Cutler, resident: agrees with prior speaker for traffic control of wrong way traffic.

[Name unintelligible], resident: They regularly cycle through this area and avoid that intersection.

Councilmember Adams wants to make sure we don't force bikers into traffic. Suggests a referral to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee to work with City Engineer and residents to look at choker options.

Councilmember Rigg is concerned about forcing bicyclists into oncoming traffic. We need to think about creative ways to address the issues. Agrees with referral to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee working in conjunction with the City Engineer for design options.

Councilmember Whitney also wants to hear from the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Example of Montreal where there is more traffic in the bike lanes than on the roads.

### **23-G-130 Traffic Control in the 7200 block of Rhode Island Avenue**

**Motion by Councilmember Adams seconded by Councilmember Rigg to refer the matter to Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee and City Engineer and return with recommendations. Give priority to non-speed hump options and maintaining on-street parking. Motion passed 8-0.**

### **B. Public Hearing and possible action on the Council request for a traffic calming study in the 4600 block of Clemson Road (Agenda Item 23-G-131)**

Mr. Vassalotti reviewed the staff report. Councilmember Adams asked how the number of speed humps is decided. Mr. Halpern said the factors are the length of the road, community input, and any geographic concerns.

Public Comment:

Nick Brennan, resident: Support for traffic calming measures on the block. Surprised by the speeding on the street; mostly non-residents that are trying to leave the neighborhood. Their observations differ from the traffic study. Suggests a combination of speed humps and measures to make sure people observe the stop sign.

PJ Brennan, resident: Support for traffic calming; it is important to the safety of his family and neighbors. Speed humps are their preference. Data is important but so is public sentiment.

Steve Cibor, resident: Properties on Clemson, Beechwood and Wake Forest. Opposed to speed humps. He hasn't experienced any speeding. The one-way streets are no longer necessary; they were put in when Calvert Road was a cut-through, which is now closed. People drive through the stop sign.

Councilmember Rigg is not in favor of the City's speed hump warrants and the petition process. The majority of the time the Council acts in opposition to the engineer's reports. As a first responder he knows that speed humps slow down emergency response. He would support a sidewalk on this road.

Councilmember Adams approaches this as traffic calming rather than speed humps. The majority of the comments were in support of speed humps; he doesn't think chokers work on this road. A sidewalk is more controversial. Two matters: the traffic flow on Clemson and the Stop Sign at Clemson and Rhode Island. Would like the engineer to look at that intersection; maybe relocate the stop sign so it is more visible.

Councilmember Kennedy said in her experience what slows the traffic is the narrowness of the road. She thinks sidewalks would be the best solution. Could we put a speed hump in now and work on a sidewalk later?

**23-G-131 Traffic calming in the 4600 block of Clemson Road.**

**Motion by Councilmember Rigg and second by Councilmember Adams in favor of the installation of traffic calming, and request to accelerate the design of a sidewalk on that portion of Clemson between Wake Forest and Rhode Island Avenue. Motion passed 8-0.**

### **C. Public Hearing and possible action on 23-CR-02, a Charter Resolution to remove the authority for Urban Renewal from the City Charter**

Ms. Ferguson said this Charter Resolution is to remove the Urban Renewal authority from the City Code. It was only used once and there is no thought about using it again.

Public Comment:

Maxine Gross, resident: Requests that action to remove the Urban Renewal language from the Charter not be taken at this time because it could be used to create restorative action in the community. Would like the opportunity to review this with the Restorative Justice Commission in September.

Richard Biffel, non-resident taxpayer: Typos in the Charter Amendment. Supports the resolution; important to prune away the dead wood in the Charter. He believes Lakeland faced a lot of challenges in the 1960s due to severe flooding. Then-Mayor Lomax supported the urban renewal project to address dilapidated conditions in the community. Encouraging homeownership and limiting the occupancy is important.

Maxine Gross, resident: said the prior speaker knows some of the story, but not the full story. The rest of the urban renewal story needs to be told.

Councilmember Esters was prepared to support this tonight but she is moved by a statement that "when we know better, we do better." She thinks we should wait until the Restorative Justice Commission has had the time to provide input.

Councilmember Rigg feels this is a blight on our charter and that the City would not take the steps that are spelled out in the resolution for urban renewal.

Councilmember Whitney does not think we will be using this part of our charter between now and when the RJC can review and comment, so she wants to wait for their input.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell believes we owe the RJC the opportunity to review and provide input to the Mayor and Council.

Councilmember Hew believes it is best to let the RJC provide input to the Council.

Motion by Councilmember Esters, second by Councilmember Whitney, to continue 23-CR-02 until after the Restorative Justice Commission has provided input. Motion passed 8-0.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**A. Discussion of amendments to Ordinance 23-O-07 prior to adoption on Sept. 12.**

Mr. Ryan updated the Council on what’s happened since the last meeting. All pay stations and meters have been reprogrammed to accept cash and coin and accept 50 cents for 15 minutes.

Councilmember Mackie wants to make sure we inform our residents.

Councilmember Adams doesn’t think it’s widely known that the first hour in the garage is free. He requests that the City have a discussion with the shopping center property owner about the 40-year old agreement with the City to manage their lot. Mr. Young will arrange.

Return next week with adoption of amended ordinance.

**B. Discussion of legislative priorities – Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager**

Legislative dinner is October 11.

Support for noise enforcement, vacant and blighted property legislation, funding for contract police, pedestrian bridge over the Paint Branch, funding for economic development priorities, schools, roads, environmental stewardship, and affordable housing.

Discussion of whether to support legislation that will expand collective bargaining rights for workers in the University System of Maryland: Mixed opinions among Council about whether the City should involve itself in this matter.

Bring back a summary of this discussion and how to organize the presentation at the dinner.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Mirani asked for a discussion of other ways to advocate for reforms on how UMD compensates employees.

Request to invite Prince George’s County Schools CEO and school board representative about bus routes within the community and staging of bus pick-ups and drop offs.

**COMMENTS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL, STUDENT LIAISONS:**

Councilmember Mackie attended the County school board meeting re CIP discussion.

**ADJOURN:** Motion by Councilmember Whitney, seconded by Councilmember Mackie, to adjourn into a Closed Session. Mayor Kabir read the closing statement:

Pursuant to the statutory authority of Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article § 3-305, the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park are providing notice that they will meet in a Closed Session after this meeting to consult with legal counsel to obtain legal advice and to discuss a personnel matter. They will not return to open session.

**The motion passed 8-0 and the regular meeting was adjourned at 9:59 p.m.**

*Submitted By: Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk*

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**Closed Session  
September 5, 2023**

At 9:59 p.m. on September 5, 2023, at the conclusion of the Council meeting, a motion was made by Councilmember Whitney and seconded by Councilmember Mackie to adjourn into a Closed Session. Mayor Kabir read the closing statement.

Pursuant to the statutory authority of Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article § 3-305, the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park are providing notice that they will meet in a Closed Session after this meeting to consult with legal counsel to obtain legal advice and to discuss a personnel matter. They will not return to open session.

The motion passed 8-0.

The Mayor and Council met in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Kabir and Councilmembers Kennedy, Hew, Esters, Whitney, Adams, Rigg, Mitchell, and Mackie were present. In addition, the meeting was attended by City Manager Kenny Young, Assistant City Manager Bill Gardiner, and City Attorney Suellen Ferguson. City Clerk Janeen Miller attended a portion of the meeting. Mayor Kabir was the designated Open Meetings trainee.

Part 1: The City Manager discussed a personnel matter with the Mayor and Council.

Part 2: The City Attorney discussed a proposal to settle a legal matter with the Mayor and Council and provided legal advice.

No action was taken.

At 11:19 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Mackie, seconded by Councilmember Adams, to adjourn the Closed Session. The motion passed 8-0.