

**MINUTES**  
**College Park City Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 10, 2023**

**7:30 p.m. – 9:21 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, Adams and Rigg.

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Stephanie Anderson, City Attorney; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Miriam Bader, Director of Planning; Erik Valentine, Community Planner; Rakhmel Rafi, Grant Coordinator; Dhruvak Mirani, Student Liaison; Gannon Sprinkle, Deputy Student Liaison.

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell thanked staff for a great College Park Day. She added that the County Council put out their 2023 priority project list.

Councilmember Mackie said the College Park Woods Neighborhood Watch is having a meet and greet on Sunday. She asked residents to volunteer for Good Neighbor Day projects.

Councilmember Adams discussed the subcommittee he is chairing on the needs-based student rental subsidy pilot program. He hopes to come to Council in December to provide an update.

Mr. Mirani said there will be an on-campus candidate forum on Thursday, October 26. Mr. Sprinkle hopes to see you at the Farmers Market.

**CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:** Mr. Young said there is an update on item 23-G-151 in the red folder with a slight change in the match requirement. He thanked City staff and volunteers for help at College Park Day. The City received \$119,221 reimbursement from the Partnership for security cameras on the Trolley Trail from a CPTED grant. We also received a grant by MDOT for the Trolley Trail for \$48,351 for intersection improvements. The College Park Here and Now will host a D 1 candidate debate on October 18 and the Yarrow Civic Association will hold a D 3 candidate debate on October 19. Both events are at City Hall and will be broadcast and streamed. Saturday, DPW will host a fall clean up from 8 – 12. There was a question about when the City will address the acoustics at the OPH.

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

Councilmember Whitney requested to move the 9/26 minutes from the Consent Agenda to Action for a correction.

Motion by Rigg/Mitchell to add a Worksession discussion re the Mayor Pro Tem position to tonight’s agenda, passed 8-0.

Motion by Mitchell/Rigg to add a discussion of tomorrow night’s Legislative Dinner to tonight’s agenda, passed 8-0.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended, Mitchell/Whitney, passed 8-0.

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

- 23-G-149 Approval of minutes for the September 19 Council meeting.
- 23-G-150 Award of Contract to purchase one Carrier New Way body rear loader packer in the amount of \$390,801.29 utilizing pricing from competitively bid Sourcewell Contract #091219 and, subject to the approval of the City Attorney. Funding for the vehicle is in the CIP Vehicle Replacement Funding.
- 23-G-151 Approval of a Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Grant application for the Old Parish House maintenance work in the amount of \$10,662.00 with the City’s matching funds of \$1,100.00 and a letter of support.

The motion passed 8-0.

**Public Hearing:**

**Ordinance 23-O-08**, An Ordinance Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, Amending Chapter 175 "Taxation", By Enacting Article V, "Property Tax Credit For Elderly Individuals", §175-14 "Establishment Of Tax Credit", §175-15, "Eligibility", §175-16, "Amount And Duration Of Credit", §175-17, "Application For The Tax Credit, And §175-18, "Effective Date Of The Tax Credit" To Authorize The Mayor And Council To Approve A Tax Credit For Elderly Individuals And To Provide The Extent, Duration, And Eligibility Requirements For The Credit As Authorized By §9-258 Of The Taxation-Property Article, Annotated Code Of Maryland

Mr. Fields gave an overview of the proposed ordinance.

**Public Comment:**

Arelis Pérez, resident: Spoke in support of the ordinance. The City has 3,500 senior residents trying to age in place. Property values continue to increase. Consider increasing the assessment threshold to \$525K. Grateful for the flat rate of \$250 but feels the flat rate should be \$500.

Mayor Kabir said further discussion and action on this Ordinance will be at the October 17, 2023 meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**23-G-148 Approval of recommendations on Detailed Site Plan DSP-22035, Terrapin House, located at the northeast quadrant of Baltimore Avenue and Hartwick Road and a Declaration of Covenants and Agreement Regarding Land Use**

Mr. Valentine reviewed the revised conditions in the red folder that are based on discussions with the applicant that continued up until today.

Discussion with the attorney for the applicant, Matt Tedesco, and owners Rich Greenberg and Aaron Schooler:

Requests for changes in the language about the restaurant tenants. Can the tenants get 90-day advance written notice. Can they ensure that eviction doesn't happen during peak times? Discussion of Covenant 4N; it is a question of when the information is provided. How many jobs would be created. Can City residents be given employment priority? Is this student housing or workforce housing? Mr. Tedesco said they are marketing to everyone but the only interest so far is student housing. It will be determined in 2025 at time of building permit.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Adams and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to recommend approval of Detailed Site Plan-22035 with conditions in accordance with the**

**staff recommendation and the Declaration of Covenants and Agreement in the form substantially attached.**

Audience comments:

Jacob Hernandez, resident: discontent on behalf of the D1 residents that another development project will be devoted to student housing. Negative impact on quality of life and traffic in the City.

Richard Biffi, non-resident, member of the LAC for the OTCP Historic District: They reviewed the plan and made a recommendation to the HPC. Appreciated the architect's response to step back the building toward the neighborhood and preserving the mature tree. Concern is about parking implications for Old Town. This plan only provides 1 parking space for every 3+ beds. Sector Plan parking requirement is based on a standard for families. Student renters have a different need. Spaces should be a standard width, not the narrow width as proposed.

Councilmember Rigg commented that this project will improve stormwater management over the current condition. He added that student residents are residents and they should have housing. The way we protect our neighborhoods is to build better student housing closer to campus.

Councilmember Adams said even if it is marketed as student housing you don't need to be a student to live there. One way to help the existing businesses is to patronize them.

Regarding the disappointment of some D1 residents, Councilmember Mitchell said this has been in the pipeline for more than 3 years and we have worked together. Applicant has heard our concerns. Our housing goal has been to create housing in downtown CP to keep students close to the campus.

Councilmember Mackie agrees with the neighborhood parking prohibition. We should promote public transit and other modes of transportation, and encourage residents not to bring cars.

The motion passed 8-0.

**23-G-152            Correction to minutes from the 9/26/2023 meeting**

**Motion by Councilmember Whitney, seconded by Councilmember Rigg, to change the word "owner" to "representative" of short-term rental company. The motion passed 8-0.**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### A. Discussion of Mayor Pro Tem position (MPT)

Councilmember Rigg said we should consider whether any Charter and/or Rules and Procedures changes are needed. Mayor should have support in filling some of the ceremonial roles. Currently, MPT is appointed by the Mayor. In other places, the MPT is elected by the Council. Find ways to make the Mayor's job easier and help mitigate the risk of disruption if the Mayor suddenly resigns. Open discussion before the new Council is sworn in.

- Sign letters on behalf of the Mayor
- Sign documents that the Mayor would normally sign
- Preside over meetings
- Represent the City at certain events
- Substitute in conversations with the City Manager in emergency situations when the Mayor is not available.
- In the recent circumstance, the Mayor was not incapacitated; look at the language
- We have a weak Mayor system; don't interfere with current form of government
- View this as risk mitigation, not about taking powers away from the Mayor.
- Nomination by Mayor/approval by Council – status quo
- Representing the City at state, national level – COG, ITGA, - etc.
- Staffing the Mayor and Council – someone to coordinate the M&C to help support them in their roles:
  - Make sure the City is represented at all of the events where needed
  - Provide talking points to the Council on how to communicate about issues
- Don't forget that the MPT is also representing their district.
- Be the most effective and efficient team possible
- Sharing executive duties among multiple people to ease the workload on one person
- Add more transparency to the approval of the MPT after the election – don't put it on the consent agenda. Explain what it means.
- What it is not: it is not the Council President
- The selection of the MPT should be up to the Mayor.
- Consider the community's expectation of the Mayor to attend events, conferences. We may need to manage those expectations, be more realistic.

Return to a future Worksession to identify possible Charter Amendments. Then, next City Council will address changes to the Rules & Procedures.

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

Adams: Put forward support for noise enforcement as a County legislative priority.

Whitney: attended Lakeland community visioning planning meeting; this was a capstone project for architectural students.

Hew: MML fall conference in College Park next week

**ADJOURN: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Mackie, passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:21.**

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