

Executive Board Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

President Gregory Intoccia called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. GOCA representatives, alternates, invited guests and members of the public introduced themselves.

Intoccia asked for a motion to approve the May 9, 2017 minutes. David Miller moved that the minutes be approved. Jackie Benn seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Intoccia asked for approval of the meeting agenda. Alden English moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Carolyn Knight seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jackie Benn thanked those that supported relay for life which took place the prior week. Jackie noted that over \$110,000 has been raised to date with another month to go.

PRESENTATION BY LYNNE STEIN BENZION, DIRECTOR, BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MCEDC)

Greg Intoccia introduced Lynne Stein Benzion who gave a brief biographical background. Lynne has been involved with economic development for 13.5 years, the first ten with Rockville Economic Development as Deputy Director, where in addition to retention and redevelopment duties, she orchestrated major conferences and was a public face of the organization, regularly tapped by media for her business expertise. Lynne is a Certified Economic Developer (CEDD), a designation from the International Economic Development Council, earned by only 1,100 people nationwide. MCEDC was formed almost 2 years ago, but started last September 2016 when President and CEO, David Petr was hired.

Lynne started by asking if the audience knew what economic development was. Lynn followed that up by reading the official definition of what economic development and explaining that it is a long-term view.

Lynne noted MCEDC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization funded by Montgomery County to do its economic development. She noted that all cities and states have economic development corporations (EDC). EDC's primarily deal with businesses. They enhance confidentiality. Lynne noted that businesses frequently would rather talk to other business, rather than the governments, for a number of reasons including structure and similar purpose. MCEDC markets the County to all who will listen, that it is a great place to live, work and play. The County's school system is the number one thing they

market, as it is widely recognized as one of the best in the nation. They also market the exceptional workforce that Montgomery County has, being one of the most highly educated counties in the nation. Lynne noted there are many reasons why business settle where they do. Aside from workforce, supply chain and customer base, the main reason is due to where the Chief Executive Officer lives, followed by the talent of the area.

Lynne noted Montgomery County's strengths includes its diversity, its colleges and other schools, availability of public transportation, and proximity to many federal agencies and Washington, D.C. Lynne noted that one of its goals is to move its businesses away from being so heavily dependent on the Federal government.

Lynne noted that cyber security is growing area of focus that MCEDEC is trying to leverage; MCEDEC continues to leverage the large presence of FDA and NIH in the area, and hopes to be able to do something similar with respect to cyber security. Montgomery County is also big in hospitality, having national headquarters for Marriott and Choice hotels here in Montgomery County. MCEDEC tries to play up to business corporate headquarters due to location, workforce, and transportation. Lynne noted that MCEDEC does not get involved with retail and restaurants as those industries tend to play themselves out.

Lynne noted that MCEDEC is no longer trying to place reliance on federal presence, has ramped up its marketing efforts, and has launched a new website (www.thinkmoco.com) to help attract large companies looking to move elsewhere. This year alone, Lynne has visited with 70 companies to help get the temperature or a feel of the area.

Lynne then took some questions from those in attendance:

Greg Intoccia asked what MCEDEC does for small businesses. Should we be urging you to do more? Lynne explained that more than two-thirds of companies have less than fifty employees. Lynne said they do small business counseling.

Mike Cullingford asked if MCEDEC can give tax incentive to small businesses. Lynne noted it depends on what they need, and sometimes incentives are offered. MCEDEC offers a training grant to help organizations grow.

Lynne then explained a few reasons businesses do not come to Montgomery County are due to expensive housing and transportation. In general, the cost of living in Montgomery County is high. Lynne note that in areas like Boston and California, there is more capital and a stronger investor base, which has not yet made its way to Montgomery County.

Joe Corbett voiced his displeasure on tax incentives. Lynne agreed that she does not like tax incentives, but unfortunately the problem is that other jurisdictions are providing them, and the County has to do this as well, otherwise the County loses. Incentives just level the playing field. MCEDEC does not lobby per Lynne.

Ed Weisel asked how MCEDEC deal with loss or possible loss of large retail establishments and related jobs. Lynne noted that this is systemic and they need to face that fact and change the economy to attract

good companies that are not going away. MCEDC will work with the workforce to get those into new, better jobs and to focus on jobs that will help people live.

Greg asked about who establishes MCEDC goals, and how are those efforts evaluated? Lynne explained that the Board of Directors sets the goals, who work with the President/CEO to establish metrics and goals. The Board of Directors is appointed by County Executive.

Mike Cullingford asked what MCEDC was doing for small, 2-3 person, entrepreneur companies. MCEDC helps those small companies try to grow and expand, according to Lynne.

Jackie Benn asked what the benefit was, if any, of Montgomery County funding MCEDC as opposed to funding other efforts. Lynne note that privatized and public economic development efforts both have advantages and disadvantages. Those that are privatized generally have at least some governmental component to them. She explained you have to have the right people funding it, those that are neutral and not thinking that just because they are funding it, they are entitled to certain things.

Lynne wrapped up her discussion making members aware that she is open to continue the conversation on economic development, and handed out a number of her calling cards.

AN OVERVIEW AND THE FUTURE OF THE OLNEY MASTER PLAN PRESENTED BY FRED BOYD, COMMUNITY PLANNER WITH THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The next guest speaker was then introduced: Fred Boyd, a planner from the Montgomery County Planning Department. Fred first discussed the broad contours of the history of the Olney Master Plan and how the Montgomery County Planning Department was created. Fred discussed the General Plan and the fact that it mentioned little of specifics. Also mentioned was that early planning also addressed Olney as a “satellite community” and a “crossroads community” (a term it also used to describe Damascus). It recognized there was some development underway and that would continue. It noted some level of self-sufficiency and also employment opportunities.

In 1966, it was determined that Olney was a large area plan, that there would be development, but not as much as in the corridors (Rockville, Gaithersburg, Germantown were the corridor cities).

In 1980, the plan was revised as the area had begun to redevelop. There was retail to serve those in the immediate areas (i.e. food stores, dry cleaning, etc.). The plan recognized that Olney would be collection of single family home communities and recommended development in the town center areas.

In the 2006 plan, its approach remained the same. The plan did allow for Olney to broaden its uses, such as residential and non-residential, which would allow more people to live in places where they could walk and be more compact. The plan anticipated that the two largest shopping centers would redevelop in a substantial way and make way for a Civic Center.

Fred then took some questions from those in attendance:

Carolyn Knight asked if Olney does have “true mixed use.” Fred said the potential exists, which is what plan states. There needs to be a fair amount of building height in order to have mixed use. Barbara Falcigno responded with some comments on what others, including Fred, had previously discussed.

Greg Intoccia asked how we could amend the zoning process so that the community could have more say in develop taking place in the central parts of town. Fred noted that the relatively small size of certain projects (i.e. Jiffy Lube) will constrain the level of the County’s review. In particular, Fred noted there is no County site plan process for those properties with less than 10,000 square feet. In order for a site plan review to be conducted or the threshold lowered, this would have to be evaluated on a County-wide basis. Fred then referred members to his website – www.montgomeryplanning.org.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEES/LIAISON REPORTS

Public Policy & Community Affairs Committee (PP&CAC):

Jiffy Lube Design – Greg Intoccia noted that he mailed a letter summarizing the results of the informal poll taken on the various façade materials that Jiffy Lube interests have used in properties previously, and would consider using one of the facades at the facility in Olney. Greg noted that Style # 2 was heavily preferred.

Bus Route 201 – Greg Intoccia noted that there was no change to Bus Route 201, service operating between Olney and BWI Airport). There was supposed to be a meeting last month to have a formal discussion, but it never happened. The schedule has not changed, and GOCA will let the community know if we learn of updated information.

Membership:

No report.

Transportation Committee Report:

Emmet Tydings discussed the bike pathway recommendations from Montgomery National Park and Planning Commission. Emmet noted there is not a whole lot of money to work with currently. Emmet asked that we leave comments on website – www.mcatlas.org/bikereact.

Olney Manor Park – no decision has been made on the gate closing.

Emmet noted there has been an increase in biker and pedestrian crashes in the area. Barbara Falcigno discussed the proposed study on Route 28 and 198. The Transportation Committee is putting together a resolution on widening Norbeck Road eastbound from one to two lanes from Georgia Avenue to Norbeck Boulevard (Leisure world entrance).

Next there was a vote taken to approve the following resolution regarding widening Route 28:

Resolution:

Whereas traffic heading eastbound on Route 28 from Georgia Ave needs to quickly merge from two lanes to one;

Whereas during the afternoon peak hours, traffic cannot flow eastbound through the intersection due to the immediate merge to one lane and this traffic sometimes blocks traffic traveling northbound on Georgia Ave;

Whereas Maryland State Highway is undergoing a MD 28/MD198 Corridor Improvement Study:

Resolved: The Study should include widening eastbound MD 28 approximately 1500 feet from Georgia Ave to Norbeck Blvd (entrance to Leisure World)

20 Yes

0 Opposed

1 Abstention

Correspondence Report:

Jackie Benn noted that there was no report.

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board:

Greg discussed the planned bikeway from Glenmont to Silver Spring.

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee:

Danny Benn thanked everyone for participation during Olney Days in the forum as it relates to the Olney Town Center. The next meeting is June 27th and then again in the fall.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

There was some discussion that some residents in the County want to place small communications towers in neighborhoods. County Executive Leggett has asked the County Department of IT to look into the matter, but it seems Federal law is clear on the matter. The County will hold an information meeting on proposed zoning changes at the County Executive Building on June 14th at 7:00.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Jackie Benn moved adjournment of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Barbara Falcigno. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Bob Hambrecht, Treasurer for Stacy Levine, Recording Secretary

Members in attendance:

GOCA Officers:

Greg Intoccia, President (Ashley Hollow); Carolyn Knight, Executive Vice President (Olney Oaks); Billy Becker, 1st Vice President (Ashley Hollow); David Miller, 2nd Vice President (Norbeck Meadows); Jackie Benn, Corresponding Secretary (Fair Hill Farm); Bob Hambrecht, Treasurer (Williamsburg Village), and Barbara Falcigno, Past President (Olney Oaks).

GOCA Delegates and Alternates:

Judy Broseker (Brookeville Knolls); Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm); Gervais Crouch (Norbeck Chase Townhouse); Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows); Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres); Carol Frenkel (Olney Mill); Jay Feinberg (Olney Oaks); Michael Cullingford (The Reserve at Fair Hill); Alden English (SEROCA); Aleka Kapatou (Tanterra); Sharon Dooley (Village of James Creek); Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village); and Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village).

Public in Attendance:

Terri Hogan, Greater Olney News; Alexis Reed, Councilmember Navarro’s Office