



TOWN CENTER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Minutes
January 14, 2015

APPROVED 2/11/15

The regular meeting of the Town Center Community Association was held on Wednesday, January 10, 2015, at Historic Oakland Manor. Those in attendance were Chairperson Linda Wengel, Vice Chairperson Joel Broida, Board members Lynn Foehrkolb and Lee Richardson, Columbia Council Representative Jeanne Ketley, Village Manager Patricia Laidig, and Assistant Village Manager Patricia Loeber. Kirsten Coombs, Jerry Davis, Karen Gray, Tom Mungo, Milton Matthews, Chris Speer, Andy Stack, and Russ Swatek were guests.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Broida made a motion, seconded by Mr. Richardson, to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Foehrkolb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Richardson, to approve the December 10, 2014, minutes as amended to change “affordable housing” to “full-spectrum housing” in Mr. Broida’s comment recorded in the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Resident Speakout

No one spoke.

Board Liaison

Not present.

Guest: Milton Matthews, President, Russ Swatek, Director and Chairperson, and Andy Stack, Director, The Columbia Association (CA).

Mr. Stack spoke on behalf of the group. The following items were discussed:

- Mr. Matthews plans to visit each village board once every year.
- The charters of all of CA’s advisory committees have been rewritten.
- Lake dredging will be placed on a regular, shorter-term schedule in order to minimize the cost and scope of these projects as much as possible. CA is also working on a watershed plan.
- Haven on the Lake, CA’s newest facility, is now open.
- CA’s “Excite Columbia” interactive sessions will be scheduled two or three times per year.
- CA retired two bonds in 2014. Longer-term debt was converted to shorter-term debt at far more favorable interest rates.
- In response to a query from Ms. Wengel, Mr. Matthews stated that contact information on the CA website is posted for senior staff only, since they are the ultimate decision-makers. Fred Gottemoeller arrived at 7:13 p.m.
- The Columbia Association’s Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) report can be viewed on CA’s website. A five-year plan is in place for implementing requisite ADA changes to CA facilities.
- Ms. Foehrkolb asked if any funds in CA’s budget have been designated for the Inner Arbor Trust. Mr. Stack replied that the Trust has not requested more money. He added that there are three CA members on the Trust’s board: the CA President and two CA Board members. Mr. Milton, Mr. Stack, and Mr. Swatek left at 7:30 p.m.

Guest: Fred Gottemoeller, Bridge Columbia

Ms. Gray also attended on behalf of Bridge Columbia. The items discussed were as follows:

- Ms. Gray gave a brief synopsis of the history and goals of Bridge Columbia.
- In light of the County’s feasibility study, Mr. Gottemoeller stated that any short-term improvements of the existing bridge would not be acceptable to Bridge Columbia members.

- He believes that the study's timeline conclusions are too conservative, and that the bridge project could be completed in 4 years, versus 9.2 years in the study. In response to Mr. Broida's question, Mr. Gottemoeller said that the timeline discrepancy is attributable to the study's inclusion of worst case scenarios and various delays.
- Mr. Gottemoeller stated that some cost of the bridge could be defrayed by federal and state grants. He recommended beginning the grant process as soon as possible.
- When asked what would make the Howard County Executive recommend building the bridge to the County Council, Mr. Gottemoeller said that conventional assumptions about how people get around would have to change, that the bridge would provide an east-west shortcut for Columbians, and that the bridge would provide a sustainable transportation option.
- Bridge Columbia is looking for letters of support from the village boards, The Howard Hughes Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce, etc. Ms. Ketley suggested that the Board select an option and get involved. Ms. Wengel said that the Town Center Board would make a decision about such a letter at another Board meeting. Ms. Gray and Mr. Gottemoeller left at 8:02 p.m. Mr. Davis, Mr. Mungo, and Mr. Speer left at 8:09 p.m.

Architectural Committee

5502-5590 Vantage Point Road (Glen Meadows): Restore community entrance sign. Add one solar-powered LED sign light. **After discussion, Mr. Broida made a motion, seconded by Ms. Foehrkolb, to approve the application as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

Order of Business

School Donations:

After discussion, Ms. Foehrkolb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Broida, to make an annual donation to the principal's discretionary fund of both Running Brook Elementary School and Wilde Lake Middle School. The motion carried unanimously.

2015 Election:

After discussion, the Board decided by unanimous consent to appoint Ms. Wengel as chair of the Election Committee if Board Member Helen Ruther, who was not in attendance, declines to serve as election chair.

Spring Schedule:

Ms. Laidig apprised the Board of the village's spring 2015 schedule: February 1-March 6, nomination period for three positions on the Village Board; March 11, Annual Speakout; April 8, Candidates' Forum at Vantage House; April 24, deadline for submission of ballots; April 25, voting at Vantage Point Park. The Annual Board Dinner will be held on April 22. Ms. Loeber will take care of planning the dinner.

Resident Handbook:

Ms. Wengel suggested that the new Resident Handbook should have less narrative, more photographs, and lists of contact information for community services and activities. Ms. Laidig will redraft the handbook with these changes.

Development:

From the most recent Downtown Partnership meeting, Ms. Wengel reported that The Metropolitan Downtown Columbia is attracting more empty-nesters and fewer young professionals than anticipated. She said there have been no announcements about any new companies coming to the Downtown.

Town Center 2014-2016 Strategic Initiatives:

Ms. Laidig and the Board have been working on both Action Plans of the first goal.

Board and Staff Reports

Manager's Report:

Submitted in writing. Ms. Laidig told the Board that CA President Milton Matthews has reorganized the staff at The Columbia Association. The Villages are now under Planning and Community Affairs, which is headed by Jane Dembner. Ms. Laidig also mentioned that she was told that the new CA headquarters is on CA-assessed property in Owen Brown.

Chairperson's Report:

Ms. Wengel told the Board that the search for a Village Manager to succeed Ms. Laidig is under way. The search committee (Mr. Broida, Ms. Foehrkolb, and Ms. Wengel), is working on the process for advertising and interviewing candidates for the position.

Columbia Council Report:

Ms. Ketley said that the ethics charge filed against a CA Board member is going forward.

Board Member Comments:

Nothing further at this time.

Ms. Foehrkolb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Broida, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting of the Town Center Village Board adjourned at 9:03 p.m. The next scheduled meeting of the Town Center Village Board will be Wednesday, March 11, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

Recorded and attested to by:

Patricia B. Laidig

Secretary/Treasurer

Date