



**Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier Maryland
City Council Meeting
Public Hearing**

Date: 6-16-2015

Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier

Presiding officer: Mayor Miles

Councilmember's present: Jesse Christopherson, Bryan Knedler, Tracy Loh, Shivali Shah

City Hall Staff: City Manager Jeannelle Wallace, Assistant City Manager Veronica Owens, Economic Development Director Samantha Olatunji, Chief Scott, Finance Director Vijay Manjani, City Clerk Janis Lomax

Public Hearing- Arundel Road Parking Petition

Agenda

Discussion of WMATA and Mount Rainier Plaza Purchase

Committee Appointments and Liaison Assignments

Mount Rainier Neighborhood Park Basketball Facility

Ordinance 3- 2015 Real Property Address Requirement

Food Truck Legislation

Charter Review Committee Appointees

Council Rules and Procedures

Rolling Agenda

Dr. Gupta Parking Lot Agreement

WMATA

Bus Stop Bench Design

SHA Bus Lane Parking Meter Removal

Update Vacant Building Lot Fee

Increase proposed alley closure between 3405 and 3409 Rhode Island Avenue

Purchase of Party Time Building

Levy Project

Thomas Stone

Scheduling Meetings

Arundel Road Parking Petition Public Hearing

There has been a recent influx of street parking on Arundel Road between 34th and 31st Street. A public hearing was held to hear how the nearby residents are particularly affected and what solutions they have for this issue.

Eddy Moore (3200 Arundel Road) lives in a corner house where he deals with a lot of the issues pertaining to the parking of non-residents on Arundel Road. He states that people sometimes

park and block his driveway so that he is unable to get in or leave. When he called the police, they told him they were only responding to emergencies. His guests are unable to park anywhere. Also, Arundel road has been turned into a mechanic shop with cars jacked up to be fixed, and the people who park there, urinate and leave trash on the road. On the matter of charging for parking, he believes he should not have to pay for parking in front of his own house.

Sarah Christopherson (3200 Arundel Road) explains that the people who park on the street move trash and other items to be picked up off the street and onto the sidewalk. Her son attends Thomas Stone Elementary and she has witnessed little kids diverting into the street because the sidewalk is blocked by the trash and other bulk items. She explains that people are parking in the street because they do not want to park at the apartments they are visiting.

She also was surprised to learn that there would be a \$50 per car parking fee. She is fortunate to have a driveway but many of her neighbors of color do not. Essentially, it is asking families with two cars to pay \$100 for two cars to park for a year. That is a lot. She questions the disparate impact of such a high parking fee for people parking in front of their own home. However, she does not want the parking fee to dissuade the council away from the fundamental parking issue. She asks the council to move forward with addressing the parking issue and to rethink the high fee for residents to park in front of their own homes.

Karen Fuentes representing her mom Toma Fuentes (3700 Arundel Road) informs the council that the people who park there can be violent sometimes. When her father politely told some people to move their cars because there are other residents and they need to park, they banged on their door and started insulting him. She also points out that the \$50 per car is very high and they would not be able to afford it because her family has two to three cars.

Sandhana Baios? 32nd & Arundel Street rents out her basement apartment and urges the council to have a process in place. She has witnessed non-resident people parking and has noticed abandoned cars.

Councilman Christopherson does not believe any violent crimes have resulted from the parking issue but he has witnessed heated exchanges.

Councilwoman Shah believes that \$50 per car, which is mandated by ordinance, is a bit steep and will look further into the matter. She would like to contact Queenstown Apartments and see what affect they have on the parking in the street. She believes a compromise can be made.

Councilman Knedler warns the council that 31st and 32nd Street will be filled with the cars that will no longer be able to park in that zone once the council decides to implement the parking permits. Also, parking will be lost in that section of Arundel because of the construction that is about to take place there soon. He also would like to know what Queenstown did to cause the whole problem.

Councilwoman Loh has been contacting Queenstown Apartments to deal with the root of the problem. She understands that the \$50 per car is an issue and that residents would like action to be taken by the council.

Mayor Miles mentions that the Levy Project is going to displace all cars, including residents. Planning for where those cars go needs to take place. Also, the violence issue has not been reported. She urges residents who have conflicts to report them. She also requests for the issue of driveways being blocked to be addressed.

Councilman Knedler confirms that car repair on the streets is illegal.

Chief Scott confirms that it is not illegal to park in the street in front of a residence. The vehicle must park three feet away from a driveway and twenty feet from a fire hydrant. If someone is vandalizing personal property, threatening persons, or using racial insults, they should be reported to the police.

Motion to close the Public Hearing

Councilman Knedler

2nd Councilwoman Loh

4-0

Committee Appointments

Mixed-Use Town Center Committee Applicants

- **Anne Leceur** (3100 Bunker Hill Road) has been a resident of Mount Rainier for fifteen years and has participated in park and planning and sector planning meetings in the past. Her professional background is in arts management and cultural policy. She is familiar with the MUTC Plan.
- **Jessica Lawrence** (4100 28th Street) is a real estate developer and has been a resident of Mount Rainier for one year. She is currently developing four net-zero energy town homes in Mount Rainier. She is familiar with the MUTC plan, Green Infrastructure Plan, and the State's Energy Action Plans and sustainability goals. She received her degree from Cornell University and works for ING real estate.
- **Mario Sisneros** (31st and Perry Street) has been a resident of Mount Rainier for the last fourteen years and has been a member of the MUTC committee four or five years ago. He would like to rejoin the committee because he would like to bring more change to the community.
- **Ryan Stubbs** (3700 36th Street) moved to Mount Rainier in January of this year. He has a background and master's degree in urban planning and public administration. Currently he works for the National States' Arts Agencies.
- **Michael Stackwoods** (34th Street) has been a resident in Mount Rainier for one year. He works for the National Park Service, which is renovating the National Mall currently. The Mixed-Use town center program is one of the reasons why he wanted to move to Mount

Rainier. He has a landscape architecture and operations background. He was also a small business owner in Massachusetts.

- **Doyle Neiman**
- **Joanne Adese**
- **Sharon O'Donnell**
- **Brent Bolin**

Anthony Lee (3000 Bunker Hill Road) is a current member of the MUTC committee and he is pleased to see the interest of many applicants to the committee. He asks that the council consider having the current committee members review the applicants since they will be working with them.

The council makes recommendations to the planning board. The Planning Board makes the appointments. Councilman Knedler requests a standard form to be sent to the applicants so he can see where their interests lie.

Purchase of Party Time Liquors Building – Councilman Knedler

The City was promised years ago by the Redevelopment Authority that it would not renew the lease of Party Time Liquors, thereby reducing the number of liquor stores in Mount Rainier. However, instead of renewing the lease, the Redevelopment Authority is selling the property. Councilman Knedler believes that residents should have a voice in this process since it was taxpayer money that bought the building. Currently, the Menkiti group is going to settlement within a month for one part of the building and Party Time Liquors is in negotiations for the sale of the second part of the property.

Bob Dicken (Party Time Liquors) states that the delay was a result of incorrect specs. The county specified that it would take eight months to correct them. When the Redevelopment Authority bought the building, the law says that the Occupancy Permit needs to be renewed. As a result, the business still has its 1976 Occupancy Permit. Additionally, the Redevelopment Authority is responsible for the façade, including the sign.

Larry Solomon (Mount Rainier Business Association President) has been around for thirty years. He states that Party time has a clean environment and the business does not bring a lot of the issues that the other liquor store brought.

Sahara Shadri (3200 Perry Street) urges the council to consider the concerns of a liquor store as Mount Rainier looks towards a new era with mixed-use town center development. The city needs good faith owners to develop the city.

David Tiario (3200 Perry Street) thinks it is a conflict of interest for the County to sell to a liquor store. He asks the council to look at research concerning liquor store density, violence, and outcomes on health safety of residents in those areas. He is against the sale and the use of a liquor store as an anchor tenant.

Anthony Lee (Business Owner in Mount Rainier) suggests that discussion center around what the city is looking for in terms of beautification and how the business is run. There is already going to be investments in the building. Perhaps additional requirements by the city that are clear and concise, for the current tenants will help to integrate the business so that it is an asset to the City.

Neal Dicken (Party Time Liquor) explains that he heard the same issues for the Arundel Road Parking Hearing that he heard at the liquor meeting a few weeks prior, such as public urination, trash, hanging out, and verbal abuse. He points out that there is no liquor store there on the corner.

Community Police Meeting

The Community Police Meeting It has been moved from June 17th to **Wednesday, June 24th at 6:30pm at the Mediterranean Café**

WMATA Plaza

Mayor Miles has been in contact with Michael Watson. One track of the property in front of City Hall does not belong to the city. Follow-up will be made with Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. It is tied up with five other properties that they are still negotiating on. Mr. Watson will meet with councilmembers and staff next week.

Liaison Assignments and Committees

Economic Development Committee (Official)	Jesse Christopherson, Tracy Loh
Economic Development Work Group (resident-based)	Shivali Shah
Personnel Review Committee	(No Council due to conflict of interest)
Emergency Preparedness Committee	Malinda Miles
Communications and Social Media	Jesse Christopherson
Mount Rainier Election Board	Malinda Miles
Ethics Commission	(No Council due to conflict of interest)
Design Review Board	Bryan Knedler
Green Team – Tree Commission, Bike Coop, Toolshed, Garden Committee	Bryan Knedler, Malinda Miles
Marketing Work Group	Shivali Shah
Community Garden	Melinda Miles, Shivali Shah
Toolshed	Tracy Loh
Bike Coop	Jesse Christopherson, Shivali Shah
Gateway Community Development	Tracy Loh, Jacqueline Reposo (Board Representatives, No Council Representatives)
Mixed-Use Town Center	Tracy Loh (Voting Member), Samantha Olatunji (Non-voting member)
PGCMA	Jesse Christopherson
Mount Rainier Business Association	Shivali Shah

ATHA	Jesse Christopherson, Tracy Loh- (1)Board and (1)Governing Board Position
FOP Negotiations	Malinda Miles
Youth and Recreation	Jesse Christopherson

Basketball Court – Councilman Christopherson

The Basketball court at Arundel Road and 30th is a full court but only one basket remains up. Councilman Christopherson believes the court helps provide children with recreational activity and it is not fully functional with only one hoop. Thus he urges the council to write a letter to the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission requesting to put the second hoop up.

Mayor Miles and Councilman Knedler worked to put up one hoop. They do not support two hoops. The Court and the Arundel apartment building do not want the basketball court there. The children do not go home when the park closes at dusk. Every night the police have to be called. Even though, the profanity and drugs on site has gotten better, as the Mayor has witnessed, it is still an issue. The Mayor walks to the park at night sometimes to monitor because Park and Planning has not assigned anyone to monitor that area for recreation. She states that unless they pay someone to monitor the park, she is not in support of putting up a second hoop.

Ordinance 3-2015 Real Property Address Requirement

An ordinance requiring residents to put rear addresses on their property. According to code enforcement, it is nearly impossible to identify properties by address from the rear in some neighborhoods. This is important for addressing complaints for issues in the rear of house. It is also important for an emergency apparatus or fire department to be able to identify a property by the rear for safety purposes. Currently, only a front address is required by regulations.

Food Trucks– Mayor Miles

County Councilwoman Deni Taveras mentioned that legislation is coming up on whether to support food trucks in Prince George’s County again. The legislation proposes having food trucks only in certain areas.

Councilwoman Loh, Councilman Christopherson, and Councilwoman Shah support the legislation with concerns regarding truck regulations and enforcement. Mayor Miles supports food trucks with regulation. She does not believe the county is capable of that level of regulation that is required and therefore, is not in support of the legislation.

Charter Review Committee - Councilman Christopherson

Councilwoman Shah suggests including law students who do clinic work. Georgetown Law School has a clinic that specifically works on community projects that are not necessarily about representing someone in the court of law. One of the supervising attorneys for this program lives in Mount Rainier’s Ward II.

Council Rules and Procedures- Councilman Knedler

- Councilmembers can only use cellphones for legitimate purposes to an extent and when appropriate.
- Items are not to be brought in to City Hall to sell or solicit.
- City Hall Facilities can be used for city business only
- The city attorney will brief the council on the Open Meetings Act
- Any policy position that is put in writing and discussed to other agencies without the vote of council should express that it is that councilmembers opinion only.
- A rolling agenda and file sharing database will be implemented to keep the council informed

Motion to close the work session

Councilwoman Shah

2nd Councilman Knedler

3-1

City Manager Retirement Party

The City Clerk is requesting \$3,000 to \$4,000 for the City Manager's retirement party on June 26th. Funds will go towards the venue, DJ, food, bartender, cake, decorations, and invitations. Drinks and alcoholic beverages will be donated by Party Time and Chuck's Liquors. Based on the RSVPs, she anticipates 140-200 people. The party will be advertised on the listserv.