



**Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier Maryland
City Council Work Session & Special Meeting**

Date: 9-16-2014

Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier

Presiding officer: Mayor Malinda Miles

Councilmember's present: Ivy Thompson, Jesse Christopherson, Jimmy Tarlau, Councilman Bolin

Councilmember's absent: City Hall Staff: City Manager Jeannelle Wallace, Assistant City Manager Veronica Owens

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Special Meeting

Ordinance 5-2014 Extending the City of Mount Rainier's cable franchise agreement with Comcast of Maryland to allow continued negotiations for renewal of the franchise agreement

Agenda

Architectural Conservation Overlay Zone and Architectural Conservation Plan Presentation

Net Zero House Presentation

WSSC Presentation

Tree Trimming Removal Process

Perry Street Barriers

29th Street Traffic Calming Petition Request

Communication with City Listserv

Economic Development Committee

Motion to Approve Agenda

Councilwoman Thompson

2nd Councilman Tarlau

3-0

Motion to Adopt Ordinance 5-2014 Extending the City of Mount Rainier's cable franchise agreement with Comcast of Maryland to allow continued negotiations for renewal of the franchise agreement

Councilman Tarlau

2nd Councilwoman Thompson

3-0

Motion to move from the special meeting to the work session
Councilwoman Thompson
2nd Councilman Tarlau
3-0

Architectural Conservation Overlay Zone and Architectural Conservation Plan Presentation

By Zunilda Rodriguez- Prince Georges Planning Department, Maryland National Park and Planning Commission

Briefing Purpose: The briefing purpose is to introduce the Architectural Conservation Plan (ACP) Project, talk about the history of ACP (including Municipal concerns and legislative action), and discuss municipal involvement.

Overview: The architectural plan and overlay zone for the City of Mount Rainier has two primary purposes. 1) Preserve and protect the architectural and historic character and scale of the City of Mount Rainier's single-family neighborhoods. 2) Promote context-sensitive infill, additions, and renovations that may take place in the future.

Project Team: Cunningham Quill Architects, EHT Traceries, R. McGhee & Associates, and the City of Mount Rainier

In 2013, the City of Mount Rainier asked the Prince George's County District Council to create an architectural conservation overlay zone for the City of Mount Rainier. It is a tool already in place in the county zoning ordinance. However, it has not been implemented in the county. The City of Mount Rainer requested that the county take a look at the city for becoming the first municipality to actually implement that overlay zone and the development of an architectural conservation plan as part of that effort. That resolution was sent to Prince George's County District Council in 2013. The Prince George's District Council adopted a resolution to direct the planning board to prepare an architectural development plan and an architectural conservation overlay zone for the City of Mount Rainier. Subsequently, the Prince George's County Planning Department began to identify a budget and project team to oversee the development of this plan as part of this effort. In January 2014, the Prince George's County Planning Department submitted a request for proposals and, in the Spring, hired a consultant, Cunningham Quill Architects, EHT Traceries, and R. McGhee & Associates to help the planning department with the plan.

Project Area: All of the single family residential zones in the City of Mount Rainier (R-20, R-35, R-55, R-80). This area includes 1,100 properties and 1,800 structures.

Project Schedule: The planning board hired its consultants this past spring. In the 2014 summer and fall, it will introduce the project and start data collection. From 2014 Winter through Spring 2015, the Architectural Conservation Plan (ACP) will be drafted and refined. Throughout 2015 Spring and Summer, the team will work on a final report and the legislative process to adopt ACP.

So far, the team has launched a website (pgplanning.org/ www.pgplanning.org/MRACOZ.htm), held a kick-off meeting with the consultant team and members of the Prince George's County Planning Department, and had a tour of some of the residential neighborhoods in Mount Rainier. In the coming months, the consultant team will be conducting architectural surveys and will be working closely with the City of Mount Rainier through that process. There will be a total of three community meetings before a draft report is developed and finalized. Following this process a joint public hearing will be held before the district council and planning board. There will be work sessions for both the planning board and the district council before the final plan release.

Major Project Deliverables:

Task One: Pre-Planning

- Project Team, consultant, Introductory Meetings with City Manager

Task Two: Urban Design Services

- Detailed inventory of the built environment
- Architectural survey
- Proposed design regulations and exemptions for the ACOZ
- Guidelines/ criteria for approval of renovation/ alteration projects
- A pattern book

Task Three: Final Report

Initial Tour of the Neighborhoods on November 11, 2014 included: ACP Project Team & Consultants, Mount Rainier Design Review Board, Mount Rainier M-U-TC Committee, Mount Rainier Green Team, Mount Rainier Tree Commission

Major Takeaways:

- The City has many examples of very sensitive renovations to existing homes as well as less sensitive modifications.
- Major concerns include: Maintaining the front porch character of the neighborhoods, accuracy and integrity of architectural details, and maintaining compatible scale within neighborhoods.
- There are a variety of architectural styles found throughout the City. Recommendations need to address this variety.
- Recommendations need to provide appropriate guidance for infill projects as well as renovations, restorations, and repairs.

Net Zero House Presentation

Howard Ways, Executive Director of Prince George's County Redevelopment Authority

In January, the Redevelopment Authority met with the Mayor and Council and expressed its desire to redevelop a lot that it owns at 3719 -34th Street into a Net-Zero energy home opportunity. It was to be renovated. However, due to hurricanes and earthquakes, it was no longer feasible and viable to renovate. So it was torn down and an RFP was submitted for the project. The two finalists for the project will present tonight to the Mayor and Council.

Jim Preon- Community Developer of the Redevelopment Authority, Chairman of the Review Committee presents the two finalists.

Housing Initiative Partnership (HIP) Presentation

Team members in attendance:

Maryann Dillon, Executive Director of HIP

Stephanie Prange Proestel, Deputy Directory

Jocelyn Harris, Project Manager for Single Family Homes

Bruce Zavos and Matt Fine from Zavos Architecture Design Dpassiv

Oscar Flores & Susie from OMF Contractors- General Contractor from Prince George's County

Andy Coral from Leasing Energy

HIP's Mission

“Housing Initiative Partnership, Inc. (HIP) is an innovative non-profit developer based in Prince George's County, Maryland dedicated to revitalizing neighborhoods. HIP creates housing and economic

opportunities for persons of low- and moderate – income and provides services that improve the quality of life in the communities we serves.”

“We serve over 2,000 clients a year in our housing counseling program. We have acquired and renovated over 60 distressed homes around Prince George’s County and several right here in Mount Rainier. We developed over 250 multi-family homes with 172 in our pipeline.”

Advisory Team

- Ralph Bennett – Professor, University of MD School of Architecture
- Garth Rockcastle – Professor, University of MD School of Architecture
- Kelly Fleming- Senior Landscape Architect, Low Impact Development Center
- Joe Wiehagen- Energy Engineer, NAHB Home Innovations Lab

Experience

- Artist Apartments on 33rd and Perry Street (1st Green Roof in Prince George’s County, 2003)
- Single family renovations in Mount Rainier and Prince George’s County
- Renaissance Square – multifamily apartment community in Hyattsville

Bruce Zavos: Buildings produce over 44% of the United States CO₂ emissions while cars only produce 34%. I have been practicing architecture for about thirty years. This was a wake-up call. Our firm made a commitment to design a project that consumed less energy using the passive house approach to lessen the impact buildings have on our environment.

Exceeding RDA Objectives

- Raising the bar
- Promoting Innovation
- Reducing Building Emissions
- Increasing Green Building Capacity and Entrepreneurship
- Using Holistic Environmental Designs
- Promoting Healthy Homes

Design Challenge Goals

- DOE Zero Energy Ready Home/ PASSIVE HOUSE
- Occupant Comfort
- Repeatable, Universal and Adaptable
- Passive Survivability
- Low Impact building and site use
- Promote social interaction and community
- Neighborhood compatibility

Certifications add another \$55,000. If selected, HIP wants to work with the Redevelopment Authority to find ways to cut costs.

HIP’s site plan focuses on social and behavioral changes through the physical design features. It includes a front porch, recycling & composting, electric car charging station, bicycle station, storage, permeable pavement, rain barrels, rain garden, vegetable garden. Each home will have 2,200 square feet, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

Passive house is about energy per square foot. It is performance-based. If you meet the metrics, then it can be certified as a passive house. The house is compatible with the streetscape but adaptable and customizable. The model is supposed to be a prototype that can be used throughout the county.

Contractor Training

Contractor education includes on-site workshops and in-classroom training. On site workshops will provide the contractors with an opportunity to come see in-site what is happening at different points of construction (installation of the mechanical systems, air ceiling insulation, demonstration of the blower door test, storm water management, rain check rebate program with environmental resources, pervious pavement, rain barrels, rain gardens, etc.). The in-classroom training will be presented through a partnership with Energy and Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA) and NAHB Research Lab—“Houses that Work”. They will provide their training in a classroom setting at the National Association of Home Builders at Prince George’s County, which will supplement the onsite training

Community Outreach

- Inclusive Design Charrette – Educate the community while getting input for the design.
- Web Page with Real time status
- Hard Hat Tours
- Rain Check Rebates – Dept. of Environmental Resources
- “Greening Your Home” community workshop
- “Solar Options” community workshop
- Peopco’s Free energy audits for Homeowners

Buyer Education

The homes will be sold to households earning 80% or less of AMI (e.g. \$85, 600 for a family of 4). They will have to go through a HUD-certified counseling program. Additionally, they will receive a homeowner’s manual and will be given a pre-occupancy walk through. Energy modeling provides the opportunity for energy checks through energy efficient technology labels. There will be usage reporting and monitory for three years. The homeowner will be able to see their energy usage and the team will check in every six months for those three years to make sure everything is working.

Budget

The houses will be sold at market price for about \$370,000. For construction financing, the team has secured HOME funds from the county and a construction loan from the Washington Area Community Investment Fund. Included in the buyer’s financing sources will be a mortgage, the My HOME down payment closing cost assistance program that is available through the redevelopment authority, and seller contribution to the household so that it is affordable.

Jack Baker, resident: I am concerned about the financing. I am not your target audience. I would have a hard time affording a \$370,000 home.

Maryann Dillon, Executive Director of HIP: We typically renovate houses throughout the county and sell them to households that probably cannot pay the full market value. We are seeing the market value as \$370,000. We know that a household with \$85,000 a year cannot afford that. We are estimating a mortgage of around \$240,000. The buyer will get a mortgage they can afford, a My Home Loan from the county (up to about \$20,000), and the balance will be contributed to the buyer as a seller subsidy. The source of funds that the team has from the county will allow it to leave some funds in the project.

Urban Green, LLC Presentation

Mark James, Founder and President

Mr. James has twenty years of working with affordable housing and was not satisfied with the housing for Low-income families. They were described as affordable but were not, as healthy but were not, and as energy efficient but in reality had the basics. In order to really produce a green and affordable house that is going to be replicable, he realized he needed to pull together a team that not only recognizes there is a mission behind the work they are doing but can also meet the goals that the county has set in a way that can be replicated by any small average developer in the region or homebuyer that wants to build themselves a nice house.

Urban Green

Urban Green is in its 3rd year of development. Before RFP's for net-zero were ever issued, Urban Green had started doing district energy systems. With its technology, the company can take a one or two block radius and pull together enough energy generation within that block to support the energy and heating needs of housing, businesses and the like in that area. They are doing it now in a 64-unit deal in Southeast D.C. called the Tobias Apartments; and a 52-unit deal in Baltimore where they are using fuel cells to do a cogeneration project that will be Net Zero energy for the apartment building.

Urban Coves (Project Team)

- *Urban Green*

- *Setty Associates*

Urban Green has worked Setty Associates (MEP Engineers) on five projects. The company is based in D.C. and works throughout Maryland, Virginia and abroad. It specializes in renewable energy and onsite generation, in particular, creating a thermal envelope that is affordable for low-income family.

- *Amy Gardner (University of Maryland School of Architecture)*

- *Lilker-EMO (Energy Model)*

- *UCAP (Non-Profit Partner)*

- *Nationwide Homes (Modular Provider)*

The houses are being built at \$106/ sq ft. They are building this house so they can put out a bid to a local general contractor who can do the site work, build the foundation, and leave the finishes on the home but allow property cost to be lower than the cost of building an average house without the need for additional subsidies for low-income families

- *EDGE Energy (Solar Install)*

The team will provide a 6 kw solar ray on the roof the building. The cost will not be passed on to the buyer. Urban Green has the financing and equity to buy that system and then do a lease arrangement with the low-income home buyers so they can buy it down the road and not have to add that additional cost to the home.

- *VNV Development (Project Management)*

The team will bid the project out to guarantee affordability. The bonus points from the county will be given to the selected contractor.

Urban Coves Team Goals: The two main goals are Net zero performance and affordability.

Next- Generation Home

- Ductless mini-split system
- Ventilation-75 cubic ft./min. (cfm)- Double the LEED standard
- Uses 50% less water

- Zero stormwater runoff (< 1.8 “rainfall”)
- Healthy Housing Standard
- High Indoor air-quality (flooring, no formaldehyde)

On- Site Energy Generation

- 6 kW rooftop solar array
- Solar install cost not added to home
- Solar lease option for homebuyer
- Lease rate 25% below grid rate
- Option to purchase anytime

LEED Platinum Home

- Super insulated thermal envelope
- 34 HERS rating (Pre-Active System)
- 0-1 HERS Rating (w/ Active System)
- High Passive Solar Benefit
- Instant Gas Water Heater
- Energy Star Home
- Energy Star Rated Appliances

Modular Home

- Off-the- shelf (core designs)
- Scalable square footage
- slab-on-grade construction
- Unit arrives 90% complete
- Use local contractors for connections
- On-site finishes

The site layout includes the preservation of the tree canopy, a wrap-around porch, an urban garden, 2-car parking pad w/ porous pavement, and bio-retention areas. The house will be built for under \$320,000. With subsidies, a family can get it for under \$250,000.

The Redevelopment Authority plans to make a decision on this project by October 2014 and then start negotiating terms with the selected developer. Hopefully, an agreement will be executed before the end of this year so that construction will commence at the end of next year.

WSSC

There is a web-based interactive tool called “WSSC in your neighborhood”, which allows residents to put in their address and find out if there is a water or sewer rehabilitation happening in their area and what the dates are for construction. There is another tool called “Agency Project Coordination” that WSSC is hoping the City will join in the future to know about the City’s road enhancement resurfacing projects that are happening. This tool provides real-time communication among County and Utilities on planned construction projects in County Rights-of- Way and prevents unnecessary pavement cuts.

Background

WSSC provides water and sewer to approximately two million people in Prince George’s and Montgomery County. It maintains 5,400 miles of sewer lines and 5, 500 miles of water lines. Typically,

WSSC projects in the public right-of-way, whether it is water or sewer rehabilitation, will have to go through the City and the County for coordination and permitting.

The representative discusses the processes that are undertaken for certain rehabilitation projects and what nearby residents can expect for the project. There will be a lot of work going on in Mount Rainier. In the next five to six years, the majority of the mains in Mount Rainier will be replaced.

29th Street Traffic Calming Petition Request

The request is for the 4000 block, 4100 block and the 4200 block of 29th Street. 60% of each block must participate in the request. The percentage of resident participation from each block is as follows: 85% of 4000 block, 72% of the 4100 block, and 63% of the 4200 block.

Presenting the request are Shenedell Sampson from 4100 29th Street and Marian Paige from 4100 29th Street.

Mr. Paige speaks on the issue. There are a lot of kids that play on the block and run up and down the street. At any given hour you will see cars speeding up and down the street.

Mr. Sampson mentions that another concern came from an accident that occurred a few months prior where a Mount Rainier resident sped through, skipped through a couple of stop signs and hit another car.

Jack Baker 29th Street came for the Review Overlay but wanted to express his support for the 29th Street Traffic Calming Petition Request.

Councilman Tarlau suggests that this issue be brought up at a public hearing.

Mayor Miles discusses the difference between humps and bumps in cost and effectiveness. She also suggests that traffic calming devices such as bumps be placed at stop signs because people are also speeding through stop signs.

Jack Baker: From a professional point of view... I have had a bit of experience, professionally, with speed humps and bumps, and I will say one of the reasons people prefer the humps over the bumps is because you can go a lot faster over the humps than you can the bumps. Bumps are much more jarring and they tend to slow people down more. They are also cheaper. So despite the fact that I do not like going over them, I would still love to see a whole bunch of speed bumps all over my road rather than humps.

Therese: Don't speed bumps have to be removed during the winter for the snow plows? They break. I have seen them break.

Mayor Miles: They don't necessarily need to be removed but because the snow plaque tends to go under them, they sometimes get pushed up and then we have to put them back. They break and crack. They are \$99 and they get a lot of traffic. We have not had to buy very many of them since we started.

Joseph Chicuto 29th Street resident and Green Team member: Thank you to the counsel for having on a previous occasion, considered the fact that bicycles do have to travel over these; and having put gaps in some of the other ones. I hope that consideration is given if this petition is accepted.

Tree Trimming

Tammy Watkins, Pepco Representative

Pepco apologizes for the erroneous tree removals in the City of Mount Rainier. They have stopped work on the public tree removals in Mount Rainier at this time; and asks that the City Council and Manager provide Pepco with a regular contact person during office hours.

Mayor Miles communicates that the Public Works Director, Tree Commission, and City Arborist are available to speak with. She also expresses that the city is very upset that three trees were cut down that did not need to be.

Pepco will work with Mr. Knedler, the City Arborist, to select the appropriate trees to replace the three that were removed. Moving forward, the representative stated that there are some trees on private property that need to be trimmed or removed to be in compliance of RM43 standards. Pepco cannot remove a tree from private property until permission is secured from the homeowner. In this instance, the Mount Rainier City Ordinance regarding trees had requirements for tree removals on private property. Pepco had concerns about a situation arising where residents were having to go through the process to secure permit removals for work that was essentially required of Pepco to perform. Pepco worked with the City Manager and Tree Commission to come up with a plan to address this issue.

Ms. Wallace, the City Manager, discusses the tree removal process and the finances that are involved.

The Mayor communicates that she was not aware of the Pepco process. The city would like to receive a list of trees that need to have work done. If this had happened earlier, the trees would not have erroneously occurred.

The Mount Rainier City Tree Arborist and former councilman Knedler, informs the Council that Pepco's work in compliance with state laws preempts any City ordinance according to the city attorney.

The City Manager, Ms. Wallace, clarified for the council where the error came from. She states that Pepco provided the City and Tree Commission with two lists of trees to be cut down. Originally, the list had eighteen trees and was narrowed down to fifteen. Pepco and the tree commission walked around the city to look at these trees individually. The erroneous cutting down of three trees came from the subcontractor cutting down the wrong trees.

Mayor Miles admits that she did not see the list.

Mr. Knedler explains that Pepco would like to continue with the public tree work that has already been agreed upon. He suggests that the Mayor or Councilman Christopherson meet with them during office hours to discuss the next steps.

Pepco will not be removing the stumps of the trees that were cut. The Maryland Public Service Commission has determined that the removal of stumps is not a part of improving reliability of electric service. So Pepco does not take out the stumps because it is not a part of its rate recovery process. Tree replanting will occur in an alternative location.

Councilman Bolin: The four trees that will be cut down correctly are being removed as part of your reliability program, you can leave those stumps. The three trees you were not supposed to cut down, that is not part of your reliability program. That is an accident and you owe us compensation for that. Also, there are no wires on that side of the street. I understand addresses can get mixed up but if the goal is to cut the branches out the wires, how does that mistake happen.

Mr. Knedler: The city is being offered nine vouchers with \$200 in value for the three trees that were cut. The private property tree owners, whose trees were cut down, will be given vouchers to buy a tree if they

want them. If the private property owner does not want to use the voucher, the city will be able to use the voucher.

Ms. Watkins will report back to the Mayor and Council about how long the poll braces will remain and about the process for replacing the street lights.

Adjourned at 9:20pm