



TOWN OF

KENSINGTON

JANUARY 2002
JOURNAL

January 28th, 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting Agenda

Variance Request for 10519 St. Paul Street

Kevin Nowak, State Highway Administration – Progress of Metropolitan Avenue

Meeting Schedule

February 4, 7:00 p.m. Work Session

February 25, 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting

Community Forum

Coming Together After September 11

February 5, 7:30 p.m. – Kensington Town Hall/Community Center

The County is having several forums, which include topics on emergency planning, family/individual preparedness, bio-terrorism information, economic impact, and community unity. Please note that the location of the February 5th forum has been changed from the Crossway Community Center to Town Hall.

For more information and other dates/locations, please call (240) 777-2500.

Contact us at 3710 Mitchell Street, Kensington, MD 20895

Phone: 301-949-2424; Fax: 301-949-4925;

E-mail: mayor.council@tok.org; Web Site: www.tok.org

Mark Your Calendars

**The Town office will be closed on the following dates:
January 21 and February 18**

There will be no trash pick up on January 21 or February 18.
Thank you for your cooperation.

Be Alert for Suspicious Vehicles/People

Please be alert and report anything that looks suspicious to your local police department. A robber was apprehended due to an alert resident noting the tag number of a suspicious vehicle in Town. Also, a hit and run driver of a parked car was found due to another alert resident noting the tag number of the vehicle.

2002 Calendars

If you would like to purchase a Kensington Historical Society Calendar they are available at the Town Office for \$6.00.

Thank you to the Historical Society for the 2002 calendar donated to the Town.

Snow

In case of a winter storm, please park vehicles in driveways when possible or park on the even side of the street on even dates and the odd side on odd dates. Remember to clear the walkway in front of your property within 24 hours after a storm. *This is a Town Ordinance.*

The Town does not advise putting salt on the new concrete driveway aprons, please consider alternative methods such as sand, liquid calcium chloride or nonabsorbent kitty litter.

Volunteers Needed

If you are interested in working on the Memorial Day rededication of Ernest Memorial Park please contact the Town office.

Olympic Torchbearer

Congratulations to Tim Strachan, a Town resident who had the honor of being an Olympic Torchbearer representing Kensington.

Scholarships Available

Two \$1,500 college scholarships will be awarded again this year to Montgomery County high school and/or college students with at least average grades who are involved in community service and who plan a career in government or public service. Preference will be given to residents who live in a municipality or special taxing district.

The scholarships are being offered by the Montgomery Chapter of Maryland Municipal League.

Application blanks and announcements are available at the Town office, at the Montgomery College Office of Financial Aid and from high school counselors. Completed applications with attachments must be sent in by April 8, 2002.

Reminders

Be courteous to your neighbors, quiet hours are in effect weekdays 9 p.m. – 7 a.m. and weekends/holidays 9 p.m. – 9 a.m.

Please keep shrubs and trees trimmed so they don't overhang on public sidewalks.

Pick up after your pet, it's the law.

Do not put waste/recycling containers curbside until the evening before pick-up. Remove waste/recycling containers from curbside after pick-up.

Mixed paper recycling items must be placed in a paper bag curbside by 7 a.m. each Wednesday.

Building Permits

Addition at 10519 St. Paul Street

Mayor's Report

- The Mayor, with staff from Maryland Municipal League, gave a newly elected briefing to Mayor Larry Gianmo of Rockville and the Rockville City Council this month.
- Montgomery County held a reopening ceremony on December 15 for the Stoney Brook Drive Bridge. The Mayor attended on behalf of the Town.
- The Mayor has been actively pursuing Montgomery County and State Highway for support in implementation of the ideas and suggestions of the Kensington Concept Plan which was put together for us by Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Montgomery County has put us on the list for improvements to Summit Avenue between Knowles and Howard Avenue. The State Highway Administration has started designs for Knowles Avenue between Connecticut and Summit and they are going to work on ideas for traffic congestion relief on Connecticut Avenue.
- The Mayor attended the Festival of Lights at the Mormon Temple on behalf of the Town. As always the event was well attended and a nice way to start the Holiday Season.

- County Council President Steve Silverman held a meeting at HOC to discuss the possibilities of reuse of the gym and possible long-term use of the building as a recreation center. This was a small meeting with the citizens who would be most impacted by changes to the HOC site. The Town will be notified when any more information is available. At that time, we will hold a Town meeting to discuss pros and cons and receive input from residents. The Mayor and several Council Members attended this meeting.
- The Mayor attended a reception at Arden Courts on Knowles Avenue. This is to be an Alzheimer's residence. The Mayor presented a proclamation and welcomed them to Kensington.
- The Mayor attended a National League of Cities Conference in Atlanta, Georgia on behalf of the Maryland Municipal League. The conference was well attended by elected officials from all over the nation. The workshops were good and the chance to exchange information with other municipal officials was beneficial to all that attended. A mobile workshop to visit the City of Decatur about 6 miles from Atlanta was also attended. The City has approximately 18,000 residents and is under smart growth rehabilitation. They are promoting pedestrian friendly and mixed-use development. It was impressive to see how they are combining residential condominiums next to and over the commercial businesses.

The Smart Growth principals are mixed-use development, alternative transportation and enhancement to pedestrian activity.

- The Mayor and Town Council wish all of our residents and businesses a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Council Member Bruch's Report

On November 28th I attended a meeting at the HOC Building on Detrick Avenue. The meeting was hosted by County Council President Steve Silverman and the purpose was to discuss possible short-term changes at the property, most notably the opening of the gymnasium for public use. Long-term (3-5yr.) changes were also discussed which included the possibility of converting the building into a regional community center after HOC vacates. The Town needs to obtain additional information concerning these possible changes, hold a public meeting, and officially weigh-in on the short and long term uses.

On December 12th Council Member Cowan and I attended a meeting with Kensington Parkwood Elementary PTA leadership and Senator Chris Van Hollen and Delegate Sharon Grosfeld to discuss deferral of the KP modernization.

I'm pleased to report that the County has identified funding to pay over 90% of our Armory ADA Restroom Project renovation costs. Many of the restroom facilities in the Armory building are original and none are wheelchair accessible. We thank Executive

Duncan for providing assistance on this important project so all citizens can enjoy our facility. The project involves the total renovation of the main level restrooms that serve the Drill Hall. I expect the work to begin in January '02 and be completed in March '02.

Council Member Cowan's Report

Even a casual observer would agree that Kensington suffers from a series of problems associated with automobile traffic. Along with the visual, aural and air quality blight of automotive congestion we also contend with speeding, disregard for traffic signals and other violations that contribute to a serious public safety concern.

Kensington is not in a position to teach driving skills that are so often obviously lacking. Nor can we depend on (although it would be nice to expect) civil behavior from everyone who uses our streets. We can, however, implement enforcement programs designed to reduce traffic violations through increased police activity.

In the next months, working with the traffic committee, we will investigate various courses of action to rein in unlawful driving. This is likely to take the form of a part-time police presence on a continuing and consistent basis. This plan will be designed to impact every street in Kensington across the categories of traffic violations.

The traffic committee agrees that we will have conversations both formal and informal with everyone likely to be affected by these actions foremost being residents but also including the business community, commercial property owners, Montgomery County Police, Fire and Rescue and school officials.

As part of this outreach effort we will hold several quasi-formal public discussions and invite comment from everyone who would like to add to our deliberations. Meanwhile, if you have immediate suggestions, please give me a call at 301-933-9599 or e-mail me at gcowan@opiniondynamics.com

Council Member Pfautz's Report

Attended meeting at the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) building with County Council President Steve Silverman, Mayor Raufaste, Council Member Scharman, Council Member Bruch and other community representatives to discuss the future of the HOC gym and building.

Attended Board of Appeals hearing on driveway and parking pad at 3802 Washington Street.

Attended KBDA breakfast meeting. State Senator Chris Van Hollen was the speaker.

Attended traffic committee meeting to discuss additional enforcement and a potential traffic survey in Town.

Council Member Scharman's Report

Attended the quarterly breakfast meeting of the Kensington Business District Association. Senator Chris Van Hollen was the guest speaker.

Attended the Diversity Celebration Ceremony at Grace Episcopal Day School and met with the principal and school staff at a reception after the ceremony. The students led the ceremony with Kensington citizens, business owners, and clergy participating.

Toured St. Paul Park with Mark Joel to review plans for repairing the basketball court and oval track, replacing wooden fence posts, and other upgrades to the park.

Prepared revisions to the application submitted to the State's Community Parks and Playgrounds Program for reconsideration of the project to renovate the cabin at Kensington Cabin Park. The Town was selected to receive grant funds for the Clum-Kennedy Gardens project in the first round of grant awards.

Public Works Progress Report for December

As you are aware, each Monday and Friday are pretty much dedicated to trash and brush removal. The crew worked through December 12th on leaf collection as we received our new equipment late. The new equipment works much faster than the old equipment so leaves had to be stockpiled on North Kensington Parkway, which have been hauled to the land fill. On December 15th we started getting the snow equipment ready which included removing the leaf boxes from the dump trucks, pressure cleaning the trucks, installing salt spreaders, hooking up plows, lubricating everything, and replacing worn hoses. This process takes seven to ten days to complete. In addition to the above work, the street paving was completed along with street striping, street sign maintenance, and two days were spent on pot hole repairs on several streets.

Please keep in mind that the Town crew works Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will try to accommodate your work order requests in a timely manner. To report a problem please call public works at (301) 949-2424. Thank you for your patience.

Charles M. Joel, Public Works Director

Town Meeting

December 17, 2001

Mayor Raufaste called the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with Council Members Bruch, Cowan, Pfautz, Scharman, Director of Public Works Joel, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A Moment of Silence was observed for September 11th.

The Mayor and Council presented monthly reports.

Residents discussed the following issues with the Mayor and Council:

HOC gymnasium; The Mayor stated that she was waiting to hear back from County Council President Steve Silverman regarding the results/minutes of the meeting that was held at the end of November. The Mayor and Council stated that once they receive enough information a Town meeting would be held regarding the future uses of HOC.

Delays at the Connecticut Avenue and Washington Street pedestrian signal; The Mayor and Council informed residents that a letter was sent in May to the State Highway Administration and that a follow up letter had recently been sent. The letter requested that the signal timing be changed so the light turns red more quickly for pedestrians.

No Left Turn sign at Washington Street and Connecticut Avenue; the Town's correspondence will be researched to determine if school buses were exempted from the restriction.

Public Works Director Joel informed residents that all crosswalks would be re-stripped.

The Mayor informed residents that because of misinformation in the press concerning the holiday tree lighting, the tapes/transcripts of the October 29th meeting would be available to the public.

Council Actions

Council Member Bruch moved to approve the minutes of the November 26 Town Meeting and the December 3 Work Session as circulated. It was seconded by Council Member Pfautz and passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz introduced resolution number 2001-02 to adopt Montgomery County Code, Chapter 40, Real Property, Section 40-12A that requires disclosures of historic designation at time of sale.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Work Session of Mayor & Council

January 7, 2002

The work session commenced at 7:05 p.m., Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Bruch, Cowan, Pfautz and Scharman, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present and the following issues were addressed:

Matthew O'Malley was present and discussed setting up a mailing list that residents could subscribe to on our web site to receive Town announcements by e-mail. The Council decided to move forward with this but require anyone subscribing to provide his or her address. This would allow the Town to determine the extent of use by residents vs. non-residents. A list of street address ranges will be added to the web site so a user can

easily determine if they are a Town resident. The *contact TOK* will be changed to *contact us* on the web site. Redesigning the web site was also discussed. The Council concurred that before considering redesigning the web site other municipal and chamber of commerce web sites need to be explored along with determining the purposes of our web site.

The employee manual was reviewed and corrected. The revised draft will be sent to the Town lawyer for review.

The project list was reviewed and updated.

Council Member Bruch suggested that an electrical contractor be engaged for relamping the new street lights on Howard Avenue rather than Town employees.

Council Member Pfautz presented recommendations for charter revisions from the Charter Review Committee. Council Member Cowan had objections to the length of residency required for Council Members in Section 403, Qualifications of Council Members. The changes will be published and presented to the Town before voting on them.

The Mayor will contact State Highway Administration concerning the left restriction at Washington Street/Connecticut Avenue to request that school buses be exempted.

Council Member Cowan stated that the Traffic Committee met and there was interest in intermittent long-term traffic enforcement by off duty police officers. The Council concurred that this should be pursued but more research needs to be done.

Council Member Pfautz informed the Council that the County bill limiting pavement in front yards is being written to apply only to special exceptions. The Mayor stated that we would probably need to adopt our own ordinance to accomplish limiting impervious surfaces in the non-historic district.

Traffic committee update, Plyers Mill sidewalk, and impervious areas were added to the project list.

Council Member Bruch moved to approve the two contracts; Airtight Windows in the amount of \$133,873.00 for armory window restorations and Heidenberger Construction in the amount of \$82,365.44 for ADA restroom alterations as delineated in a memorandum. Council Member Cowan seconded it and it passed unanimously with the Mayor concurring.

Monthly correspondence was reviewed.

The Council concurred that in response to a request received for a variance the applicant needs to either assert that 10 feet will be maintained or request a specific measurement.

Council Member Pfautz obtained information on policies from other municipalities on replacing brick sidewalks in historic districts. The Mayor suggested that when the Town

is replacing brick in the historic district it should be replaced by brick however per revised standards suggested by Council Member Bruch. Council Member Bruch informed the Council that he would document how this could be handled in the future for Council approval. It was also established that in the future the Town would need an historic area work permit for alternations in the public right of way including tree removals.

Mayor and Council accepted an offer from a family to donate \$200 for replacing plants in the flowerbed at Ernest Park and providing maintenance of plants for one year.

The minutes from the December 17 Town Meeting were reviewed.

Council Member Pfautz introduced the resolution supporting the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Neighborhood Business Development Program financing to the Jubilee Association of Maryland which will be voted on at the next meeting.

Council concurred that the Town's elected officials could sign up for dental insurance under the Town's plan provided they paid 100% of premium costs.

More information will be obtained about a chess group's request for use of the armory and a resume/letter received from an event planner.

Council withheld opinion on a historic work permit for a deck pending comment by the LAP.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.