

**GWCA Development Committee  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
3/19/18**

**ATTENDEES**

**Committee Members:** Adam Kutcher (co-chair), Brian Levy, Dave Thack, Lauren Kelly-Washington, Lou Linden, Lowell Larsson, Monika Graves, Patricia Denver, Sela Thack,

**Committee Partners:** Ashley Wallace (Central Baltimore Partnership), Cat Willis (Hidden Harvest Farm), Charlie Duff (Jubilee Baltimore), Peter Duvall (Strong City Baltimore), Robert Stokes (Baltimore City Council)

**Community Guests:** Asiah Sanders, Carter Richardson, Cornell Morrison, Dominique Hellgeth, John Anane-Sefah, Kim Schulke, Kisha Webster, Michael Hart, Tim Ford,

**Presenters:** Inspector Norris Turnipseed (Baltimore City Code Enforcement), Patrick McMahon (Maryland Department of Transportation), Holly Arnold (Maryland Department of Transportation)

**Location:** OpenWorks, 1400 Greenmount Ave.

**AGENDA**

- 1. Bi-annual Code Enforcement Priorities** (Senior Inspector Norris Turnipseed, Baltimore DHCD)
  - a. Community support for upcoming receivership hearing on 319 E. Lafayette
  - b. Inquiries regarding construction-related house fire at 418 E. Lanvale (3/5/2018)
- 2. North Avenue Rising Feedback Session:** (MTA Representatives)
  - a. Community feedback on plans shown at community meeting for Greenmount/North intersection, North Avenue streetscape changes, pedestrian safety improvements
- 3. Sub-Committee Updates**
  - a. Legacy residents Initiatives (Charlie Duff in Jessie Nedrow's absence)
  - b. Green space Initiatives (Brian Levy)
    - Update on Spruce-Up grant
    - Garden Plot Requests (Adam Kutcher, Sela Thack)
  - c. Parking (Jason Hill absent)
  - d. DevCom Authorities (Shea Frederick absent)
  - e. Update on MOU draft for 231 E. North Ave (Adam Kutcher)

**Bi-annual Code Enforcement Priorities:**

Despite suffering from laryngitis, Inspector Norris Turnipseed, discussed current code violations and the progress that has been made in Greenmount West over the past decade. He specifically discussed the following:

- Inspector Turnipseed noted that there are fewer Code Enforcement resources in GMW due to decrease in vacant properties over the past 5 years, which is a good thing. He encourages the community to continue to use the 311 app to notify his department
- Chair noted that we call the code enforcement office when there is a time-sensitive manner and have seen fast (same day) turnaround of inspectors when requested

**319 E. Lafayette:** Has been a problem property for some time with the front wall ready to collapse posing risk to neighbor. He recommended close and coordinated action with the State's Attorney (Eileen Murphy), which GMW Community Association is pursuing.

- Peter Duvall inquired about getting a building inspector inside the building prior to their court date (28-March-2018). Inspector Turnipseed noted that inspection would be conducted by a different department (building inspections), but he can pass the request on.

**418 E. Lanvale:** This property was the subject of a fire a month ago - it hasn't passed its inspections. Inspector Turnipseed sent owner a letter and hasn't received a response. Community noted that the

developer may not be a registered business in Maryland (they are from New Jersey). He has not responded to inquiries from the neighbor or their insurance company. Turnipseed recommends increased pressure from Greenmount West Community. The insurance company will soon take over.

- Inspector Turnipseed emphasized that it is up to the community and the State's Attorney office to set deadlines for the completion of code work.
- There will be back channel discussions about building inspection work on this house and other properties being worked on by these builders to receive exacting inspection of their work.

**306 & 308 E. Lanvale:** Cited for trash due to illegal dumping. Lou Linden will contact Thomas Waugh Chief of Special Investigation Unit (410-396-1536), thomas.waugh@baltimorecity.gov.

### **North Avenue Rising Feedback Session:**

**Background:** North Avenue Rising is a \$27.3M project jointly funded through a \$10M TIGER grant (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), \$14.7M from the MD Dept. of Transportation (MDOT), \$1.6M from the Federal Highway Administration, and \$1M from the Baltimore City Dept. of Transportation.

The North Avenue Rising project is promoted as supporting economic revitalization along the length of the North Avenue corridor through 30 neighborhoods. Proposed changes include improved sidewalks and bus shelters, bike share stations, pedestrian count-down signals, and dedicated bus/bike lane.

The most pressing concern for the Greenmount West community is the conversion of the curb lane to a dedicated bus lane. To accommodate this, the plan requires the elimination of 80 parking spaces along East North Avenue between North Charles Street and Greenmount Avenue.

**MDOT:** Two MTA Representatives opened the discussion on the North Avenue Rising project with an overview of the plan and then responded to questions posed by community members.

### **Community Responses:**

**Excerpts from Lowell Larsson's February 2018 communications are included.**

*"In a departure from what was done downtown in which the dedicated lane was painted red, on North Ave the plan is to repave the curb lane with red asphalt. The justification for doing this is that the long-term cost will be less since it won't need to be repainted. It also means that the decision to use the lane will probably be permanent...With 90 feet curb-to-curb there is sufficient room for parking and a dedicated bus lane. To fully utilize the 90 feet will require more funding for a second phase. The current phase, with its plans for red asphalt will lock in place a poorly conceived design...By using the curb lane for buses/bikes there will be two lanes for through traffic. MTA has not justified the need for this since there will be just a single lane for thru traffic on North Avenue east of Homewood Ave."*

- Red tinted asphalt was specifically called out as a test technology for the TIGER grant, as it embeds the pigment in the asphalt when it is laid, helping decrease installation time and increase the longevity of the pigment

### **Parking:**

(Adam K.) The current state of parking in Greenmount West does not accurately reflect changes that are rapidly occurring - there are over 100 new dwelling units coming online in GMW the next few years within a block of North Avenue. The Community is attempting to address parking issues through a Residential Parking Permit program, but the loss of 60 parking spaces will undermine those efforts.

- (MDOT) Looking into alternatives for parking crisis. Cited lack of funding.

### **Dedicated bus lane:**

(Brian L.) The proposed traffic lane reduction is insane; inset curb parking is critical. With 11.6M Federal funds and 14.7M from Maryland State, why is Baltimore City contributing only \$1M??

(MDOT) What are some options? Peak hour parking restrictions?

- Community was open to peak bus lane travel

- MTA said that parkers don't generally leave the parking lanes by start of restricted hours, and cars parked in the lane decrease the utility of the bus corridor
- Dedicated bus corridor decreases travel time by ~1 minute per mile

(Charlie D.) Put that section of corridor on hold; pass on the project for our community—it is bad for us. Improvement of commuter experience at major loss to the community doesn't make sense.

- (MDOT) Any hold will cause loss of federal funding and then state funding.

(Adam K.) Is it possible to use the median strip (for bus lane)?

- (MDOT) Analysis doesn't support, too expensive. Will reexamine data, numbers are being recalculated. Will return in 2 weeks & meet with CBP & City officials.
- Committee noted that center lanes currently feature turning lanes and slip lanes - if whole roadway was re-imagined, this could provide room for center-running
- MTA was concerned about pedestrian safety by center-running bus lanes, requiring bus customers to cross traffic to get to bus stops

### **Committee Updates:**

**Legacy:** (Charlie D.) In Jessie Nedrow's absence, Charlie spoke about the Homeowner's Workshop held at the GW Community Center that was sponsored by Jubilee Baltimore. Although attendance was low, they will continue to hold such events and reach out to the Legacy residents.

**Green Spaces:** (Brian L.) Brian presented an overview of the efforts to apply for a Spruce-Up grant and the idea of establishing a Green Space Committee for Greenmount West.

**Parking:** (Patricia D.) The Parking team has been on a hiatus. Although they didn't receive as many completed surveys as desired, half of the surveys supported the reduction of street sweeping by 50%.

### **New Contacts:**

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