City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2023

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Monday, April 3, 2023, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu called the meeting to order at 8:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu, Councilmembers Esteve, Gardner (arrived 8:05 p.m., left 8:15 p.m.), Hawkins, Truesdale and Woolfley, City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Attorney Levan, City Clerk Hernandez, and Staff.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. Andrew Colevas, Elder Oaks Blvd. – He is owner of vacant property on Elder Oaks and spoke in regard to working with Council for ideas of development of property.
2. Christopher Loffredo, Shelter Ln – Spoke in support of the native plants planting around the stormwater pond on Midwood Lane.
3. John Teasdale, Midwood Ln – Spoke in support of the native plants planting around the stormwater pond on Midwood Lane. (Comment attached)

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Gardner announced that he will be hosting a town hall meeting to discuss the opening of the Half Note Lounge in the Marketplace Shopping Center. The owners will be present to answer any questions residents may have. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 5th at 7:00p.m. at Kenhill Center.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manger Lott reported that staff is finalizing the FY24 Budget to present to Council next week.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilmember Woolfley made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items: A) Approval of February 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes; B) Approval of Proclamation P-4-23 Proclaiming April 22, 2023 as Earth Day in Bowie; C) Adoption of Resolution R-22-23 Awarding a Contract for Retaining Wall Removal and Grading Services at 12006 Towanda Lane; D) Adoption of Resolution R-24-23 Accepting Bid

Proposal for Maintenance of Roadside Drainage Swales. Councilmember Hawkins seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0 (Gardner not present).

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Environmental Advisory Committee Priorities - Chair Abby Snyder presented a pilot program to improve the landscaping at the stormwater pond retrofit site at Midwood Lane. It consists of planting native plants that are being donated as well as wood chips for ground cover. A volunteer base from the Green Team, EAC, scout troops and school Green Teams will do the planting. This pilot program will be of no cost to the City. Mr. Elmer Dengler, member of the EAC is currently growing the native plants and is an integral member in this project.

Councilmember Esteve thanked Ms. Snyder and the committee for their initiative is organizing this pilot program and is very excited to see the outcome.

Councilmember Woolfley thanked the committee and would like to see this program implemented at all stormwater ponds in the City.

Councilmember Truesdale asked how many years they foresee in this project to see final results. Mr. Elmer Dengler responded that in the initial plantings you can see results right away but as far as shrubs and tree plantings, you are looking at 3 to 5 years.

Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu thanked the committee and asked how we can engage kids to get involved in this program to learn about sustainability. Mr. Dengler responded that they are working with Boy Scout Troops that will help in the plantings. Ms. Snyder will work with the gymnasium to recruit kids.

Council concurred for the EAC to continue with implementing this pilot program.

B. Tanglewood Property Master Plan Presentation – Ms. Lynette Pinhey of Human & Rhode, Inc. presented three schematic plans for Council to review and consider. Staff held two stakeholders meeting to receive input from residents on how the site is to be used. Stakeholders input consisted of retaining primary entrance at Zug Road; provide minimal/limited gravel parking; prohibit motorized vehicles, dirt bikes and ATV's; add property identification sign/kiosk on Zug Road; provide trash cans and pet waste stations at entrances and provide additional cleanup and maintenance for the trails. Staff's input consisted of minimizing environmental impacts; consider ADA access and parking; consider wider trails for emergency and maintenance access; reduce number of trails and develop a maintenance and monitoring partnership. The schematic plans range in price from $65,000 to $230,000. More stakeholders selected Plan "A" although Plan "B" was a strong contender. Since the majority of stakeholders selected Plan "A", this is the option that is included in the Draft Master Plan presented this evening. A final master plan will be presented to Council for adoption in May.

Public Hearing:

City Clerk Hernandez stated that four comments were received via email and are attached for the record.

1. Ken McCaughey, Chalford Ln – Spoke in support of the proposed master plan for the Tanglewood property.

Since there was no one signed up to speak, Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu declared the Public Hearing to have been held.

Councilmember Esteve thanked Ms. Pinhey and staff for the presentation and look forward to seeing the final plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Ndebumadu thanked Ms. Pinhey for her presentation.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Esteve motioned to adjourn the Regular City Council meeting. Councilmember Woolfley seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk

April 3, 2023

Agenda Item XII.A. Improved landscaping and aesthetics at Levitt stormwater pond retrofit sites.

My name is John Teasdale and I am a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee and, as such, have a stake in the presentation you are about to hear. But tonight, I am speaking as a resident of Midwood Lane who lives only one block from the Midwood Lane stormwater management pond, the subject of tonight's presentation.

As you know, during the renovation of the Midwood Lane stormwater pond and, subsequently, of other ponds in the City, all trees were removed from these sites to permit requisite grading and upgrades to meet current stormwater standards. This left a very barren landscape where once there had been a thriving urban tree canopy. Unfortunately, these sites have been left with the barren, institutional appearance of an open pit surrounded by a chain link fence. This does a disservice to the City in several ways.

First, it is a disservice to residents who live in these neighborhoods. The tree canopy of a City is known to enhance property values. Removal of these trees without a revegetation plan reduces the beauty and potential property value of these neighborhoods.

Second, the City misses an opportunity to provide important ecological services for our urban ecosystem. These spaces represent an opportunity for creating a mixed canopy of trees, woody shrubs, and herbaceous plants that would provide sustenance and habitat for local food webs consisting of a diverse array of species dependent on this vegetation as the base of the food chain. Recall that the viability and resilience of our natural ecosystems are dependent on maintaining sufficient diversity at all trophic levels to support life on this planet.

Third, the City Climate Action Plan calls for enhancing the urban tree canopy in the City. Trees absorb carbon from the atmosphere and, therefore, play an important role in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. Thus, anytime trees are lost from the City, it is important to replant. These stormwater sites need to have a mature tree canopy re-established to compensate for what has been lost.

Speaking of climate change, let me return to the original function of these ponds. As climate change accelerates, storms are expected to become more intense with greater volumes of rainfall. This will require state-of-the art stormwater infrastructure to handle increased water flux throughout the City. So, I recognize the importance of these stormwater ponds to meet all guidelines designated by federal and state mandates to serve their intended function of managing stormwater. I want to be clear that I understand that the intended function of these ponds is to manage stormwater and that this function is an important component of developing resilience to the potential impacts of climate change. But, it should be possible to meet these stormwater guidelines while also upgrading the landscaping of these facilities to enhance ecological services and beautify local neighborhoods. I encourage Council to facilitate management solutions to achieve both the stormwater and the ecological benefits that these facilities can provide.

Thank you,

John Teasdale, Resident
Midwood Lane

Awilda Hernandez

From: Susan Dyer <sldyer1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2023 10:41 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Comments on the Tanglewood Master Plan

Hello Awilda,

I'd like the following to be attached to the minutes
of the City Council meeting.

Thank you,
Susan L. Dyer

I am not attending the City Council due to ongoing covid concerns. I just had it and don't want a repeat illness. However, I am quite interested in keeping Tanglewood very much as as it is now.

I really like the Master Plan and hope you will support it as written. If some items need to be nixed due to budget concerns I understand that.

What I most care about is the parking arrangement on Zug Road. Two of the options had a table inside the park. As a solo female walker I don't want to see that. I'm concerned it could become a party HQ and I wouldn't want to walk by that to get into the park, or be picking up their trash on a daily basis. Northridge had to remove all their tables due to littering, drinking and smoking. I often walk in the park, alone, around and after sunset and wouldn't want to run into a bunch of drunk guys.

Another serious concern for me is the idea to make Tanglewood ADA compliant. I think that is a great idea for another place than Tanglewood. It's a wild and hilly place; there have to be better options, possibly expand ADA features at Allan's Pond, Whitemarsh, Acorn Hill, 10th Street Park or Jericho Park Heritage Trail. As a Bowie taxpayer I think those other sites would be significantly more cost effective.

Sincerely,
Susan L Dyer

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Awilda Hernandez

From: blussier7@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2023 11:08 PM
To: cityclerk
Cc: Matt Reno
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Testimony for the 3 Apr City Counsel Meeting
Attachments: FoT Endorsement of Tanglewood Master Plan.docx

The Friends of Tanglewood respectfully submit the attached testimony for tonight's City Counsel meeting.

Sincerely,
Bill Lussier
Friends of Tanglewood organizer

Date: 3 April 2023

From: Friends of Tanglewood

Subj: Endorsement of Tanglewood Master Plan

The Friend of Tanglewood respectfully endorse the proposed Master Plan for the Tanglewood Natural Area. We believe that once the improvements outlined in the plan are implemented, Tanglewood will attract many new visitors and be an enjoyable natural resource for generations to come.

We would like to thank the city staff and the Landscape Architects from Human & Rohde for developing such a thoughtful and comprehensive master plan. They listened to the community, carefully considered the options, and effectively articulated a plan that will guide Tanglewood towards a bright future. The Friends of Tanglewood look forward to working with the city to implement the plan and enhance and preserve this wonderful property.

Awilda Hernandez

From: Susan Hansen <cjsj2002@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 5:21 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Tanglewood Property Draft Master Plan Comments

Hello,

Below are my comments regarding the Tanglewood Property Draft Master Plan.

If the City Council approves the Draft Master Plan, I encourage them to vote for the minimal amount of improvements, including Schematic Plan A, and urge the least amount of improvements at the park entrance to prevent loitering as has happened on 12th Street in Old Bowie near the Knights of St Johns. The most important request regarding Tanglewood is one of trail maintenance.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to share and thank you for considering the comments.

Susan Hansen

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Awilda Hernandez

From: Joshua Wooten <joshuawooten2@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 5:38 PM
To: cityclerk; Timothy Adams; Michael Esteve; Dufour Woolfley; Rosann Ndebumadu; Henri Gardner; Jarryd Hawkins; Clinton Truesdale
Cc: Joe Meinert; Matt Reno; Sally Hein; michellenbalfe; Erin Oxenford
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Testimony submittal for tonight's City Council meeting
Attachments: MAPS_Tanglewood_Master_Plan_20230403.pdf

Good evening,

The Bowie Green Team's MAPS sub-committee is submitting the following document containing testimony for tonight's City Council meeting regarding the Tanglewood Property Master Plan draft.

Thank you and please let us know if you have any questions.

Joshua Wooten, Chair - Bowie Green Team's MAPS Sub-committee
4020 Wharton Turn

To: City of Bowie Mayor and City Council

From: Multi-modal Access & Public Spaces (MAPS)
Green Team Sub-committee

Date: April 3, 2023

Subject: Tanglewood Master Plan

MAPS believes Tanglewood can become a great public space for the people of Bowie. We are very pleased with the progress that the City Department of Community Services has made in producing a new Master Plan for the Tanglewood property.

The new Master Plan is in very good agreement with the proposed vision that MAPS put forth in February of last year. The plan was further enhanced by input from the community, including the Friends of Tanglewood, that was provided by the two stakeholder meetings.

Just to review, here are some of the key items MAPS felt were needed for Tanglewood:

- Clean, safe, and open to the public.
- Maintained as a wilderness/nature park.
- Retain natural surface trails.
- Trim dead trees that pose potential safety issues along the trails.
- Improve trail markers.
- Improve access from the Northridge community across the Newstop Branch creek.
- Install a small gravel parking area off Zug Road.
- Install a welcome sign with usage rules, a trail map and park description.
- Costs to the City should be kept to a minimum

The new plan addresses all of these as part of a comprehensive plan.

We would like to thank Sally Hein, Director, Department of Community Services
City of Bowie, Matt Reno, Tanglewood Project Manager, and Human & Rohde Inc. Landscape Architects for their hard work.

MAPS asks that the Mayor and City Council approve this plan. We all look forward to a Tanglewood Natural Area grand opening.