



# Olde Towne Advisory Subcommittee Annual Briefing

Mayor and City Council Work Session  
Monday, November 28, 2016



## OTAC: Who We Are

- An interdisciplinary subcommittee comprised of residents, business owners and property owners
- The “eyes and ears” of Olde Towne

# OTAC Members

- Lenny Levy, Chair
- Richard Arkin
- Garrie Black
- Cathy Drzyzgula
- Jef Fuller
- Linda Hanson
- Dan Lane
- Robert Love
- Larry Luhn
- Jim McNulty
- Yvette Monroe
- John Roddy
- Philip Wilk



# What We Do

Advocate for Olde Towne:

- Economic Development
- Revitalization
- Safety & Security
- Aesthetics

# Our Charge & Goals

- In accordance with the City's goal of establishing Olde Towne as the civic, social, and cultural heart of Gaithersburg, OTAC was established to promote and assist the Mayor and City Council in coordinating the revitalization efforts
- Promote and support the ongoing redevelopment of Olde Towne
- Advocate/promote Olde Towne businesses and encourage continued growth
- Assist with establishing Olde Towne as the civic, social and cultural heart of Gaithersburg

# Making Progress

- 16 South Summit acquired; to become new Police HQ
- Former Roy's Place renovated; La Casita now open
- Design and construction docs completed for new Park Plaza at Summit & Diamond Avenues
- Enhanced streetscape for East Diamond Avenue also planned; landscape architect retained as part of Park Plaza design work; design 30% complete
- Fishman Site under contract; developer proceeding with due diligence for mixed use
- Crossings at Olde Towne completed; estimated investment of \$46 mm

# But Challenges Remain...

- Office vacancy rate higher than Citywide average
- Upcoming WSSC water & sewer main replacement project to be disruptive
- Archstone/Gaithersburg Station ground floor retail remains unoccupied
- Key sites yet to be redeveloped
- New multifamily projects threaten occupancy in existing apartments
- Crime and/or the perception of crime

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Fishman Parcel



- A representative from Ellisdale Construction presented his company's plans for this City-owned property
- A mixed-use building would include ground floor retail and approximately 100 apartments
- Structured parking between the building and CSX tracks would serve as a buffer
- The proposed garage could include public parking

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Olde Towne Park Plaza and Streetscape

- Committee members reviewed two preliminary designs and engineering for the plaza and streetscape
- Consensus favored the blending of the two design concepts presented
- Members specifically endorsed the following key features:
  - An interactive water feature
  - Landscaping to buffer plaza from Summit Ave. traffic
  - Integration of the existing bus stop into the design

# 2016 Meeting Topics:

## Business Improvement Districts

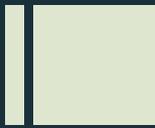


- Proposed changes to Maryland's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) failed to garner legislative support, but will be reintroduced in 2017's General Assembly
- Members reviewed information on legal requirements in other states – who, how and who pays
- Examples of successful BIDs were examined
- Follow-up activity will depend upon changes to Maryland law

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Business Attraction

- How a retailer chooses a new location was studied, with a video from Starbucks demonstrating the use of demographic information in its analysis
- Members reviewed location requirements for a variety of retailers, including Dunkin Donuts, Aldi, Lidl and a pizza chain
- Olde Towne site characteristics – especially traffic counts - were then compared with retailer needs

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Neighborhood Demographics



- Continuing the discussion on site location and Olde Towne characteristics, members reviewed “Tapestry Segmentation,” a categorization of household types by Esri, a national source used by retailers
- Local household incomes and buying preferences were explored, recalibrating member impressions of Olde Towne
- Within ½ mile of the plaza, the largest segments are now “American Dreamers” and “Metro Renters”

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Crime



- Officer Dan Lane from the Gaithersburg Police Department met and reviewed the most recent neighborhood crime statistics
- Perception of crime continues to be a larger challenge for the neighborhood than actual incidence of crimes
- New initiatives from the police department include establishing a safe place for online transaction exchanges and a proposed registry of residents' cameras

# 2016 Meeting Topics: Automotive Uses



- Central Business District (CBD) zoning prevents automotive uses from moving into new spaces, but these businesses remain in “grandfathered” locations
- Smaller, older buildings fronting East Diamond with rear boundaries against the railroad tracks are not attractive office/retail locations
- Members supported the possibility of allowing these uses under a “special exception”

# Business Expansion & Growth Objectives



- Continue to pursue new residents and office tenants to support Olde Towne retailers and restaurants
- Support attraction of quality, destination retailers and restaurants
- Continue to assist the contract purchaser of the Fishman site as plans move forward for a mixed-use development
- Protect existing incentives, especially those associated with the Enterprise Zone



Questions?