

WAKEFIELD VALLEY TASK FORCE
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 10, 2016

The Wakefield Valley Task Force met at 5:30 PM on August 10, 2016, at the John Street Quarters of the Westminster Volunteer Fire Department. In attendance were Chair Ed Cramer and members Peggy Bair, Dean Camlin, Bob Coursey, Pat Cull, Jeff Degitz, Thomas Ferguson, Mike McMullin, Eric Mersinger, Judy Powers, Tom Rasmussen, and Dr. Ethan Seidel.

Mayor Kevin Utz and Council Members Dr. Mona Becker, Mr. Tony Chiavacci and Mr. Greg Pecoraro were present. City staff included David Deutsch, Dave Davidson, Andrew Gray and Bill Mackey.

Chair Cramer recapped past meetings and the process by which the Task Force selected final proposals. The Chair informed the Task Force that, as requested in the Task Force letter sent to responders, the Looking Glass Gardens Lavender Farm and Pinkard Properties had made contact with each other about combining their proposals. The Chair also reminded everyone in attendance that Council Members were present to observe and not to interact. Chair Cramer noted that Mr. Joe Paciella had declined the Task Force's second-round invitation to discuss his golf-course proposal with the Task Force.

Chair Cramer introduced Athan Sunderland of Pinkard Properties and Dawn Pritchard of the Looking Glass Gardens Lavender Farm proposal. Mr. Sunderland presented a combined proposal of four lighted turf fields, indoor recreation center, outdoor learning center, a science-technology-engineering-arts-math center, possible cable-wake-boarding park, lavender farm and gardens. Mr. Sunderland affirmed Pinkard Properties is not seeking capital from the City, also stating that Pinkard Properties is also open to amending the proposal as long as it remains economically sustainable.

Mr. Sunderland stated the desire to build on the success of the existing trail system and create an expanded system of trails with varying difficulties, potentially partnering with Charm City Run and/or the State of Maryland. Mr. Doug Renner from McDaniel was present. Mr. Sunderland offered to meet with Mr. Renner for possible collaboration, as requested in the Task Force letter sent to responders.

There was discussion on renovating the existing facilities, addressing potential traffic increases on Bell Road, and the potential effects of lighting and noise from turf fields on the neighboring community. A turf field at Towson University was cited as an example of how modern technology can mitigate light spill. The Task Force also recognized that the cost to rehabilitate the greens and the irrigation system for golf was prohibitive.

The Task Force decided by majority vote to pass a favorable recommendation forward to the Mayor and Common Council on the combined proposal by Pinkard Properties and Looking Glass Gardens Lavender Farm. An amendment to request that City staff perform reference checks related to Pinkard Properties also passed by majority vote. The Task Force Chair will present the Task Force's recommendation to the Mayor and Common Council at an upcoming Council meeting.

Chair Cramer adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.