

Town of Riverdale Park
Town Seal Design Committee Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2022

In Attendance

Jamie Spann, Chair
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1
CM David Lingua, Ward 3
Rushern Baker, IV, Committee Member
Melissa Hmelnicky, Committee Member

Jessica Barnes, Director of Administrative Services
Cristian Ortiz-Romero, Program Specialist

Call to Order

Ms. Spann called the Town Seal Design Committee Meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

The November 10, 2022, agenda was approved by consensus.

Discussion:

There were no changes to the agenda and no stated conflicts of interest.

Discussion Items

Overview of Town of Cheverly process

Mr. Baker provided an overview of his discussion with Mayor Munyeneh regarding the Town of Cheverly's town seal redesign process. Mr. Baker reported that Cheverly had worked with the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) and had a positive experience.

Mr. Baker discussed the goals that Cheverly established for the project as well as the opportunities for community input. Mr. Baker also discussed the role that the descendants and current occupants of Mount Hope, a former plantation in Cheverly, played in the town seal redesign process.

Mr. Baker discussed the in-person and virtual events, surveys, and social media campaign organized by NDC for Cheverly's project, and the amount of input received from residents and community stakeholders. Mr. Baker discussed how the final design was selected.

Mr. Baker stated that the cost of Cheverly's project was approximately \$10,000 and NDC was a local entity with a lot of experience working with municipalities. Mr. Baker stated that Mayor Munyeneh was very pleased with their experience and was willing to meet with the Committee to discuss things that Cheverly had learned throughout their process.

Ms. Hmelnicky thanked Mr. Baker for his work and stated that she was excited about the prospect of having so much community engagement in the Town's process.

Mr. Baker stated that based on the information provided by the Town of Cheverly, NDC understood the sensitivity of some aspects of the project as well as how to navigate the bureaucratic structure of local government and work with the community.

Director Barnes asked about the length of Cheverly's process and Mr. Baker replied that it took approximately one year.

CM Smith asked about the process for selecting a vendor for the project and Director Barnes discussed the Town's procurement process.

Mr. Baker stated that he would contact Cheverly to get a point of contact for their project. Director Barnes stated that she would reach out to NDC and the Town of Cheverly to learn more about the work conducted for their project.

Ms. Spann asked about the timeline related to the January 21st Community Conversation. Ms. Hmelnicky suggested reaching out to NDC first to determine best practices for moving forward with the project and to ensure that a strong foundation was established at the beginning of the process. Mr. Baker agreed.

CM Smith asked if there was a deadline related to the preparation of the FY2024 budget. Director Barnes discussed the Town Seal Redesign Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) project and the budget impact of the redesign of the Town's seal. Director Barnes discussed a list of places where the town seal was currently displayed. CM Lingua discussed the approach that could be taken with regarding to budgeting for the project moving forward.

CM Lingua stated that he would like to hear from the Town of Cheverly regarding their experience going through the process. Mr. Baker stated that Cheverly was happy with the amount of public input and the positive reaction by the community. Mr. Baker also stated that it was important, based on his discussions regarding the Cheverly process, to get a vendor in place as soon as possible to manage the process and community outreach.

CM Lingua stated that it was important to have a deliberate process as the redesigned town seal would be in place for a very long time. CM Lingua discussed the Town's procurement process and NDC's experience with similar projects. CM Lingua stated that he agreed that it was important to get a vendor in place as soon as possible.

Ms. Spann asked the Committee if they knew of any other vendors who could work with the Town on the redesign process. Ms. Hmelnicky stated that she was aware of other designers, but her preference would be to work with a vendor that could develop a structure for the process and obtain significant community input. Mr. Baker agreed that the community input component of the project was very important, and he was only aware of NDC as a vendor that had experience working with municipalities. CM Smith expressed his support for working with NDC.

Ms. Spann discussed the next steps for moving forward with the process. Ms. Hmelnicky noted that January may be too soon to hold a Community Conversation. Ms. Barnes stated that the Town had experience working with NDC and if their proposal was under \$20,000 then the Committee could likely move forward sooner. Ms. Barnes discussed the importance of the community engagement portion of the project and stated that she was unaware of other local vendors that provided similar services. CM Smith discussed the value of NDC's recent

experience with conducting a town seal redesign process for a neighboring jurisdiction with similar demographics and with similar issues with their previous town seal.

Director Barnes stated that Town staff would reach out to NDC to get more information. Director Barnes noted that the Community Conversation could be rescheduled for a future date if needed. Director Barnes suggested including an article in the *Town Crier* stating that more information would be coming soon. Mr. Baker and Ms. Hmelnicky agreed.

CM Lingua stated that the *Town Crier* article could be more of a kick-off for the community discussion regarding the town seal.

Ms. Spann asked if the Committee wanted to set a date for the next meeting. Ms. Hmelnicky asked for clarity regarding the expectations for the next meeting. Mr. Baker suggested that staff update the Committee via e-mail over the next few weeks. Ms. Hmelnicky agreed.

Ms. Spann thanked Mr. Baker for his work on compiling information regarding the Town of Cheverly's town seal redesign process.

Review of draft article for December/January edition of *Town Crier*

Ms. Hmelnicky discussed the edits made to the draft article for the December/January edition of the *Town Crier* and noted that additional edits would be needed to remove the date for the Community Conversation.

CM Lingua stated that he would review the draft article and provide feedback.

Ms. Spann stated that the article was exciting, and Mr. Baker agreed. Ms. Hmelnicky stated that she was really energized after the last Committee meeting.

The Committee agreed that the final deadline for edits to the *Town Crier* article would be Monday, November 14th at 5:00 p.m.

Format of Community Conversations meeting in January

Ms. Hmelnicky suggested delaying the discussion regarding the format of the Community Conversation until a vendor was selected. There were no objections.

Next Meeting

Ms. Hmelnicky suggested meeting monthly starting in January 2023. CM Lingua agreed. There were no objections to meeting monthly starting in January 2023.

Director Barnes asked if the Committee had a specific day and time when they would like to meet each month. Mr. Baker stated that he would be finalizing his class schedule next week. Ms. Hmelnicky suggested Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. if that day/time worked with Mr. Baker's schedule. There were no objections.

CM Lingua suggested that the Committee consider how much they would like to borrow from the process used by the Town of Cheverly before the next meeting. Ms. Hmelnicky stated that she was looking forward to hearing from NDC.

Cristian Ortiz-Romero, Program Specialist, introduced himself to the Committee and stated that he was looking forward to working with the Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm