



**Area Advisory Committee Three Meeting # 2 Summary**  
**Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Ingleside at King Farm**  
**701 King Farm Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850**

**Attendees:**

**Members**

Marcia Bond	
Gerald Calderone	Timothy McDonald
Kevin Johnson	Arlene Robinson
Alan Kaplan	Fred Samadani
Marilyn Leist	Gail Sherman
Martin Mankowski	Mel Willis

**AAC Three Apologies**

Chris Maravilla

**Staff**

<b>Facilitator</b> - Tracee Strum-Gilliam	<b>M-NCPPC</b> - Nkosi Yearwood
<b>Station Architect</b> - Kyle Kramer	<b>City of Rockville</b> – Emad Elshafei
<b>Traffic Engineer</b> - Kevin Permisohn	<b>City of Rockville</b> - Daniel Seo
<b>Segment Engineer</b> - Allison Berkheimer	<b>Project Staff</b> - Kyle Nembhard
<b>Public Involvement Task Lead</b> - Crystal Saunders	<b>Logistics Staff</b> - Jordan Vann
<b>Montgomery County</b> - Gary Erenrich	

**General Audience**

Mark Scoffield

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**Introductions**

Tracee Strum-Gilliam welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that the group has moved to a new location. AAC Member, Marilyn Leist welcomed everyone and provided a brief overview of the Ingleside community. Tracee thanked the group for attending the AAC meeting and explained her role as the facilitator. She continued with introductions and encouraged the group to reach out to her with any questions, comments or concerns.

**Meeting Follow-Up**

**AAC Three Kick-off Meeting**

Tracee noted that the March meeting introduced the project but tonight's meeting is where the group work begins. She walked the group through the handouts they were given including the agenda and then opened the floor to the committee members to solicit thoughts as a follow-up to the previous AAC Three meeting held on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

An AAC member commented that a question came up at an external affairs committee meeting regarding the two stations on King Farm Boulevard and whether or not a station at Village Center (East Gaither) was actually needed as the area is not a destination. Another member asked why the MTA felt it is needed? The concern is that people looking to access the CCT at the East Gaither station will park on the limited street parking in that area using it as a “park n ride” for the Shady Grove Metro station.

Another member commented that Rick Kiegel promised at the 2010 Crabbs Branch meeting that speeds for the CCT would be 25 mph on King Farm Boulevard and that none of the side streets will be closed. A rumor is circulating that the speed limit of the CCT is 40mph. What is the status? Tracee suggested that the meeting minutes from the 2010 Crabbs Branch meeting will be reviewed in an effort to verify the information stated. Another member stated that she heard the same thing about the speeds and median closures. They asked that the CCT team please consider the residents when making these types of decisions. Tracee asked the AAC Member if he remembers where he heard that buses would run at 40 mph through King Farm Boulevard? The AAC Member stated he was unsure exactly where the comment originated. Allison Berkheimer, Segment Engineer, explained that the CCT is not allowed to operate faster than the posted speed limit on the adjacent roadway. Tracee emphasized that it is important to share with this group what they hear in the community because it’s possible someone may have heard about the overall CCT design speed vs. the design speed on King Farm Boulevard specifically. Allison stated that the operating speed throughout the entire 9 mile alignment varies depending on which roadway the CCT is operating along. Finally, Allison said that for the King Farm Boulevard segment, the CCT would operate at 25 mph since that is the posted speed of King Farm Boulevard.

**Q:** Is Rick Kiegel concerned about the citizens when making that statement about speeds and median closures?

**A:** Yes, Rick Kiegel is concerned about the citizens in the community.

Tracee reassured the group that the project team will consider the residents and that some of the design elements had already changed since 2010 in response to public feedback.

**AAC Member Comment:** I suggest that the AAC committee be sent a draft of the meeting summary to review prior to the meetings to ensure that all topics have been properly recorded.

Tracee noted that the meeting summary from the previous meeting was sent out a month prior. The minutes will be emailed out to everyone for review and then at the following meeting will be distributed via hard copy and at that point would be considered final. Members should feel free to provide comments on the minutes when they are emailed out and comments will be addressed in the final minutes.

**Q:** When will the project refer to the East Gaither Station as “Pleasant” and West Gaither Station as “Piccard?” It would be better for the community to understand the station location by referring to the East and West Gaither stations as “Pleasant” and “Piccard” respectively.

**A:** While the Project Team understands that the street names are more familiar to the community, this wasn’t confirmed as the current station names are place holder names.

## **New Business**

### **King Farm Walking Tour**

Tracee proposed the suggestion of conducting a walking tour at the request of an AAC member, and explained that the tour would involve walking up and down King Farm Boulevard stopping

at intersections along the alignment while referencing cross-sections as a guide. Feedback indicated that a walking tour would be conducted and that the project team would reach out to the AAC members to determine what dates work for the group.

### **Expedited Project Design Schedule**

Tracee advanced the discussion regarding the expedited design schedule explaining that the design team has asked that all AACs increase their schedules to bi-monthly meetings which would have the next AAC Three meeting in July. Tracee requested that the AAC members inform the project team of any absolute dates that they are NOT available or any concerns about a July meeting. Allison added that the goal is to have the CCT at 30% design by next summer so the AAC process has been expedited in order to meet that goal. She noted that the project is currently at 10% design.

### **Proposed AAC Three Meeting Schedule**

In reviewing the proposed dates and topics handout, no dates were agreed upon at the meeting and Tracee will follow-up with the AAC members to determine acceptable dates.

### **Operations Plan Overview**

Kevin Permisohn, Traffic Engineer, explained that in general there is a lot of information being presented at this meeting and it is the design team's goal to provide the AAC members with a better base understanding of the concepts and ideas behind what is being developed for the CCT and how it is going to operate. This will encourage AAC members to participate in the decision making process with constructive feedback.

Kevin referenced the 11x17 CCT alignment map that was distributed and explained the difference between the CCT Direct Service and the CCT Service via Universities at Shady Grove (USG) routes. He explained that the CCT Direct Service will operate on an exclusive, dedicated transitway stopping at every station along the transitway, while the CCT via (USG) segment will operate along the transitway, stopping at all stations, but will divert off the transitway to serve two additional stations.

Kevin clarified that the operational information presented in the Operations Plan Overview handout is for the design year of 2035. He explained that a projected headway in the year 2035 of 3.5 minutes for the direct route in each direction and when you factor in the buses on the USG route and buses traveling in both directions, this roughly equates to a bus passing through any given intersection every 1.5 minutes. The opening year operations plan is still in development.

### **Operating Hours**

Kevin presented the general operating plan hours with the group, explaining that the CCT operating hours would be based off of the WMATA Metro schedule. He explained that if a patron wanted to catch the first Metro train from Shady Grove Metro station, the CCT would begin operation at Metropolitan Grove in order for the patron to catch the first train. Conversely, the last CCT bus would depart after the last Metro train arrives in the evening at the Shady Grove Metro station.

**Q:** How many decibels will the bus produce with service starting at 4AM?

Kevin deferred that question for the noise team to answer as they will present their analysis in a later meeting, but explained that speed contributes to the noise levels and reinforced that the speed of the CCT bus along King Farm is based on the posted speed of the adjacent roadway, 25

mph. Kevin also pointed out to the group that a noise team has been in the area since January taking noise measurements.

Tracee further explained how the CCT follows noise requirements as directed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) but if that is a topic that the group would like to cover, it can be added to the AAC schedule.

**AAC Member Comment:** Noise is one of the most important things given that buses would be travelling at 4:30 AM while people are sleeping.

**AAC Member Comment:** There is hardly any traffic on King Farm Boulevard at 8:00 PM. and that additional noise would be introduced. Kevin explained that the CCT would be using articulated clean diesel/hybrid buses so minimal noise is expected as compared to the Ride On buses people are used to hearing. Further, based on the frequency of the buses as described in the operations plan, motorist traffic would still be the predominant source of noise at 8:00 PM.

**AAC Member Comment:** By 2035 there won't be any pedestrian traffic because they can't cross King Farm Boulevard and I am concerned about mid block crossings.

Kevin suggested that the group can get more into that subject when the discussion progresses toward traffic.

**Q:** Will the CCT have signal priority?

**A:** The bus will not have preemption, meaning, it will not be able to pass through a signal every time it approaches the intersection. The CCT bus would have some level of transit signal priority in terms of the signal providing for a few extra seconds of a green light phase in order to pass through an intersection before turning red. Kevin explained that the priority would not take time away from the side street phase to allow the CCT bus to receive a green indication sooner. Further, the CCT would not always have priority, it would only be implemented to maintain headways, which is the separation between buses along the corridor.

**Q:** Please clarify how the CCT would cross Shady Grove Road and I-270, assuming that the CCT would be crossing over both roadways.

Kevin confirmed that the CCT crosses both roadways on structure. Allison added that the structure would start in the median of Fields Road at the intersection with Washingtonian Boulevard crossing over I-270 and Shady Grove Road and come down into the median of King Farm Boulevard. She noted that the bridge structure would have a shared use path on it, connecting from a pedestrian bridge down to the trail along Fields Road.

**Q:** Please clarify the term "shared use?"

**A:** Kevin responded that it refers to the Hiker-Biker path/trail.

**Q:** How will the CCT cross MD 355?

**A:** The CCT will cross MD 355 at-grade.

**Q:** Which roadway will get priority at the MD 355 intersection?

**A:** The CCT will operate with the vehicular traffic on King Farm Boulevard. At this point, signal priority for the CCT bus will be treated the same at this intersection as it is for other intersections throughout the corridor. The signal timing and phasing is being coordinated with Montgomery County and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA).

**Q:** I assume that the frequency is based upon the assumption that Metro would not continue north.

**A:** Kevin explained that he could not answer that question directly but that he was not aware of any further development of Metro, north of Shady Grove. He also explained how the design team is using regional growth models based on accepted assumptions and plans. Tracee added that the Metro representative was not present but the long range plan did not include an additional station north of Shady Grove Metro.

Nkosi Yearwood, M-NCPPC representative stated that there are no plans for extending the terminus of the Metro and that only improvements to MARC are in the long range plans.

**Q:** What about the possibility of expansion?

**A:** Tracee clarified that there is no plan to expand Metro beyond Shady Grove and that the idea is that CCT would replace that expansion.

**Q:** Will we receive a 2020, opening day operating plan?

**A:** Yes. The team is working on this and will be able to present at an upcoming meeting.

### **Transitway Alignment Options**

Tracee then asked the group to get up and view the map displays presented in the front of the room. Kevin explained that the maps show two different typical section options for the CCT using the median. Option 1 is the center transitway and Option 2 is the adjacent transit lanes typical section that most closely replicates the King Farm Development Plan typical section referred to in Meeting #1. Kevin stated that the team would like the committee members' feedback regarding the options and what suggestions, concerns or comments they have about either option. AAC members got up and began looking at the maps. Tracee asked that the group return to their seats so that the discussion could continue. She informed the group that Allison would print and email copies of the 1996 proposed typical sections if needed. An email to the group was provided by one of the AAC members as a follow-up to discussions held during the break.

**AAC Member Comment:** How will snow removal be handled on the transitway? The snow piles will have to be moved away from the corners, which is a change from how it is currently done.

**A:** Allison responded that we don't have that level of detail determined but that is one of the operations tasks that will be considered as the project progresses. Most likely this will ultimately be determined by the operator of the system.

**AAC Member Comment:** I suggest that the project team look at the entire development package and look at what streets would require street parking.

**A:** The team will take that under consideration. Allison explained that the options being presented were similar to the locally preferred alternative option but the difference is where the green space would be located. Tracee added that Allison is referring to the alignment shown at the October 30, 2013 public open house. Allison explained how the design team centered the transitway to accommodate and provide for green space on both sides in response to public comments from the public open house. There would be a combination of landscaping, stormwater management, and tree replacement accommodated in that green space.

**AAC Member Comment:** At the Kick-Off meeting, I heard that grass roadways are proposed but noted that I did not see it on the drawings.

**A:** The Team is not considering green track at this time because the green strips require a fixed guideway.

**AAC Member Comment:** I understand that the grass tracks were a sound mitigation measure.

Kevin added that there are other maintenance issues discouraging the consideration of grass tracks for the transitway and that a noise analysis is underway and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented if it is found that the noise levels exceed industry standard thresholds.

Allison began the discussion by explaining that Option 1 and Option 2 have the same number of median crossings that are currently proposed to be closed. The proposed closed crossings are:

- Elmcroft Boulevard
- Reserve Champion Drive
- Ingleside west entrance
- Irvington entrance near West Gaither Station

Kevin added that right turn access would be maintained into and out of the proposed side streets where median openings are proposed to be closed. Kevin also noted that Crestfield Drive was originally recommended for closure but was reopened in response to public comment.

**AAC Member Comment:** Crestfield Drive is the most dangerous intersection and it is recommended that you close Crestfield Drive, and open Reserve Champion Drive.

**AAC Member Comment:** Access to the pool for both sides of the community is off of Reserve Champion Drive and should be kept open. It should also be maintained as emergency vehicles currently use Reserve Champion Drive to maneuver between the two destinations.

**A:** The team will evaluate closing Crestfield Drive and opening Reserve Champion Drive. However, Kevin explained that left turns from westbound King Farm Boulevard will be restricted at Pleasant Drive due to the station typical section. Therefore, opening the median at Crestfield Drive will provide the only direct access off of westbound King Farm Boulevard to the businesses.

**Q:** Please clarify how cars will make a u-turn due to the left turn restriction at the station locations. Where can u-turns be made from Reserve Champion Drive?

**A:** Gaither Drive would be the location for u-turns for vehicles traveling from Reserve Champion Drive in the westbound direction.

**AAC Member Comment:** Gaither Drive is not a good place to make the u-turn.

**AAC Member Comment:** Currently, u-turns cannot be made at this location.

Multiple members began to contribute to the conversation and Tracee asked that members speak one at a time so that everyone's thoughts and opinions could be heard clearly. She then asked one of the AAC members to clarify their concerns about that location and whether it was the turning radius or being able to navigate the intersection.

**AAC Member Comment:** Concern is the traffic turning without signals.

**AAC Member Comment:** The intersection is a problem.

**AAC Member Comment:** Gaither Drive is an oddball intersection as the width of the intersection makes it hard to determine how far to pull up for site distance.

**AAC Member Comment:** Two cars were totaled at that intersection and it was reported to the City of Rockville, however nothing has happened as a result.

**A:** Kevin explained that the current signal phasing at Gaither Drive is a split phase for the King Farm Boulevard approaches which means all movements for each direction of King Farm are protected and have the right of way. Specific to the u-turn movement in question, the existing signal provides a dedicated left turn arrow for westbound King Farm Boulevard, therefore there would be no conflict with this movement and any other vehicles in the intersection which makes

it a very safe movement. Kevin mentioned that this would be something we could look at on the Walking Tour to see in person the issues that are being described. Some of the concerns mentioned may not be associated with the proposed CCT alignment or the new additional u-turn movements that may occur as a result of the median closure at Reserve Champion Drive.

**Q:** Can a ladder truck make the u-turn at Gaither Drive?

**A:** Yes, a ladder truck can make the u-turn at Gaither Drive.

**Q:** Is Option 1 or Option 2 better in terms of noise?

**A:** The design team does not have information on that issue at this time. Kevin added that vehicle speed is more of the contributor to determining noise and that the speed will not be different between the two options.

Tracee asked Allison to re-cap the proposed closures and locations. Allison listed the proposed intersection closures to the group:

- Elmcroft Boulevard
- Reserve Champion Drive
- Ingleside west entrance
- Irvington entrance near West Gaither Station

**Q:** Where are left turns restricted?

**A:** Pleasant Drive in the westbound direction and Grand Champion Drive in the eastbound direction are locations where left turns would be restricted at an open intersection.

**Q:** Why are traffic signals being added?

**A:** The traffic signals are being added for safety reasons. Kevin explained that one of the important considerations with BRT is the intention to protect conflicting movements between motorists and the CCT bus. In order to protect all conflicting movements, signalization is needed. This also plays a part into the decision for median closures as well. Kevin further explained that one of the differences between alignment options is that left turn phasing in Option 1 would restrict movement when a CCT bus is present from either direction. Whereas, Option 2 eliminates the potential conflict between a motorist having to cross over the path of a bus traveling in the same direction as they make their turn. Allison added that the design team is looking at potential pedestrian crossings at the proposed closed medians.

Tracee reminded the committee that the options are detailed in the handouts that were distributed. She also emphasized that the team would still like to answer questions before you leave.

**AAC Member Comment:** A lot of people spent time and money trying to predict where the median crossings would be and they would be shocked if they saw these proposed closures. Allison noted that the design team did receive the concept plans from the King Farm developer which showed the transit lanes adjacent to the median and not separated. She further explained how the design team took that concept and presented it in Option 2 where the dedicated lanes would be directly adjacent to the roadway lanes. Allison also added that putting the transitway adjacent to the roadway provides for a single wider median to accommodate stormwater management, trees, and landscaping. Kevin added that another notable difference between the two options is how left turns operate at the intersection.

**AAC Member Comment:** When approaching an intersection in Option 2, there's nothing keeping the cars from going into the bus lane and it's difficult to enforce like the HOV lanes.

Kevin addressed the observation by adding that the left turn movement restrictions would be different at different areas along the corridor from this adjacent shared lane. If a vehicle enters the bus lane and a left turn is not permitted, they'll see a "No Left Turn" sign at that intersection.

**Q:** Is the total amount of green space the same for the median for both options?

**A:** Yes, the total amount of median green space is the same for both options.

**AAC Member Comment:** The strips may be too narrow for landscapers to do their work in Option 1.

**AAC Member Comment:** It seems that Option 2 might be a less safe option.

Tracee noted to the group that both options have their own advantages and disadvantages.

**AAC Member Comment:** Option 2 looks like the same thing now but narrower.

**AAC Member Comment:** Unlike today, vehicles will not be able to sit in the median like you do now. Allison confirmed this by stating that drivers would not have the existing provision of the 50 foot gap any more.

**Q:** What would come of the existing trees? Additionally is 24 foot green space enough to plant trees?

**A:** The existing trees would be removed and yes, 24 feet is enough space to plant trees.

**AAC Member Comment:** The new trees would not be as big as the existing shade trees. The new trees would be smaller in nature and spaced closer together.

Tracee added that for Option 2, larger trees can be accommodated but they still would not be as big as what is there now. Allison added that there are also stormwater management requirements the design team has to meet and that those facilities have to be considered when selecting the type and size of tree that can be used.

Tracee noted that there was a question of water storage and filtration in previous meetings. Allison also explained that there will be underground vaults for the stormwater management quantity requirements and the linear features in the median would be for stormwater management quality requirements.

**AAC Member Comment:** The community and transitway were designed to not introduce additional stormwater management concerns as that was the concept behind placing it in the median.

Allison noted that the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations have changed twice since the design of the King Farm development.

**AAC Member Comment:** The King Farm developer spent millions of dollars on regional facilities. They coordinated with the state and City of Rockville so that the regional ponds were sized to accommodate the CCT but that quality requirements need to be accommodated.

**Q:** What calculations were used to determine that the stormwater was adequately addressed at the site? Has pervious pavement been considered?

**A:** Allison commented that the design team will review the calculations and asked the City of Rockville representatives for all the calculations for the development plan of King Farm.

**Q:** How will cars and buses will be separated in Option 2?

**A:** Pavement striping will be used to clearly indicate a separate use for the CCT lane. Allison added that there would also be signs in the median to indicate where cars can enter the CCT lane in order to make a left turn.

**AAC Member Comment:** Option 2 appears to be more beneficial for emergency vehicles.



Tracee notified the group that there are 15 more minutes left for the discussion and asked if there were any more elements that Allison needed to get through before taking any more questions. She then began to summarize the elements of both options as well as follow-up items discussed in the conversation so far.

**AAC Member Comment:** Maintenance of landscaping would be challenging given the width of the grass strips.

Tracee clarified that whether it is a large or small space, the agency operating the CCT would be responsible for maintaining the green space(s) in the median.

**Q:** Are similar discussions being held with the other Area Advisory Committees?

**A:** No, the other groups do not have a choice of which typical section should be selected.

**Q:** Is the median strip safer for pedestrian since it breaks up the traffic?

**A:** Allison noted that it would be the entire 24 foot width and that this would be the only place pedestrians would have refuge. Kevin added that another thing to consider is that where traffic signals are installed, pedestrian walk signals will be installed and pedestrians will not receive a walk phase to cross the CCT when the bus has a green signal indication. He also assured the group that there will be enough time built into the signal cycle to allow pedestrians to cross at safely.

**AAC Member Comment:** King Farm has a population of 10,000 and I would suggest a meeting be open to all the residents in October in order to share with them where AAC Three has gone as the entire community is not being adequately represented by the limited number of the committee.

Tracee reminded the group that all AAC members are expected to report back to their respective community and/or organizations in addition to reporting information back to the committee and CCT staff. She provided an example scenario of being stopped in the grocery store by a community member with a question or comment and how the AAC members should bring that information back to the group for discussion. She also emphasized how the process works both ways. Finally, Tracee also reminded the group that several King Farm meetings have been held.

**AAC Member Comment:** An article was placed in the community newsletter but no comments have been received to date.

**Q:** Is there a vote for which option we like the best?

**A:** There will not be a vote on the options, rather the design team is looking for feedback and opinions from the AAC members on the two options.

**AAC Member Comment:** It would be nice to save as much of the median as possible.

**AAC Member Comment:** The only time there will be issues is at rush hour and once they realize they can't make left turns, they'll start going a different direction anyway.

**Q:** What is the affect of left turn restrictions onto Pleasant Drive on businesses?

**A:** Kevin noted that the team is investigating the potential impacts and that opening the median at Crestfield Drive is a good alternative for motorists to access parking and businesses.

**Q:** Has the CCT talked to the businesses?

**A:** Kevin responded that this is the reason why the CCT team is talking with the AAC in order to get a sense of what paths residents/customers take to get to these businesses. As a part of the public relations effort on this project, coordination is ongoing with business owners.

**AAC Member Comment:** The AAC members' advice won't go far even with the suggestions that have been written down. The group should go over these responses and recommendations and then spot review them first. It's the engineers' responsibility to consider these but also acknowledge that some of the suggestions stated are personal in nature.

**AAC Member Comment:** Notes from this meeting should be provided to the committee members before the next meeting in order to organize thoughts for that meeting.

**AAC Member Comment:** I haven't seen anything about bikes and how people can get to the Shady Grove Metro station. This is something that would be nice to see and discussed in the future in addition to more discussion about stormwater management.

Tracee notified the group that there is a future meeting planned to discuss those issues in more detail. She also acknowledged the AAC Member's request to review meeting minutes. Tracee continued to explain the structure and intent of the meetings and suggested to the group that if they felt they needed more time for each meeting that they can arrange for that.

One AAC member complimented Tracee on how well she has been facilitating the meeting.

**AAC Member Comment:** Some of the committee members are on vacation in July and suggested that the July meeting be scheduled at the end of June or beginning of August. Tracee assured the group that this was a possibility.

**AAC Member Comment:** I think that the walking tour is a good idea.

Tracee re-affirmed that a Walking Tour can be arranged if the group is comfortable with the idea and that possible dates and times can be discussed.

**AAC Member Comment:** Will the committee get into the "nuts and bolts" Discussion of why specific decisions were made? Substantial information that supports the design intent is needed ie closure of intersections. I've attended hearings held by the City of Rockville that said median crossings at specific locations would be needed and where closures are being proposed. Please note that this is in conflict with the required approvals for the development.

Tracee suggested that this is something that will have to be figured out collectively as a team - how items previously developed will work with what currently exists and is proposed.

**AAC Member Comment:** King Farm functions the way it was planned and designed excluding the CCT. There are minimal complaints about the development today. What is being proposed is a major deviation from the original plan. This deviation is the issue that everyone is seeing and when one takes a step back and notices that everything is working ok, MTA proposes to make that change and it minimizes what was already done. Why are the residents of King Farm being made to suffer for the benefit of shorter travel time?

**AAC Member Comment:** The design team claims that it has to stick to '70s plans but also claims that what was done in 1996 doesn't work now.

Tracee clarified with the group that the issue being raised is the design refinements and not the alignments. She explained that the typical sections and stormwater management are in question.

Tracee thanked the AAC for a great meeting and apologized for the meeting exceeding the proposed end-time. She requested feedback from the group on the meeting minutes and meeting dates for the next year as well as suggested discussing dates in June for the walking tour. Finally, Tracee also encouraged the committee to communicate and share information with the community.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.