

**Town of Riverdale Park**  
**Town Seal Design Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**January 19, 2023**

**In Attendance**

Jamie Spann, Chair

Mayor Alan K. Thompson (arrived at 8:13 p.m.)

CM David Lingua, Ward 3 (arrived a 7:50 p.m.)

Rushern Baker, IV, Committee Member

Melissa Hmelnicky, Committee Member

Jessica Barnes, Director of Administrative Services

Allie O'Neill, Neighborhood Design Center

**Absent**

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1

**Call to Order**

Chair Spann called the Town Seal Design Committee Meeting to order at 7:44 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

The January 19, 2023, meeting agenda was approved by consensus.

*Discussion:*

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

**Approval of the Minutes**

The November 10, 2022, meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

**Discussion Items**

Review of Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) Proposal

Administrative Services Director Jessica Barnes discussed the outreach to the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) and noted that the NDC proposal was less than \$20,000.

Allie O'Neill, Architecture and Community Planning Program Director for the Neighborhood Design Center, provided an overview of their proposal.

Mr. Baker asked about the similarities and differences between the proposal and the Town of Cheverly's process. Ms. O'Neill noted two major differences: a slightly different genesis and organization with regard to the committee structure and the use of a NDC graphic designer. Ms. O'Neill discussed the reasons for the differences. Ms. O'Neill also stated that the stipend to the artist was not included in the proposal.

Ms. Hmelnicky asked if hiring the NDC graphic designer was an option and Ms. O'Neill stated that the NDC graphic designer may be available as an independent contractor, and it could be added to the proposal.

Chair Spann asked about the artist selection process and Ms. O’Neill provided additional details about the process. Ms. O’Neill discussed a request for qualifications versus a call for proposals and the overall design process.

Ms. Hmelnicky noted that the Cheverly process included a public vote on the seal design. Ms. Hmelnicky also noted that the schedule seemed to be tight especially due to the holidays and asked if more time could be built into the timeline. Mr. Baker stated that he liked having several seal design options and residents voting on the final version. Ms. O’Neill noted that the voting aspect added more time to the Cheverly process but a thoughtful approach to ranked choice voting could be used. Ms. O’Neill discussed the challenges related to Cheverly’s process.

Mr. Baker stated that a person from each ward could be nominated to be part of the process. CM Lingua stated that broad involvement in the process was important and noted that a variety of people from each ward was needed. CM Lingua noted that the design of the Town Seal should be community driven. Ms. Spann discussed community involvement in the process and the need to keep people involved throughout the process.

Ms. Hmelnicky suggested that a Community Conversation could be held once several design options were available. Chair Spann stated that it was difficult for artists to do a partial or rough design and Ms. Hmelnicky agreed.

Ms. O’Neill discussed the proposed focus groups, public panels, and public participation around certain questions. Ms. O’Neill discussed the proposed timeline and the recent process for a park in Hyattsville.

Ms. O’Neill asked Director Barnes if December was the project deadline and Director Barnes replied that the overall process and community involvement were the most important parts of the project and there was no specific deadline for the project.

CM Lingua stated that the process was very important as the town seal would be in place for a long time and should be something that the community was proud of. CM Lingua reiterated that it was a substantial process and there were no issues related to the budget process or timeline. CM Lingua stated that the most important thing was to get it right. Mayor Thompson gave a thumbs up. Chair Spann stated that the Committee would take their time and do it right. CM Lingua stated that the Committee should avoid prolonging the process but also not rush it. Ms. O’Neill discussed building in contingencies into the proposal.

Ms. O’Neill asked if there were events or specific dates that NDC should be aware of, and CM Lingua discussed the Town’s approach to public events. CM Lingua noted that the Farmers Market was held on Thursdays. Director Barnes stated that she was working on a schedule of events for 2023.

CM Lingua asked if Riversdale House Museum or Riverdale Elementary School (RES) could be used as meeting space during the active construction phase of the Municipal Center Renovation project. Director Barnes noted that in addition to Riversdale or RES, there were outdoor spaces that could be used. Director Barnes stated that Riversdale House Museum staff were interested in participating in the town seal design process.

Ms. O’Neill asked about public outreach components such as social media. Chair Spann stated that the Committee would discuss it further at a future meeting. CM Lingua agreed.

Chair Spann asked what NDC needed from the Committee to move forward. Ms. O'Neill discussed the review the revised proposal, the execution of the contract, consideration and recruitment of those who should be included in the process, creation of a one-pager, and building excitement in the community around the design process.

CM Lingua clarified that the Committee would provide the vision for the town seal and NDC would create the RFQ that reflected what the Town was looking for and Ms. O'Neill replied in the affirmative. Ms. O'Neill also discussed how the input from the focus groups and the community would create the design principles.

Chair Spann thanked Ms. O'Neill for joining the meeting.

Chair Spann asked if there was a consensus to move forward with NDC and there were no objections. CM Lingua stated that he abstained due to his role as a member of the Council and Mayor Thompson stated that he was present at the meeting as an observer.

Chair Spann, Ms. Hmelnicky, and Mr. Baker discussed public awareness and involvement. Mr. Baker discussed following NDC on social media and CM Lingua asked if it was effective. Mr. Baker discussed the type of information available on NDC's social media platforms. Ms. Hmelnicky discussed the need for community outreach that was specific to the Town's process.

Director Barnes discussed the Town's communication platforms and the recommendations from NDC regarding the Committee's role in community outreach efforts. Ms. Hmelnicky discussed the foundational items that the Committee should consider in preparation for the next meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Town Seal Design Committee was scheduled for February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom to discuss an agreement with NDC, public outreach, community stakeholders, and goals or a value statement for the process.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm