

MAYOR & COUNCIL AGENDA COVER SHEET

MEETING DATE:

December 3, 2007

CALL TO PODIUM:

James D. Arnoult
Acting City Manager

RESPONSIBLE STAFF:

James D. Arnoult
Acting City Manager

AGENDA ITEM:

(please check one)

| | |
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| | Presentation |
| | Proclamation/Certificate |
| | Appointment |
| | Public Hearing |
| | Historic District |
| | Consent Item |
| | Ordinance |
| | Resolution |
| | Policy Discussion |
| | Work Session Discussion Item |
| X | Other: From Staff |

PUBLIC HEARING HISTORY:

(Please complete this section if agenda item is a public hearing)

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| Introduced | |
| Advertised | |
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| Hearing Date | |
| Record Held Open | |
| Policy Discussion | |

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| TITLE: |
| Guidance on Memorandum Dated November 29, 2007 Concerning the Annual Strategic Planning Retreat |

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| SUPPORTING BACKGROUND: |
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| DESIRED OUTCOME: |
| Provide Guidance to Staff |

MEMORANDUM TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: James D. Arnoult, Acting City Manager

SUBJECT: Annual Strategic Planning Retreat

DATE: November 29, 2007

As you know, the Mayor and City Council hold an annual retreat each January to review financial projections and to discuss the draft strategic plan. For the last several years, the retreat was held outside the City of Gaithersburg (typically in Annapolis or Baltimore) and consisted of a Friday night social event and then an all day Saturday working session.

The basic premise for holding a retreat outside Gaithersburg was to provide an environment where the Mayor and City Council and senior staff were away from their normal environment and could focus exclusively on retreat issues; however, a location outside the City does not promote attendance by our residents.

While the retreat format has served the City well over the years, the Assistant City Managers and I have brainstormed an alternative format that may be beneficial because we have three new elected officials.

In addition to reviewing financial projections and the draft strategic plan, we are proposing that the Mayor and City Council receive briefings from each department head on their departmental operations. Further, we are suggesting that representatives of the Maryland Municipal League be invited to attend one session to provide a briefing on the League and state-wide municipal issues. Finally, we would like to provide an overview of the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), and discuss our Citizen Survey.

One of the key purposes of a retreat exercise is to encourage open and frank discussion among City officials on key issues so we are not recommending that the public be permitted to participate; however, we believe the retreat should be held in Gaithersburg to make it more convenient for interested residents to attend and observe.

To accomplish the purposes outlined above, we are proposing a series of evening meetings at various City facilities one week in January 2008 to culminate with a Saturday session. A possible schedule could be as follows:

- Monday evening—receive briefing from Maryland Municipal League
- Tuesday evening—receive financial briefings, CIP overview, and discuss Citizen Survey
- Thursday evening—receive department head presentations
- Saturday morning—review Strategic Plan and wrap up exercise

I will be seeking guidance on this issue during the December 3, 2007 Mayor and City Council meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to discuss.

JDA/sp