



## **PARKS COMMISSION AGENDA**

**Tuesday, May 6, 2025**

**4:30 PM**

1. Approval of Minutes for March 4, 2025
2. Presentation: Boy Scout of Troop 225 Mini Library Proposal – Stephen Decatur Park
3. FY25 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application – Multi-Purpose Building Demolition, Letter of Support
4. Event Recap: Spring Celebration 2025
5. Upcoming Event: National Night Out, Tuesday, August 5, 2025, Henry Park at 4 PM
6. Comments from Staff
7. Comments from the Commission
8. Adjournment

Upcoming Meeting/Event Schedule:

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 4:30 PM

Tuesday, July 1, 2025, at 4:30 PM

\*Tuesday, August 5, 2025, 4 PM to 7 PM (National Night Out)

Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 4:30 PM

Tuesday, November 4, 2025, at 4:30 PM

**Berlin Town Hall, 10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
410-641-4314 for more information**

Parks Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 4, 2025

**4:30 PM          REGULAR SESSION – Berlin Town Hall Conference Room**

**Commission Members Present:** Chair Laura Stearns, Patricia Dufendach, Kristen Gerhart, and Corey Davis.

**Absent:** Melissa Gillespie

**Staff Present:** Public Works Superintendent Cody Chesser and Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub

This meeting was also broadcast live via Facebook. Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub called the meeting to order at approximately 4:30 PM.

Ms. Daub presented the January 21, 2025, meeting minutes for approval. Ms. Stearns made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Dufendach, and passed without any objections.

The meeting moved to agenda item two, which focused on preparations for the Berlin Spring Celebration set for Saturday, April 19, 2025. Ms. Daub revisited their decision to distribute seed packets as a craft for attendees and proposed alternatives, including a bee-themed project with a pollination fact sheet and cardboard flowers decorated with bees. However, the commission preferred to proceed with the seed packets as they encouraged children to connect with nature. Like the previous year, Ms. Gerhart volunteered to assemble the bags once all the supplies were delivered.

To evaluate the effectiveness of past seed distributions, commission members considered incorporating a QR code inside the seed bags to gather feedback. However, some expressed concerns about its practicality, particularly whether children would engage with the QR code. Ms. Stearns proposed an alternative by placing the QR code on the bag's label or developing an online platform where participants could share photos of their plants. Ultimately, the commission determined that the most effective approach would be to collect images from the public via email and showcase them on the parks page of the town's website.

The commission reviewed the supply quantities and noted that they distributed approximately 100 to 120 seed packets last year, which ran out quickly. To prevent shortages this year, they decided to increase the order to 125 packets. Ms. Dufendach mentioned that she understood the event format had changed slightly, as the Easter Bunny will now be stationed at the Town of Berlin Firehouse instead of Raynes Reef restaurant. She indicated that this change may affect attendance.

Ms. Daub provided an update on the Backyard Buffer Program, which is coordinated with the Forestry Service. She announced that distribution is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2025, at Berlin Town Hall, with early pickups likely available on Friday, April 25, 2025. She reported that Worcester County has allocated 40 bundles for distribution, and sign-ups have already begun. Once the capacity is reached, Ms. Daub confirmed that a waitlist will be created. She continued by stating that each bundle contains 25 seedlings, including loblolly pine, swamp white oak, bald cypress, buttonbush, and beautyberry. To qualify for a bundle, she indicated that recipients must have a waterway, such as a stream or drainage ditch, on or near their property.

Due to declining participation, Ms. Daub explained that Mayor Tyndall decided against holding a formal Cleanup Day this year. Instead, she mentioned that smaller-scale cleanup efforts might be organized in conjunction with Berlin's birthday celebrations at the end of March. Ms. Dufendach inquired about resident Lara Mulvaney's vine removal tutorial and whether she could host another session this year. Since invasive vines were damaging trees

in Heron Park and other local areas, she suggested redistributing Ms. Mulvaney's previous flyer as a public reminder. Ms. Daub agreed to contact her and share the information if available.

Ms. Daub provided an update on Program Open Space, explaining that the town and commission were no longer required to submit the project list annually unless specifically requested. She highlighted the revised list in the meeting packet, noting that certain projects, such as the Stephen Decatur Park restrooms and AED installations, had been excluded because alternative funding sources had been pursued.

She informed the Commission that the next major initiative would focus on applying for a Community Parks and Playgrounds Grant to support the Berlin skate park. With the grant application deadline set for August 2025, she stated that We Heart Berlin planned to present a proposed application at the Commission's next meeting in May. Ms. Daub added that she was collaborating with Tony Weeg, Executive Director of We Heart Berlin, to ensure that all submission requirements were met.

Ms. Dufendach remarked that removing completed projects from the list was gratifying, as it signified steady progress. Ms. Daub agreed, adding that the list had gradually shortened over the years, reflecting ongoing improvements. However, she noted that the waterside life-saving devices remained uncertain, as they, like AEDs, might not meet the 20-year lifespan requirement for funding eligibility. The commission agreed to keep them on the list in case the funding criteria changed. Ms. Dufendach suggested that the safety devices could be included in the observation platform project, as structures over water typically required safety measures. Before concluding, Ms. Daub encouraged members to review the project list and share new project ideas from residents.

Next, Public Works Superintendent Cody Chesser provided park-related updates. He announced that the Henry Park Playground Large Play Unit was completed and open for use. Although no formal feedback had been gathered, he noted that children were frequently seen enjoying the new equipment. The commission discussed the possibility of a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and Ms. Daub mentioned that hosting the event over Memorial Day weekend was being considered, although plans had not yet been finalized.

Mr. Chesser continued, noting that renovations at Stephen Decatur Park were underway, with new climbing structures anticipated by late April or early May. He informed the Commission that the River of Kindness project had received full approval from the Mayor and Council and was scheduled to start in March, adding that he was collaborating with the Jesse Klump Memorial Foundation to coordinate the next steps.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Daub requested a motion to adjourn. On a motion made by Ms. Dufendach and seconded by Ms. Gerhart, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kate Daub*

Kate Daub  
Special Projects Administrator



# Mayor & Council of Berlin

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[www.berlinmd.gov](http://www.berlinmd.gov)

April 29, 2025

Cindy Stone  
Director, Community Development Programs  
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization  
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development  
7800 Harkins Road  
Lanham, MD 20706

Subject: SFY25 CBDG Application – Town of Berlin

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Berlin Parks Commission to express our strong support for the demolition of the existing multipurpose facility located at 130 Flower Street in Berlin, Maryland. Following a comprehensive assessment of the building's deteriorating condition and careful evaluation of the significant safety risks it presents, we believe that demolition is necessary to protect our community's safety and well-being.

The facility has fallen into a serious state of disrepair, with years of deferred maintenance leading to numerous critical safety and structural issues. Visible deterioration includes a crumbling foundation, roof leaks, and weakened, unstable walls, each of which poses a direct risk to public safety. In addition to these structural concerns, the building's electrical and plumbing systems are severely outdated and no longer meet current code standards, further heightening the risks. Taken together, these issues render the building unsuitable for any public use. The extent of damage and the rising cost of necessary repairs make restoration neither practical nor economically feasible.

Of particular concern to the Parks Commission is the close proximity of the deteriorating multipurpose building to the newly renovated playground and basketball courts at Henry Park. Thanks to the funding we received from the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program, we were able to replace outdated equipment and transform this area into a vibrant, welcoming space that now serves as a gathering point for neighborhood children and families. However, the success of this revitalization effort is being compromised by the blighted multipurpose building located just across the street. As children flock to the park, we are deeply concerned for their safety. The building's advanced state of deterioration, potential presence of hazardous materials, and overall visual blight pose significant risks to the health and well-being of our young residents. Addressing this issue is critical to preserving our children's physical safety and the long-term success of our community investments.

Given the declining state of the structure and the escalating costs of maintaining a building that no longer meets safety standards, we strongly believe that demolition is the most responsible course of action. Continuing to operate the building in its current condition would endanger public safety and impose unnecessary financial burdens on the town.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your support. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at the information below.

Sincerely,

*Kate Daub*

Kate Daub  
Special Projects Administrator  
Staff Liaison, Berlin Parks Commission  
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