

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Planning Commission Chairman, Dick Oliver and Town Manager, Maureen Hartman

SUBJECT: Street Lighting

DATE: October 23, 2017

On October 19, 2017 we met with Jim Smith from Delmarva Power and Light (DPL). The purpose of the meeting was twofold:

- (1) To mitigate the number of complaints from nearby residents about the brightness and design of the new lights on Canal Drive and
- (2) To seek information from DPL about the availability of alternative lighting designs that we might consider as we move forward slowly and carefully with recommending designs to move the town toward adopting future fixtures that might increase safety and security but minimize light scatter and pollution.

We agreed that the Canal Drive issue is within the sole purview of the town manager and she will work with DPL to ensure that the light shades fabricated by Don Chrobot are installed as soon as possible. We hope that this will solve or at least substantially mitigate the lighting pollution problem and demonstrate that the town is responsive to citizens' concerns. This is not a viable solution for adoption in other areas of town.

The rest of the meeting was wide ranging covering many issues. We will try to summarize the major points and planned future actions.

Mr. Smith pointed out that issues and dilemmas are shared by coastal towns up and down the shore. We agreed that by comparison South Bethany's problems are less complex since it is entirely a residential community. It does not share the complexities involved with lighting commercial areas and boardwalks. Nevertheless, South Bethany has the challenge of trying to bring a town up to more modern standards where the existing lights were installed in the 1960's and 1970's when the town was much more sparsely populated.

During our conversation we kept returning to the subject of LED lights. LED's use less energy and create less heat and last literally for years. Over the past several years, the upfront cost of LED's for home use have declined rapidly. A bulb that was ten dollars a couple of years ago is now four dollars. Consequently, the payback time for the higher initial investment is much shorter. Many homeowners are converting entirely to LED lights entirely to reduce the cost of power. Dick volunteered that he is among them. Mr. Smith observed that LED's are the way of the future but that the technology is evolving very quickly and that what is available in the marketplace now may be very different in a year or two. Right now, the LED's that DPL has installed have been widely believed to be too bright, though new products from their supplier may address that problem.