



Greater Olney Civic Association

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Our Website Address: <http://www.goca.org>

GOCA MEETING - NOVEMBER 9, 1999

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Kelley. Following introductions, the floor was opened for Public Comments.

Mary Gardiner stated that she and her husband were moving to upstate New York, but before leaving she wanted to thank GOCA for all our support and good things that we do. She will remember this group as a model. She noted too, that an idea had occurred to her as she was preparing to move. She suggested that another aspect of the Olney Days Festival might be a homecoming event. Brookeville had opened its bicentennial event with a homecoming event in which they had invited everyone who had lived in Brookeville and had moved away. She hoped we would consider adding something like that to our Festival. She also encouraged everyone to attend the music festival Community Concerts is coordinating for July 14-16 as part of the year's celebration of the millennium.

Paul Jarosinski noted that there had been an article in the Gazette featuring Helene Rosenheim recognizing all the volunteer work she does for the community.

Ron Berger noted that he had received a video tape called Year 2000 and You from the County government. It is a good presentation of what they think people might need to do to prepare for the new year and what to expect. The copy will be in the Library for those interested in checking it out.

The minutes were approved with no corrections or additions. The agenda was approved with one addition regarding the extension of Brighton Dam Rd to Bordley. and no deletions.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Olney Theatre Expansion Plans -Proposed Restaurant/Pub/Inn - Bill Miller, the developer of the proposed restaurant, pub and room country inn. He has purchased the 4 acres within this cultural zone west of the Olney Theatre building. He has worked with their architect to put together a campus-type plan for the theatre. They Theatre has gotten \$1 million from County Executive Duncan and \$2 million from the State. They are now fundraising for the remainder of the money they need. The new main stage will cost \$4 million.

Bill noted that he came to live in Olney when he was 8 years old when his father was involved in the development of the Longwood Recreation Center. He noted also that the Hallowell Corporation bought the property next to the Olney Theatre and built 430 homes under the direction of Bill Haussman. Haussman also helped the theatre with the development of the Planned Cultural Zone to develop the theatre and its various uses. There is an approved preliminary plan that was approved in 1991. Part of the land was recorded.

He is developing his four acres as an inn and restaurant. He indicated that he had an agreement with the Theatre to move the location of his building from the original site indicated on the preliminary plan. He is proposing a 185 seat restaurant and a 30 room in which is the size facilities the preliminary plan called for.

Bill noted that two events had to occur before the plan could move forward. Both have taken place. Old Vic had to be put in and the State had to widen Rte. 108. Old Vic has been built with a cut for the entrance to the Theatre property. In response to concerns expressed by the Lake Hallowell homeowners about what they will see from their homes, Bill plans to add more landscaping between his building and their homes. In response to concerns about overflow parking in the neighborhood, they have added spaces on site. They have a formalized agreement with the Theatre with cross easements for parking. Their preliminary plan is scheduled to go before the Park & Planning (P&P) on Dec 16th. The Planned Cultural zone was placed on both the Theatre and the Hallowell 4-acre property that Miller now owns. He noted that in 1989 the County Council created this

zone and put it on this property outlining the proposed uses. In 1991, they went through subdivision on the theatre property and 1 lot was created. They then presented detailed plans to the P&P. Once Rte 108 and Old Vic were done, it was time to move onto the Hallowell property Miller now owns. Miller's property is not a recorded lot and that is what the hearing is for in December. Then they will go in with a detailed site plan. Miller noted that the plan presented in 1989 was just a concept plan and they are now doing the detailed plan. Much of the land is in a reforestation area.

Miller noted that the concept plan included an actor's residence, but the earlier plan was just a concept plan. There are no plans to build on now, but the Theatre may build it later. Their building includes a terrace that will face the trees and there will be a walkway that will connect the restaurant to the Theatre. With respect to internal traffic, there are now 3 access points to the site, at the light and at the east and west ends of the property. Traffic mostly moves counterclockwise and most of the parking is in the rear. With this development, they anticipate a lot of shared parking. So some traffic will come in Theatre access points and other will come in from Old Vic. They anticipate that people will drive in past the Theatre, drop passengers off at the restaurant and then go park at the Theatre. There will eventually be a connection from Old Vic into the Theatre parking lot.

The following points were made during the questions and answers following the presentation:

- Some of the property is in an RE-2 zone, but none of this property has been subdivided.
- Miller is designating more land than required as open space. There is an area in which they will be doing reforestation - in perpetuity with a conservation easement.
- There is some wetlands in the RE-2 area. They had approximated the limits of the wetlands before, but now that doing more detailed plans, they have met with the Corps of Engineers who confirmed their estimate. The wetlands are mostly limited to the ditch and that still allows for a residential use in front of the ditch and in the area of the inn, etc.
- Their storm water management plan has been approved. It will consist of a small water-quality structure that drains to Lake Hallowell. It consists of a dry pond, and sand filters. It was always intended that this site would drain into Lake Hallowell, so they have a waiver for quantity control.
- They noted 2 mistakes on the plan. It indicates underground parking. They have discussed this idea, but currently are not moving in that direction. The plan indicated 60+ patio seats. They are limited to 185 seats and these would be used in place of 60 of the inside seats.
- The plan indicates a limitation of 7,500 sq. ft. for the inn and they feel they cannot do 30 rooms in 7,500 sq. ft. So, they are asking that this limitation be lifted as well as some of the traffic limitations that have been muted by improvements made since the plan was put together. P&P can state in a subdivision approval that they lift this limitation and that new limitations will be determined at site plan review. This is what Miller is hoping for.
- They have not designed the building yet, so do not know the total square footage of the building yet. Bill plans to recreate the Olney Inn and the building will be more than one story, The footprint of the building would be 19,000 sq. ft. if the building was all on one level. What they are submitting is in conformance with the '89 approval. Bill stated that both he and the theater would like some of the traffic limitations removed.
- On the concept plan they had to show the intended uses, but not necessarily in the exact intended location. It turned out that the location proposed for the restaurant/inn was in the middle of a treed area, so they moved it.
- Jim Folk noted that in the Preliminary Plan the building was shown in still a different location than now being shown in. The area the building is shown in the preliminary plan as a low area that might be useful to the Theatre for an outside use.
- Dave Eskenazi asked Miller about his intent to keep the building and manage it. Miller indicated that he did not think a large chain would not be interested because the facility was too small. He thought they might form a group to operate it, or they might find a suitable small operator. He did not want to make a commitment on the operation of the restaurant/inn.
- The property Miller purchased is 4.27 acres and about 1/3 is treed. The plan calls for 430 parking spaces. The Theatre now has close to 300 and is slotted for 313. They can build approximately another 50 spaces and Miller has 95 spaces on his piece. They are only required to have 399, but have proposed 430 to avoid on-street parking by patrons.
- Mike Kelley asked how tall their building would be. They indicated that the limit on the site is 70' which is the height of the Theatre, but their building would not be that tall. Didn't know exact height cause not designed yet. Miller did agree to building the berm first to shield the residents from the construction. He noted, too, that the land is lower there and with the berm they will not see the cars and the first level of the building. But, they might see the top level.
- The time for construction would be approximately 9-12 months.

Jim Folk noted that the Lake Hollowell Homeowners Association was contacted by the Theatre and Bill Miller in 1998. The plan they were shown then did not go to site plan, so their association did not take any formal action. Their association take the zoning plan for the cultural zone and the approved preliminary plan for the whole site as a guide to what should be permitted on this site. He noted that the PCC is a unique zone, a lot of thought went into the wording of the description of the zone and the intent in creating a cultural zone. Development of the Theatre and the inn/restaurant is consistent with what people expected that bought homes in proximity of the Theatre property. The major difference they see between the preliminary plan and this plan is the location of the inn/restaurant that has now been moved outside the trees on the west end of the site. This is a concern of their residents. In their comments to P&P they point out the difference in the number of seats, number of parking spaces, and the layout of the building. These need to be addressed and thought out in the planning process. Either they should follow the preliminary plan or go through the process to get changes. There seems to be a piece missing. One thing that bothers them is that if this is a "cultural zone" that Bill Miller and the Theatre are not presenting this proposal together. This leaves them with concern about the long term relationship between the two facilities. Before all of the buildings were on the Theatre's property and Hollowell property east of the trees. He noted that they would be limiting their comments to P&P to the differences between this and the earlier preliminary plan.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Mike reported that:

- Some concerns had been raised by the new director of Guide, the counseling group that rent the room that we meet in about the way we have been leaving the room after our meetings after the September. They have found trash around the room and furniture is not being put back where it belongs. Several GOCA officers meet with the new Guide director, the Center director and other Recreation Dept. representatives to discuss these concerns. The Guide director noted that she has developed specific furniture arrangements in order to create an environment that enhances the counseling services they provide. To avoid having to hurriedly rearrange the furniture before early morning meetings with clients, she has left a drawing and a photograph on the wall near the door showing the furniture layout. In the course of discussing the use of the room we currently meet in, we discussed several of issues including the problem with security when we stay after the center closes - each time we open the doors, we set off the alarm and the lack of access to the center's restroom. That led to a discussion of the possibility of using other parts of the center for our meetings. That led to a proposal that we try to use the first floor lounge for our meetings. The furniture can be arranged so that the room will hold 30 or so people and will provide access to the restrooms. We will have to leave the building by the side door in the social hall. The downside with that room is that it does sometimes get stuffy and if we have to open the door for air circulation before the center closes, it could be noisy, and if there are issues that unexpectedly bring out more people than we normally get it would be harder to accommodate that. However, in most cases, we would have the option of moving into the social hall if necessary. There are also some security issues that need to be resolved, but the staff is working on that. We did agree to hold our December meeting there as a trial

OLD BUSINESS

Signage at Olney Golf Center -Rick Coburn reported that the Board of Appeals did not approve the signage that had been proposed for the center. What was approved was a compromise that was acceptable to the surrounding residents (SEROCA). The size of the sign is down to 9 ft. and will be double posted, more rustic in appearance. But, the 9 ft. has to start at the average level within a 20 ft. radius of the spot. The sign approved was similar to the one approved in '96. The sign will be more subdued, won't attract customer necessarily, but will be more acceptable to the residents. Joe Hess thought that SEROCA had gotten blind-sided in '96. They were so concerned with the concept of the center that they did not realize The sign was part of the approval.

Muncaster Mill Traffic Safety Issues/Upper Rock Creek Master Plan Study - Rich Kopanda reported that we still do not have accident data from the County police, but that we will begin to draft a letter to the State and will see if data is in by then. If not, they will just rely on anecdotal evidence. He hoped to have it completed by the next meeting.

Rich noted as well that, in connection with the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan study, he had been in contact with Tom Welch, the person putting the Upper Rock Creek Alliance together. They are calling themselves PURC, Protect Upper Rock Creek. They want to focus on water/ground water issues. They are trying to approach all groups in the watershed area. They are still supportive of our Muncaster Mill effort and will get a draft of the letter. They got some maps from Park & Planning that showed the watershed in 2 planning areas. Two groups have already given \$1,000 each. Rich and Mike thought that GOCA would address the issue along Muncaster Mill between Norbeck Rd. and Bowie Mill Rd., and PURC would address the issues would take it from there as a part of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan review now underway.

Cary Lamari noted that the County Council asked their staff to review the widening of Muncaster Mill Rd and reactivate the ICC alignment of Rte. 115. Khalid has asked P&P's Transportation staff to look at Muncaster Mill as part of the situation between

Georgia Ave and Rte. 370. They will do this as a part of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan review. They will look at Muncaster Mill, the MidCounty Highway, and the proposed ICC..

Norwood Road Closure - Mike Kelley reported that it had caught people in the area by surprise that the closing of Norwood Rd. would take about a year. Within the last month, he, Jim Folk, Jerry Miron, and representatives from NEMPAC and the Blake High School feeder developments met with Edgar Gonzalez of the County's Dept. of Public Works Engineering Div. Mr. Gonzalez indicated that the project will begin in January, but not the closure. They anticipate that the closure will not actually begin until June 2001. The road closure is needed because of the change in elevation of the new road. The reason for the difference in the elevation is the result of a requirement by Park and Planning for an equestrian trail under Norwood Rd. This is causing the 18 ft. difference in the elevation of the road. It is being scheduled so that it only affect one school year. The reason the road will have to be closed is that the Corp of Engineers had determined that the detour around the closure would not take long enough time to warrant the expense of a temporary bypass. In part that is because they anticipate a number of intersection improvements having been completed before the detour is needed that will facilitate traffic flow. These include Ednor & New Hampshire, Norwood and Layhill, and Layhill and Norbeck. We do have more time to educate the community to make them aware of what is planned. The consensus was that we may want to have a separate meeting to present the plans to the community. Mike noted that we have reserved the large meeting room at the Library on the first Thursday of each month, so we could use that room for this meeting.

Cary L. hoped that the project would be delayed until Norbeck Rd is widened, but there are no current plans for that. The new road will be 4 lanes in places and 6 lanes in others. The school schedule is not an overriding concern to the County because the detour will take less time than when Sherwood went to Northwood, but they seem to have overlooked the impact on the many commuters through this area.

The consensus was that we host an informational meeting later, closer to the time of the closure. We may want to have a smaller group get together to explore the possibility of changing the plans.

Olney Days Festival 2000 - Helene Rosenheim reported that we had an initial planning meeting for the Olney Days Festival that is scheduled for the weekend of May 19-21, 2000. We outlined most of the events for the weekend. We plan to continue the concert at Olney Theatre on Friday night and she noted that she liked the suggestion Mary Gardiner made and would look at a way of incorporating that idea into the concert event. On Saturday, we will have the car and auto show at Fletcher's. We decided to abandon the Swim Meet, but expand some of the other activities at Olney Manor Park that afternoon and evening. The Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department plan to repeat some of the carnival type games they did at B J Pumpnickel's Fall Festival in addition to continuing the Home Run Derby. On Sunday we will not have the Walk Your Pet-a-thon, but will, of course, have the Parade. We also plan to have the t-shirt design competition again.

Two new events we are considering is some type of golf tournament at Trotter's Glen, possibly on Friday that would be one fundraiser; and a bull roast similar to what the Fire Department did last year as a part of their 75th anniversary celebration. However, we would like to move it to a site, possibly the hospital grounds instead of at Woodlawn. We are trying to come up with a theme that expresses the idea that Olney's future being built on its past. Also, Roni Septoff, Monica Friedman (a friend of Roni's) and Laura Weiss will be working together on the ad book.

Extension of Bordley Rd - Rick Coburn reported that he drove along Bordley from the corner of Brighton Dam Rd to Georgia Ave. and found that 2/3's of the road was paved and 1/3rd is indistinct, but passable with a 4-wheel drive, a distance of about 1.3 miles. Pluses for the commuters are that (1) this road is in the Olney Master Plan connecting Georgia Ave to Brookeville between Gray Haven and Zion Rds.; and (2) it will eliminate some of the east-west traffic going through Brookeville. It doesn't relieve traffic on Brighton Dam Rd going north on Georgia. Rick recommended that we support the extension. He anticipates opposition because it shifts traffic not now there to Bordley.

Tom Luke, a resident on Brookeville Rd west of Grey Haven who has been very active in Brookeville. He was told this project is intended to relieve traffic through southern Brookeville. In the Sandy Spring Master Plan, it is suppose to accommodate incidental traffic from Howard County. He was out of the area for a couple of years and upon returning, learned that they are now planning to build this road, but he has not been able to determine any consensus for why the road is being built. Nancy Dacek's office says that it is a safety issue to prevent homes from being isolated in the event of flooding on Brighton Dam Rd that occurs occasionally. The town of Brookeville say it is needed to reduce traffic in Brookeville. Brookeville Farm residents don't understand why it is being built. There is already a problem on his portion of Brookeville Rd with difficulties at the Brookeville/Rte. 108 intersection during the AM rush hour There are multiple accidents, cars traveling at high speeds that make it unsafe to walk along Brookeville Rd. There can be 20 cars backed up on Brookeville Rd trying to enter or cross Rte 108. In addition, nothing has been done to address the problem of speeding traffic on Brookeville Rd. Serious commuters going from Howard Co to Gaithersburg will use these roads to save a few minutes from slower routes a little further south. This extension will add even more traffic to this road, principally traffic from Howard County. He does not think the people planning this extension have address how to slow traffic down using these roads and to pulses the cars with traffic signals so cars come in clusters than spread out randomly. He asked that the extension not be put in until the existing problems on the western portion of Brookeville

Rd be addressed. If that were to happen, he would not object to the extension. He asked that GOCA recommend to Ron Berger, the hearing examiner for the County on this issue, that the extension be delayed while the County looks at measures to slow traffic on Brookeville Rd and the eastern aspects of Brighton Dam Rd..

John O'Loughlin of Brookeville Farms thought that Bordley would be further north than Tom thought, but felt that Tom's points were valid. He questioned why they are building this road when they do not know where the Brookeville bypass will be yet. He noted, too, that many of the residents in Brookeville Farms are adamantly opposed to this extension. In reviewing some of the records in this case, he found that in 1980, the road P-23 straightened Brighton Dam Rd and northern bypass of Brookeville. In 1990, R-23 was taken from the Master Plan. Then in 1993 or 94, Bordley was put in as part of the approval of Brookeville Farms and labeled P-23, but it is not the same road. He found documentation saying that the extension was needed for emergency purposes because of flooding on Brighton Dam that would isolate residents. There was a 1990 memo in the file in which someone complained that when the Hawlings River and Reddy Branch bridges flood, people in the area of Brookeville Farms area will be isolated. At about the time they were determining how costly it would be to fix the bridge, Brookeville Farms development plans came in and offered a less costly solution. Tom felt that there were more instances of isolating situations in the northern parts of the County because of snow and fallen trees, but there are no proposals for building roads or bridges before this. He presented some traffic data: traffic is estimated to reach 2,500 cars by 2020. In 1972, there were 275 cars on Brighton Dam Rd during the 7 am and 7 pm rush hours. In 1986, 359 cars. In 1996, 1592 cars. In 1996, during the AM rush hour, there were 107 cars going east and 218 going west from Howard Co. and in the PM, 74 cars going west and 174 going east to Howard County. The Brookeville Bypass will take 80% of the north/south traffic out of Brookeville.

Rick noted that the north/south bypass will likely be south of this road. Both north/south and east/west, the town of Brookeville deterrent to traffic, but not enough to keep Brookeville from being inundated. This proposal offers some east/west relief to Brookeville. Traffic on Bordley would not be much greater than what is going through Brookeville now. He noted, too, that Bordley Rd was in the Brookeville Farm plan. Dave Eskenazi suggested that we need to look at this in the totality of this with the Brookeville Bypass which was meant to keep traffic off Brookeville Rd. Cary L. suggested that there are regional and local safety issues related to this road project. His concern would be what does this do for local safety and what is the impact on the larger region. The added traffic is inevitable and we need to share the pain that added traffic results in. Tom thought we needed to have some broader discussion about traffic in this area before a decision is made on this road that he feels the County will say is a solution to the problem without addressing the problems on Brookeville Rd. Rick did not agree that we need to defer the decision on this project while addressing these other broader issues. Rich Kopanda suggested, too, that our comments should be limited to this project. Helene suggested that there are other ways and opportunities such as the upcoming master plan review process for addressing the issues related to high speed traffic on Brookeville Rd and access to Rte. 108.

Rick Coburn moved that:

GOCA SUPPORT THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF BORDLEY DRIVE TO GEORGIA AVENUE.

The motion was seconded by Helene Rosenheim, and , after a brief additional discussion, passed overwhelmingly.

NEW BUSINESS

1999 GOCA Award Nominations - Helene Rosenheim reported that part of what makes Olney such a successful community is the many people that give of themselves in many different ways either as volunteers or a part of their job. Each year GOCA likes to recognize people who have made noteworthy contributions by presenting a series of awards. But, there are many people doing significant things for the community that we are not aware of. To help us identify deserving individuals and groups, we ask the community to submit nominations for our annual awards. We will be distributing nominations forms and in January we will be putting together a ballot for the 1999 GOCA Awards. We then send that ballot to our members in good standing, i.e. have paid their 1999 dues. The ballots are tallied at our February meeting and awards are presented at a public ceremony at Longwood Recreation Center on the first Sunday in March. She noted that we do not just want to recognize people that have been involved through GOCA, but those who have contributed on their own or through the many other organizations that help to shape this community.

Discussion of the Special Presentation - Olney Theatre Development Plans

Jim noted that there a lot needs to happen before the 12/16 hearing and they have asked for a delay in the hearing. The P&P staff member reviewing this application must make some decisions 2 weeks before the hearing date and there are a number of unresolved issues. Dave Eskenazi noted that this concept has been in place for a long time, that it was not a surprise. He was unhappy with the uncertainty of the limits of this project, and with the idea that this developer might not see this through to the end. He noted that if we support the subdivision, we would also be supporting the placement of the building as shown on the plan presented that evening. Rick Coburn felt the key is this commercial use on this property as opposed to where the building was originally proposed to be on the Theatre property. The question is if this is not going to be part of the theatre property and it seems to be a use that is consistent with the Theatre, where should it go.

Bill Miller noted that the Planning Board can lift the size limitation or replant. There is a limited site this building can be on. They tried to stay out of the trees, and after you put in the entrances, and the circular road, that limits what you can do. They do not plan to do a more detailed plan until they get to subdivision.

Miller plans to meet with the Lake Hallowell residents once again and then with P&P staff prior to the hearing in December. Since it is after our next meeting, the consensus was that we should wait to see what the outcome of those meetings is before we take a formal position on this application. Our meeting will only be 2 days before the hearing, we can let P&P staff know what our concerns are and the issues we are looking for additional information on before making out decision on what our position will be.

Special Exception Legislation - Cary Lamari noted that on 11/16 there will be a hearing on legislation proposed by Betty Ann Kranhke dealing with the issues raised in Mossburg lawsuit. Currently there are 4 Council members in support of the legislation and he suggested GOCA might want to consider adding their support to this bill.

Following a few announcements, the meeting was adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Helene Rosenheim
Recording Secretary

People in attendance: Ron Berger, Rick Coburn, Helene Rosenheim, Mike Kelley, Rich Kopanda, Roy Peck, Peggy Vaughn (Gazette), Dave Eskenazi, Thomas Luke, Ed Wallington, Gus Bauman, Bill Miller, Jim Folk, Paul Jarosinski, Christie Berman, Michael Kay, Sandy and Larry Shulman, Ed Partington, David Burnett, John O'Longhlin, Khalid Afzal, and Joe Hess