



Greater Olney Civic Association

Post Office Box 212 Olney, Maryland 20830

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

GOCA MEETING - DECEMBER 14, 1999

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Kelley. Before beginning the business of the meeting, Mike asked that we observe a moment of silence in memory of GOCA's Second Vice President Henry Alley who was killed in an automobile accident the Sunday after Thanksgiving on Rte, 108 in Howard County.

Mike explained that the meeting was being held in the lounge as a test. By meeting in this room we also have access to the restrooms and the phone, something we didn't have upstairs. The trade off is that there is a little less space and the front door is locked after 9:00 pm, so unless we could hear someone knocking on the side door of the social hall, no one can get in after 9:00 and we have to leave by the side door of the social hall. If we find that the room is too hot or gets too crowded, we can move to the social hall. He asked for comments after the meeting about our continuing to use this room. He noted that we will try the art room next month.

Following introductions, the floor was opened for Public Comments.

- Ed Partington asked which location had been selected for the post office. In discussing it with the postmaster, the postmaster had indicated that he did not know for sure which had been selected. Mike indicated that as far as we knew, the Postal Service had selected the Finneyrock site on Georgia Ave north of Rte. 108 at Hillcrest and that they were moving ahead with completing that purchase. We had not heard anything different.

- Joe Hess brought everyone's attention to the wet spots in the ceiling tiles above us. He noted that there are regularly wet spots in the ceiling tiles in lounge we were sitting in at Longwood for the past eight years. The tiles have been replaced numerous times, and the area above the tiles has been examined by Rec. Dept maintenance staff. But, no one has found the cause of the leak. He thought that a request from GOCA for something being done to resolve the problem might get more response than from a resident who happens to use the facility.

- Rich Kopanda noted that the bike path on Emory Lane is scheduled to begin construction in the Spring with completion in September. There was a six month delay in beginning the construction because of additional planning that had to be done because they decided to add a path on the north side of a portion of the road between Monty Ct. and Walking Fern with a crosswalk to the south side.

The agenda was approved with the addition of a special election to fill the vice presidency vacated by Henry Alley's death. The minutes were approved with no corrections or additions. Mike announced that we would begin emailing minutes next month and reminded everyone to get their email addresses to Helene, if they have one they want their minutes sent to. That can be done by either going to GOCA web site and send an email to the webmaster or email Helene at helener@pressroom.com.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Art Brodsky reported that the correspondence included a PEPCO bill, Village J C., a note from James Creek designating their GOCA delegate, a copy of a letter from the Oak Grove HOA to the Dept. of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) about the need for a 4-way stop at Carter Mill and Old Baltimore Rd., letter from the Mont. Co. Convention and Visitors that they are planning stages for developing a county calendar of events and requesting information on any events we would like to include, and a request for donations from the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lori Wilen reported that there is \$700 in checking and \$3,000 in savings. She noted that Roni Septoff is trying to collect 2 outstanding Olney Days Festival donations. Mike noted that Natalie Cantor, Director of the MidCounty Regional Services Center is helping us with trying to get some County funding to cover some of the Festival expenses, principally through a grant program administered by the Dept. of Recreation which Natalie told them today that looked promising. We are asking for the full amount of our expenses for the weekend of \$12,000-\$15,000, but would be happy with any portion of that. Those funds would be by FY 2001.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Mike reported that:

- The Olney Town Shopping Center is now up for sale. It does not seem that anything will happen with their development plans for some time, and therefore, with the plans for the ramp connecting the two centers. While he had not been told you it is, he did indicate that there was a perspective buyer.

OLD BUSINESS

Olney Theatre Development Plans - Mike noted that the hearing originally scheduled for December 16th has been rescheduled for some time in mid or late January. At Mike's request Jim Folk summarized the current status of the request for subdivision for the former Hallowell property adjacent to the Olney Theatre. The Lake Hallowell received the plan submitted by Bill Miller in October. In November, the Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association (HOA) submitted its comments to the Park & Planning Commission (P&P). There were 5 major points they addressed:

(1) The already approved development and preliminary plan are satisfactory to their development; (2) The proposed amendment revised the development plan necessitating an amendment to that plan also, specifically addressing the 200 ft. setback requirement; (3) changes to the approved preliminary plan should not be permitted, specifically the re-siting of a larger restaurant/pub/inn (hereafter referred to as the pub/inn) and the loss of an effective ring road for flow of traffic; (4) the absence of the integration between the pub/inn and the Theatre lessens, if not eliminates the pub/inn's cultural contributions to the site; and (5) details are required to do a thorough analysis, such as building elevations, architecture, landscaping, etc. They understand that these details will be done during the site plan phase. From their experience with the Hallowell Corporation relative to the plans for their development, they understand that some details may change over time, but think that these details are important enough that they need to be spell out more clearly at this point in the decision process.

Subsequent to the last GOCA meeting, the invited Bill Miller to meet with some of the Arden Woods residents to further discuss their concerns. Following that meeting, several letters have been written to P&P and Jim outlined some of the points made in those letters: (1) the approved plans were the basis upon which they purchased their homes and this amendment is much different; (2) they support the P&P approved preliminary plan; (3) the pub/inn must be tied to the Theatre and relocated on its original site; (4) its size must not increase from the approved 13,500 sq. ft.; (5) the ring road must be completed before any developments to the cultural center; (6) four access points may no longer be required since the Theatre's seating today is much less than envisioned in the original plans; (7) Old Vic should not be the principal entrance and exit as it is the only access for Arden Woods; and, (8) the amendment clearly requests a stand-alone commercial venture not connected with the Theatre's cultural center.

The Lake Hallowell has asked Nancy Floreen to represent them on this issue and she suggested that the issue that is moving an active commercial aspect closer to residents. The Theatre is not getting the money anticipated money for landscaping, etc. Moving the pub/inn raises concerns that it is losing its association with the Theatre which is a key piece of the original concept.

One Lake Hallowell resident expressed concern about the environmental impact of relocating the building. They have already had a number of problems with water in their basements and had to spend thousands of dollars to fix the problem. They are concerned that if there is a change to the existing topography on top of the hill. They wonder where the water runoff will go. There is a subterranean problem that has now been repaired. There is concern that this is cause the problem to return.

Rich Kopanda suggested that special care needs to be taken with the water as the development proceeds.

Ed Partington suggested that they be sure to plant the right kinds of trees and that they not have a paved parking lot near the houses.

Mike Kay noted that water planning issues are part of the site plan and lots of options exist for eliminating the run-off and that problem can usually be easily addressed.

A third Lake Hollowell resident expressed his concern about what he sees as a total disconnect with the Theatre because of it not facing the Theatre and because of the size of the building footprint being 40% larger than originally proposed. He noted also that the hill now between this property and the Arden Woods was created by dumping soil, asphalt, concrete, excavation soil from construction of Arden Woods homes. The hill was originally 6-8 ft lower than it is now. The Hollowell Corp. put construction materials there and after two years of complaining, Hollowell seeded the hill and let grass grow on it.

Jim F. added that the residents were surprised with the extent of the problem so far. Though it seems on surface not a big deal, but they are concerned that any changes would exacerbate the problem.

A fourth Hollowell resident is concerned about the traffic and safety issues. When they purchased their house, they reviewed the development plan. They were concerned, not with the Theatre, but with the pub/inn. If their development only has 1 entrance and they have to share it with the pub/inn, she feels a light should be put in. They are concerned about the delivery trucks, trash truck, and other business related traffic. The exit to Rte. 108 is already dangerous. Now when backups at Old Baltimore, people go into their development to look for a shortcut and they are concerned that patrons will do the same thing when it is hard to get out onto Rte. 108 from Old Vic. She concluded by noting that she did not object to the Theatre, just this commercial development.

Roy Peck noted that there is a difference between surface and subterranean water and we need to be sure both are addressed. Also, the relocation of Batchellor's Forest may increase counts enough to warrant a stop light. But, it was noted that the relocation was number of years off. He also asked about the possibility of a land swap that would put the pub/inn on land owned by the Theatre.

Nancy noted that originally the pub/inn focused and oriented toward the Theatre and was further from the residences. Overtime it has moved closer to the neighboring homes and turned away from the Theatre. The pub/inn is now 2 times further from the Theatre than it is from the homes in the current plan. This shifts all the activity from the pub/inn closer to the homes. Also, the road /access has changed and the plan is a lot different from what was originally proposed. The traffic issue is a concern now because Old Vic is the only access to Arden Woods and was not fully appreciated when the development plan was done originally. Making the Old Vic access the primary access to the pub/inn has significant impacts on Old Vic that were not anticipated.

Joe Hess asked, if all the parties could agree, would it be possible to remove the entrance onto Old Vic and make all of the access to the whole site from Rte. 108. Nancy Floreen said they would have to ask Bill Miller, but that she thought it would be a big improvement from the perspective of the neighbors, particularly since there is less seating anticipated at the Theatre than originally planned; and would reorient the traffic towards the Theatre which is where it was originally envisioned. Bill Miller indicated that when the hearing examiner looked at this originally, he conditioned phasing of the Theatre development plan construction on completion of Old Vic and the widening of Rte. 108. He noted too, that they have retained the ring road which he demonstrated by comparing the original plan and the current plan. He noted that they added a landscaped berm between the parking lot and the residences so minimize their view of the cars. Also, the land slopes in such a way that all that will be visible from the homes is a roofline of their building and the trees they plan to retain around the building. Miller added that he had been working with the Theatre for a number of years. He was brought in as architect to do the campus plan that the Theatre has used it to raise funding. He noted that Gene Counihan, President of the Theatre's Board of Directors was at the meeting to show the Theatre's support of his project.

Gus Bauman, Miller's attorney, noted that in the conceptual development plan the building for the pub/inn was sited on the property line and it was anticipated that the exact siting of all the features of the plan would be pinned down in the site plan process. Part of what they are doing with the relocation of their building is simply moving it off of the property line. He also stated that the County makes sure that the new development cannot add to an existing water problem. Sometimes it happens that the new development may alleviate or solve the problem. He didn't know if that would be the case here, but wouldn't be able to move ahead in the site plan process if they don't address this. He also wanted to assure us that they are working with the Theatre and have been cooperating for a long time and have a close association. He added that there are other things on that original development plan that are not happening, such as the relocation of the Grange building to the site and the Theatre is reconsidering where they want to place their new main stage. Bill's intent is to build the inn as a replica of the old Olney Inn. The building will be behind some trees facing the Theatre with connecting walkways. When the preliminary plan was done, the purpose was to record the Theatre property as a lot. They did a concept plan but it was not meant to reflect an exact location of buildings. The site plan done a year

later for the Theatre's portion of the project was to site the location of their buildings. The Council did elect to put the pub/inn in a PCC zone with certain limitations. They could have left it RE-2 like the land near Rte. 108. They are only asking GOCA's support for the subdivision to record the lot. At preliminary plan you show the general location of buildings. At site plan, all the issues will be discussed.

Another Lake Hollowell resident noted that there are now 2 legal entities. In the original circumstances there was one legal entity and things have changed. Their question is what is nature of the agreement between the 2 entities.

Bill Miller noted that the Theatre has uses in mind for its property - a new main stage and an amphitheatre. He plans to move ahead and he doesn't think the Theatre is interested in a land swap and they are moving ahead with their own plans.

The Theatre is concerned about the noise from Rte. 108 so they are thinking about putting the new main stage near Rte. 108 and putting the amphitheatre behind new main. The berm and the pub/inn would serve as a buffer from the residences..

Gene Counihan stated that the support of the community is key to the success of the Theatre. They just completed their most successful season ever. The first phase of their fundraising is about to close which gives them \$4 million in their building fund.. They have gotten \$2 million from the State and \$1 million from the County, but they were not getting any of it until they raised their million. The next Theatre will have 400 seats and they expect to break ground in Spring 2001 for parts of Phase I of the construction. As soon as they complete Phase I of the fundraising, they will begin the Phase II fundraising, and they need \$6 million for the phase II construction. They do not have a time line for that construction yet. The total Theatre expansion is a 6-10 year, \$15 million project. He believes they will have plans for the new main stage in 2000 and begin construction in 2001. Like the Lake Hollowell, they are an adjacent property owner and have worked closely with Miller and have said that the plans look good to them. They were not involved in the discussions of the size of the facility, but they want the best possible facility to support the Theatre and serve their patrons. He thinks their plan is compatible with the campus feeling they want to achieve. They are comfortable with what Bill Miller is proposing in light of their patrons and the kind of environment and experience they are hoping to create. They like that fact that they are not encroaching on their property line and that the healthy stand of trees will remain in the plan.

Dave Eskenazi asked that if the pub/inn went back, where would the Theatre go. Gene noted that he could not really answer that, but didn't think that they could put it on the property line. Nancy noted that the details will be addressed at site plan.

Gene noted that the Theatre has a recorded lot and can move ahead to site plan approved in '91 to be able to expand the Theatre main stage. The two separately owned properties were assigned the PCC zoning. Two years later the Theatre got their lot recorded, but for some reason, unbeknown to Gus Bauman, the Hollowell Corporation did not record their lot. In response to a question about the possibility of applying to record the lot without showing the location of the building and some of the other details, Gus noted that technically you can record a lot without details of the development, but practically you can't because the residents, Park & Planning and the Council want to see some details about your intentions. The development plan has a ring road so will have to be there. They are trying to catch-up to the planning stage the Theatre is at. Both have been working collaboratively to put together a coordinated plan. P&P told both parties a year ago that they should not think about coming in without showing that the 2 are working together.

Lori Wilen noted that some of the issued can't. be addressed until they get recorded. She is concerned that the development plans for the Theatre might get delayed because this lot is not recorded. Rick noted that the direction of the pub/inn is facing does not impact the relationship, especially if the Theatre is closer. He asked if Theatre had any concerns about the location of the building, the appearance, lighting, and noise from the pub/inn. Jim Folk noted that he personally felt that if Old Vic is closed that is something that he could take to the residents. Miller felt their building is as far from the houses as possible, xxx, kept the ring road, and put in the berm. He thinks this plan is much improved over the original plan. He noted that they have had 6 meetings with the residents and they have heard their concerns.

Joe Hess asked if the entrance onto Old Vic could be closed with an easement from the Theatre instead of access to a public road. Nancy thought that if they could work with the Theatre to establish an easement through the Theatre property to the benefit of the PCC zone. Gus and Bill thought that there was a legal requirement that their property have a direct access to a public road, so were not certain such an easement would satisfy that legal requirement.

Several people suggested that we would have the same discussion again when this goes to site plan and do not need to resolve all of these issues at this phase. Miller will move ahead whether GOCA supports them or not. So, GOCA needs to make a decision on whether or not to support the initial step in this process that is to get the lot recorded. A suggestion was made that the footprint be made reduced from 19,000 to 13,500 and moving the building closer to Rte.

108 and as close to the wetlands as possible. Another resident suggested that the recording of the lot is the penultimate action because once the lot is recorded, then they will be moving in lock step. They were told that the pub/inn would be par of the Theatre and they would be given to them. There is a disconnect now. There is a perception that these are 2 entities and that Miller can do what he wants to later - sell, whatever and this is a concern to them.

Miller replied to some of the concerns by noting that he is a father of 4 and concerned about the safety of children, but most of the commercial traffic would be during the day when children would be in school and lunch trade would be done by the time they are home. Also, the divided entrance at Old Vic was designed with the idea that it would be shared by the 60 homes and the Theatre campus. Old Vic was there when he acquired the property. When the government approved this zone, this was an indication that they expected something to be there by virtue of putting the infrastructure there. He didn't design the access, but has to live with it as designed. He also noted that he felt the current plan, in general, is an improvement over the original plan.

Rick Coburn moved that:

GOCA SUPPORT THE RECORDING OF THE SUBJECT LOT AND AT THE SAME TIME EXPRESS ITS CONCERNS ABOUT DRAINAGE, INTERNAL TRAFFIC FLOW, INGRESS AND EGRESS, SIZE OF THE FACILITY, AND OTHER CONCERNS OF THE ADJACENT COMMUNITY.

Joe Hess seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the motion was passed with one abstention and one opposed.

Transportation Issues - Mike noted that one 2/29 at 7:00 pm there will be a public forum at Blake HS concerning the closure of Norwood Rd between Layhill and New Hampshire. Based on our discussion at an earlier meeting, he is planning to invite the representative from the County's Dept. of Public Works and Transportation, Edgar Gonzalez to attend our January meeting. The purpose of that meeting will be to get more information to the community, rather than trying to get the decision to change.

Rich Kopanda reported that the Council has asked P&P to look at ways to improve traffic flows between Shady Grove and Georgia Ave and they will be doing that as a part of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan review over the next 2 years. They are looking at improvements to Muncaster Mill Rd that include making the road 4 lanes, and 2 alternatives using the ICC right of way. He noted that we got into this issue to make Muncaster Mill more safe. He is concerned that we could be told that it will be taken care of through the Master Plan process for the Rock Creek Master plan. The consensus was to continue to pursue. Our efforts may be helping the other process along. We want officials to continue to hear our concerns, and even if the ICC is approved, this improvement may still be needed. Rich indicated that he would continue to follow and pursue this effort.

Joe Hess noted that there continue to be problems at the intersection of Georgia Ave and Emory Lane because of the confusing markings on the road for turning movements. Rick noted that they are scheduled to begin the improvements to Emory this Spring, and they will address it, So he felt that they would not likely address it before then.

Olney Days Festival 2000 - Helene Rosenheim reported that we are moving ahead with the idea of adding a golf tournament to the weekend's activities. Also, she had been contacted by Phil Wolke of the Olney Chamber of Commerce who was interested in exploring the idea of the Chamber doing something like a carnival during that weekend as a fundraiser for them. She had suggested that they might want to take over the coordination of the activities associated with the bull roast following the parade on Sunday, with the understanding that GOCA would still want a percentage of the proceeds from the bull roast which we had planned to be a fundraiser for us. The consensus was that we continue to explore that idea with the Chamber. Roni Septoff has put together a proposal to submit to the Safeway to have coupons at the registers at the store in Olney for \$1 or \$2 donations would be added to their

NEW BUSINESS

Special Election - Mike noted that as a result of Henry Alley's death, we needed to hold a special election to fill the 2nd Vice President seat. Jim Folk, who lives in Lake Hallowell, the association Henry represented, had indicated to Mike that he would be willing to take the office. So Mike moved that

JIM FOLK BE ELECTED TO COMPLETE THE TERM OF SECOND VICE PRESIDENT VACATED BY THE DEATH OF HENRY ALLEY.

The motion was seconded by Helene Rosenheim and passed unanimously.

Following a few announcements, the meeting was adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Helene Rosenheim
Recording Secretary

People in attendance: Rick Coburn, Helene Rosenheim, Mike Kelley, Rich Kopanda, Roy Peck, Peggy Vaughn (Gazette), Dave Eskenazi, Ed Wallington, Gus Bauman, Gene Counihan, Jim Folk, Nancy Floreen, Lori Wilen, David Freedman, Christie Berman, Michael Kay, Tony Williams, Robbye Fox, Wendy Hertz, Scott Decker, Roy Mead, Joe Hess, Gary Lieber, Sharon Elswick, Art Brodsky, and Dennis Trietsch.