



Greater Olney Civic Association

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

GOCA MEETING - FEBRUARY 8, 2000

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

- Edward Partington noted that he was concerned with the number of pedestrians injured in the County. He suggested that we need to think of the safety of pedestrians when we build roads. They need to build sidewalks and those sidewalks need to be cleared of snow. He added that we should consider urging WMATA to extend the subway at least into Olney to prevent some of these accidents - as a life saving measure.

Jim Folk noted that normally they don't plow Old Baltimore, but children within 1 mile of Brooke Grove must walk to school and the County is not cleaning the sidewalks along there. Their homeowner's association did it themselves this time for \$2,000 because it was easier than fighting with the County. But, he felt it should have really been done by the County. Lori Wilen suggested that he take this issue to Montgomery County PTA and if they think it has merit, they will take it to the Presidents Assembly or the Delegates Assembly. Khalid Afzal, of Park & Planning staff, suggested that we copy the Council with any correspondence so they will become more aware of these pedestrian issues.

- Sammie Young, who has been serving as GOCA's representative to the ICC Citizen Advisory Committee since 1993, and serves on several other groups involved with the opposition to the Inter-County Connector (ICC) since 1973. He noted that Al Genetti has been appointed as the new head of Montgomery County Dept. of Public Works and Transportation. He was formerly with the Army Corps of Engineers and a West Pointer. Sammie thought that Genetti would be a consensus builder, but jumped in and immediately threw support to the ICC. In a newspaper article, he lives in Olney and everyone who lives there knows we need this road. Sammie suggested that GOCA write to him to welcome him to the Department and to let him know that GOCA has been opposed to the ICC for many years. Ed Weisel offered to draft a letter for Mike's signature. Ron suggested that while he is still an opponent and there may be many in the area who still oppose the road, there are many communities that are opposing the expansion or extension of primary roads because they feel they will attract traffic they could get if the ICC were built.

Dave Eskenazi didn't think there has been much candor in the discussion of the ICC lately. We need an open discussion of the issue. Depending on how it is designed, it might be ok. Joe Hess suggested that a sensible answer was something he had read about recently. They need to rejuvenate some areas that had been abandoned like Silver Spring. We can't just keep paving roads. Paul Jarosinski suggested that we should just send a letter to Genetti stating that we want to let him know that not everyone in Olney feels the ICC is a good idea. Mike suggested that we invite him to our April meeting to discuss this and several other issues, e.g., Norwood Rd, the Georgia Ave Busway, Muncaster Mill, that we could discuss with him.

Sammie agreed that there never had really been a full discussion of the issues, never been a discussion of the road alignment. There are 5 alternatives including a no-build alternative. It is just a study so far. When Glendenning stopped the process that put an end to the discussions. There is a 200 page report that is just sitting there, not being reviewed.

The consensus was that we write the letter Mike had suggested inviting Mr. Genetti to the April meeting.

- Paul Jarosinski noted that the high school baseball season will start in 3 weeks. GOCA wrote to Don Cochran, head of the Dept of Parks and Paul asked if we had heard anything in response. Art noted that we had just received a letter outlining what had been done and what work is planned.

-Mike reminded everyone that we are beginning to put together a list of email addresses so that we can send the minutes and agendas by email and reminded everyone who has email to let us know by putting it on the sign-in sheet or by sending it to Helene Rosenheim at helener@pressroom.com.

The January minutes were corrected to add Ron Berger's name to the list of attendees and there were 3 changes to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Art reported that the correspondence included a copy of the letter from Paula Kahla to Duncan suggested that they use the old Post Office building for some sort of town center building; a Civic Federation agenda, an Historic Society report of upcoming sites being evaluated either for inclusion or removal from the list of historic homes, and a letter from Gus Bauman on a no-grid traffic solution.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lori Wilen reported that she felt that we needed a fundraiser. Rich noted that when we change treasurer after the election, the books will need to be reviewed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership- The new associations in the area are: Brook Manor Estates, Norbeck Gove, Manor Oaks, Oatland Farm, Olney Acres, and The Preserve. We will approach them about becoming members. It was noted that we do not need to wait until the residents have taken control of their homeowners association from the builder. If the residents are interested in joining, most developers will go along with that.

Land Use - Properties that currently have development issues related to them are the: John's Tract at Emory & Ga Ave, Olney/Hillcrest Dr, Brown Property - upper New Hampshire Ave, Tridelpia Rd property - 5 lots purchased earlier by the Humane Society; Olney House - will have them at the April or May meeting. Khalid noted that the Olney House developer is talking to the Historic Preservation Society. They want to subdivide the lot into 2 lots with the Olney House on one lot and then they will build a new small office building on the other lot. Their original proposal would separate the springhouse on the property from the Olney House and disrupt the setting which is a concern for the Historic Society. The Society suggested a different way of subdividing and the developer is considering that.

Legislation - Ed Weisel noted that President's Day is Environmental Issues Day at the State Legislature. Usually it is an interesting and worthwhile day in Annapolis, talking with legislators on environmental issues.

ELECTION OF 2000 GOCA OFFICERS

Ron Berger reported that the slate of officers for 2000 is:

President - Mike Kelley
 Executive Vice President - Rich Kopanda
 First Vice President - Art Brodsky
 Second Vice President - Jim Folk
 Treasurer - Roy Peck
 Corresponding Secretary - Lori Wilen
 Recording Secretary - Helene Rosenheim

Rick Coburn would continue to be the immediate Past President.

Ron opened the floor to other nominations, but there were none. Ed Weisel moved that:

THE NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2000 GOCA OFFICERS BE CLOSED.

Paul Jarosinski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ron moved that:

THE SLATE BE VOTED IN BY ACCLAMATION.

Ed Weisel seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Mike reported that he got a letter from the Redland Middle School PTA asking for our support to get Redland back into the budget.

OLD BUSINESS

Transportation Issues - Dave Eskenazi reported that:

- Emory Ln/Georgia Ave Intersection: Construction will begin in the Spring and will be finished in 4 months. The 2 lanes north of Emory will be expanded to 3 lanes southbound. There will not be any changes northbound.
- Brookeville Bypass: Dave noted the article in the Gazette re: the meeting on the Bypass that stated that GOCA is in support of the Bypass. While we are, Dave was concerned that GOCA was not included in this meeting since the bypass will have an impact on homes in Olney with the western alignment and on Longwood Rec. Center. Dave spoke to Paul Maloney at State Highway Administration (SHA) who indicated that since the design changes will not require. There will be a community meeting in late Spring or early Summer. Dave is looking to see if there is any community interest in having a public meeting before the SHA meeting to bring the community up to speed on the issues. He noted that this is a 6-year project and they still need to do an environmental impact study and there are a number of other issues. Dave asked Maloney to reconstitute the focus group. It is now principally Brookeville residents. He feels that it should have representation from Brookeville, Olney, Longwood, and users of the road.
- Norwood Rd Closure: The closure will not happen until June 2001. There are three intersections that will be improved before the closure. Rte 28 at Layhill, Ednor at New Hampshire, and the Ednor/Layhill/Norwood intersection. He has been trying to locate the person in charge of the Layhill project to see what the process will be for that improvement and to invite them to a GOCA meeting to discuss their piece of this project. He has been sent from their Baltimore office to Greenbelt and still has not identified the person. We want to keep track of the process on these intersections and determine who is responsible for completing these and what the projects entail.
- METRO parking: Ed Weisel noted that he has been parking at the METRO garage in Wheaton, mostly because the Glenmont garage is frequently filled when he gets there. They are proposing to lower parking rates at the Wheaton garage to attract traffic from Glenmont and Forest Glen. Ed is concerned about doing something that brings more traffic through the Georgia Ave /Randolph Rd intersection. He feels GOCA needs to start pushing hard for the Georgia Ave transitway. The transitway study is completed and approved by the County. Khalid noted that in June 2000 they will begin the Olney Master Plan review process and that will be an issue they will be looking at. But, we do not need to wait if we think its important.
- Muncaster Mill Rd - Rich Kopanda noted that the State is already making some improvements in response to a request from a dentist on the road. The improvements will involve signage, removing some branches close to the road, and putting in some reflectors.

Olney Days Festival 2000 - Helene Rosenheim reminded everyone that the dates for this year's Festival is Friday, May 19th-Sunday, May 21st and that we will begin looking for volunteers to work the varioius events. Anyone interested in volunteering should let her know. She reported that we are adding another new event to the Festival. The B'nai Shalom of Olney synagogue's high school youth group, United Synagogue Youth, will be sponsoring a 6 K Walk-a-thon on Sunday morning, in conjunction with GOCA. They will make all the arrangements and provide the manpower to run the event. It will begin at the synagogue at the intersection of Rte. 108 and Burtfield Rd. Half the proceeds will go towards the synagogue's building fund for their expansion and half will go to an Olney-based charity. That charity will likely be a fund that has been established for the construction of an indoor elevator for the home of Cillie Gerstenzang needed now that she the neuromuscular disease she has has left her wheel-chair bound. The Olney Chamber of Commerce is still planning to host a flea market that will be in the same location as the bull roast we are doing with BJ Pumpernickel's. She noted also that she and her husband, Eliot had just learned that the Montgomery General Hospital is holding their 24th annual golf tournament on Monday, May 22nd. When they first became aware of it, Eliot thought we might want to consider moving the date of our golf tournament, now scheduled for Friday, May 19th. However, she decided that these two events would appeal to very different audiences. They have lived in Olney for 23 of those 24 years and this is the first time they had heard of this event. So, it probably has a well established audience, probably mostly corporate participants. Also, it is substantially more expensive than our tournament. So, the decision was to proceed with the plans as they stand. We will be looking for corporate sponsors to sponsor the holes. What that means is that for a fee, we will display the names of businesses or other sponsors at which ever hole they sponsors.

Music Fest 2000 - Ron Berger noted that there has been a planning group for the Fest in place for some time. One group is working on the big event at Sherwood. Another group, principally Ron, is working on the Music Where You Are portion of the Fest. Community Concerts of Olney (CCO), who is sponsoring the Fest, needs someone to work with Ron to contact groups and schedule events - matching groups with sponsors. The sponsors are responsible for covering any fees or costs related to their performance. They are looking for sites like churches, stores, etc. The help they need is mostly with making follow-up phone calls and scheduling events as responses come in. They may also want to have someone from GOCA, besides Ron, attend CCO Festival planning meetings; at least to monitor planning. There may be big crowds at some of these events and we want to be sure that they are considering all they need to with crowd control. Their meetings are on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6 pm. They usually last about an hour - an hour and a half and includes dinner at Longwood.

1999 GOCA Awards - Ron Berger reported that they had tallied up the ballots and he was pleased to report that this year's Howard J. Garber Citizen of the Year is going to be Sandy and Bobby Fletcher. The recipients for the Contribution to Community Awards would be Kathy Hill, Project Change, and The SHARP Program hosted at the Sharp Street Church. Eliot Rosenheim is the GOCA Worker of the Year; and Carol Henry and Carolyn Neal are the recipients of the Olney Heritage Award for their work on the development of the current Olney Master Plan which shaped the way Olney looks today. He noted that a good turnout at the Awards Ceremony says we value the work done by the recipients. It will be on Sunday, March 5th at Longwood at 2:00 pm. He also reminded the officers that they are expected at Longwood at 10:00 am to set up for the ceremony.

NEW BUSINESS

Olney Boys and Girls Club Rte. 108 Site Sewer and Wate Category Change - Mike noted that the Olney Boys and Girls Club (OBGC) has applied for a sewer and water category change for their property on Rte. 108 for limited access to the lines serving Rosa Parks Middle School for their new gymnasium. While there was some concern that developers would use this as a precedent for their getting access to these sewer and water mains. However, because of the nature of the facility, and the precedent of restricting lines such as these to Farquahar Middle School and other public institutions, this really does not set such a precedent. Paul Jarosinski moved that:

GOCA SUPPORT THE EXTENSION OF A LIMITED ACCESS OF SEWER AND WATER LINES TO THE PROPOSED GYMNASIUM ON THE OBGC SITE ON RTE. 108.

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, Jim Folk, Joe Hess, Stanley Elswick, Art Brodsky, Sandy Shulman, Ed Weisel, Lori Wilen, Sammie Young, Ron Berger, Gary Lieber, Ed Partington, and Khalid Afzal.